

# novičke

## spring 2001

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SLOVENIAN ADULT  
EDUCATION SCENE

INTERNATIONAL  
CO-OPERATION

SLOVENIA FROM  
NOVIČKE TO NOVIČKE



**10 years together**

Andragoški center Republike Slovenije  
Slovenian Institute for Adult Education



## PROGRAMME BASIS OF NOVIČKE

Novičke (The News) is an information bulletin with which we wish to inform individuals and organisations abroad with adult education and learning in Slovenia.

We plan to provide the following types of:

- description and presentation of events and activities in adult education;
- development, research and other programmes and projects;
- information on organisations, their needs, plans and activities;
- information on policy and strategies of adult education;
- the latest news in administration and legislation;
- statistical data;
- information on forthcoming events, workshops, seminars and conferences;
- presentations of new books and articles.

Novičke will provide brief, concise, objective and unbiased information.

Novičke will be published three times a year in English language.

Users will receive Novičke free of charge. This is a policy we intend to continue, provided we are able to cover the costs of publishing from the public funds allocated to adult education.

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## SIAE EVENTS

### European year of languages and adult education Proposals for marking the Year of languages

The Council of Europe and the European Union proclaimed 2001 the European Year of Languages. At the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, we will mark this year in a special way.

Language learning is one of the areas strongly represented in adult education practice. As in other areas, so in language learning: the knowledge we gain in school is insufficient - it needs to be refreshed and supplemented. Because of their work, adults often come across a need for knowledge of new languages; other common motivating factors include foreign travel and establishing various contacts etc. It is therefore no surprise that around 34,000\* adults participate in various language education programmes each year, a substantial figure in Slovenian terms. Language education is interesting not just because of the extent of education; it is also the field in which the most diverse modern teaching methods are being introduced, various experiments conducted and new organisational approaches tested.

At the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, we believe that it is right to take advantage of the international year of languages to present achievements in adult language education, as well as to consider the weaknesses in the field and how to improve them. We have thus prepared some proposals through which we aim to contribute to marking the year of languages ourselves, and to encourage others to do so:

1. In the preparations for the celebration of this year's Lifelong Learning Week we will specifically encourage organisers to prepare events in which language education providers can present their achievements, promote new language teaching methods, encourage adults to learn languages, etc.

\* According to the latest figures available from the Statistical Office of RS (1997), 12,647 people attended publicly certified language programmes, and a further 22,154 took part in non-certified programmes, making a total of 34,801 participants. Source: Statistical Information, no. 169/2000, Statistical Office of RS.

2. The Council of Europe and the European Union have specifically decided to mark **The Adult Language Learners' Week**. This will run from **5 to 11 May 2001**. Since our Lifelong Learning Week takes place in the autumn, and the organisation of special events twice a year would be an impossible burden on educational institutions, the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education called on the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport to organise a press conference during this week, bringing together representatives of the ministry, the SIAE, the National Examination Centre and the Centre for Slovenian as a Second Language to present:

- the renewal of the Slovenian for foreigners programme,
- the renewal of foreign language programmes for adults,
- the results of the use of the new programme for Slovenian,
- the results of the first external assessment of foreign language knowledge,
- the first response to the use of language portfolios in adult language education,
- changed method for statistical monitoring of language learning.

In the last two years, numerous changes and innovations have been introduced in Slovenia in adult language education, and these should be presented to the wider public.

3. Each issue of the Slovenian version of *Novičke* will contain a brief professional paper on a specific professional issue concerning adult language education. To this end we will invite various professionals to participate. The first such article was published in the March issue of *Novičke*; we deliberately chose to present learning of a language not commonly studied (Polish), since this year we should think about all languages spoken in Europe, and not just those most commonly used.
4. This year, each issue of the English edition of *Novičke*, which is published three times a year, will contain some Slovenian professional terms from the fields of education and adult education (e.g. *izobraževanje, učenje, odrasel ...*), and we will invite readers to learn them.
5. We propose that the editorial committee of the *Andragoška Spoznanja* (Findings in Adult Education) journal should invite various linguists and other professionals to participate by writing about adult language education.
6. We have placed links on the SIAE web site ([www.acs.si](http://www.acs.si)) to international addresses where more information can be obtained relating to this European event.

Sonja Klemenčič, SIAE



## Evaluation of the PLYA programme in the 1999/2000 school year **PLYAers return to school**

Project learning for young adults was provided by five organisations in Slovenia in the 1999/2000 school year: TIN in Ljubljana, KOR-CIS in Slovenj Gradec, Skala in Celje, Murska Sobota Folk High School and Radovljica Folk High School.

The basic purpose of the evaluation of the PLYA programme was to determine whether the programme has been adapted to its target population - young unemployed adults who have left education. We were also interested in learning whether the effects on participants were positive, whether the recommended work methods produce the expected results and whether the programme motivates young people to continue their disrupted education.

The basic purpose of the evaluation of the PLYA programme is to determine whether its central goals, principles and results are being achieved in accordance with its concept, and whether the goals set at the level of the curriculum are being realised.

We conducted two types of evaluation in the 1999/2000 school year:

- we conducted ongoing evaluation at the monthly meetings of mentors and directors of provider organisations,
- we conducted a summation evaluation at the end of the programme; this contained:
  - analysis of survey questionnaires from all programme participants,
  - analysis of discussions with mentors and directors of provider organisations which began implementing the programme in the 1999/2000 school year,
  - analysis of the documentation (personal sheets of participants, monthly reports, final reports and learning projects) of all provider organisations.

The summation evaluation at the end of the school year covered:

- 73 programme participants who completed the questionnaire for programme participants at the end of the school year,
- 9 mentors of the PLYA programme, with whom we held discussions at the end of the school year,
- 3 directors of provider organisations, with whom we held discussions at the end of the school year,
- 125 personal sheets of PLYA programme participants who attended the programme until the end of the school year,
- 40 monthly reports of PLYA programme provider organisations,

- 5 final reports of PLYA programme provider organisations,
- 26 forms for learning projects conducted by provider organisations in the 1999/2000 school year.

The evaluation was divided into three parts:

- subject findings: provider organisations, mentors, participants who attended the programme in the previous school year; we analysed participants by sex, their attendance in individual months and their education;
- analysis of project work, the quantity and form of individual learning, optional and production projects, and interest activities, provided in provider organisations in the past school year;
- realisation of the basic and joint goals; to what extent have participants achieved success in the areas of continuing their education, the formation of a vocational identity, general education and personal development.

### **Main conclusions**

125 participants attended the programme until the end of the school year, while a total of 203 participants attended the programme over the whole year.

The gender structure was very interesting, with male students more likely to attend the programme: of 125 participants, 77 were male and 48 female, with males thus accounting for almost 62% of the total. In terms of previous education, 108 of the participants who attended the PLYA programme until the end of the year had completed primary school, while 17 had not. Those who had completed primary school mostly dropped out of secondary school, mainly in the first (36) and second (26) years, while fewer participants dropped out from later years (third year - 14; fourth year - 8; and fifth year - 1). Some participants had to complete either leaving examinations or a baccalaureate.

Participants mainly came from secondary vocational and professional schools, e.g. secondary trade, hospitality, dairy schools, electrical engineering and metal work schools, while those from later years came from general secondary schools.

### **Success of participants**

In the evaluation we focused on the PLYA goals and analysed the success of participants regarding goals achieved. The most important and fundamental goal of the programme is to prepare participants to continue their interrupted education. 25 participants had already



met all the conditions for continuing their education, 16 opted for education, 23 sat examinations while attending the programme, 1 enrolled in an academy, 2 completed leaving examinations, 1 sat the baccalaureate, 1 completed his education, 1 resumed education, and two sought opportunities to continue their education. This makes a total of 72 participants which, given the numbers attending the programme, is an excellent result.

In addition to the basic goal, we also analysed the joint goals of the programme: general education, vocational identity and socio-cultural operation. Participants were successful in all three areas.

The results presented here are very good, but they also represent the success of mentor groups, who worked very hard with participants. One characteristic of participants is short-term motivation, whether this is motivation to participate in project work or motivation to continue interrupted education. Thus the great success of participants also reflects the intensive work of mentors in motivating participants. At the same time, the results of the evaluation confirm the need in Slovenia for the PLYA programme, and support our plans to expand it to all regions of Slovenia.

Andreja Dobrovoljc, SIAE



### Farewell to LLW 2000 - pre-new year meeting **“We start with the belief that we are rich - also in knowledge!”**

In order to bid farewell to the Lifelong Learning Week 2000, the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education invited LLW friends from all over Slovenia to come together to review the path taken, exchange experience gained and shed light on new opportunities for the future.

On 14 December, over 40 representatives of thirty-one providers of LLW events gathered together at the pre-new year meeting, some of whom have established a five-year tradition of partnership in the extensive, pan-Slovenian project intended to promote lifelong learning.

After the introductory address by Olga Drogenik, deputy director of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik, national project coordinator, gave a highly condensed report on the implementation of LLW 2000. She presented it as the

result of the combined efforts of all providers. Some providers have established themselves as excellent coordinators on a regional level or in a more restricted geographic area, connecting within their network a range of smaller providers of educational, informative, professional, advisory, social and cultural events. This year, particularly successful animators and organisers included RIC Novo Mesto (which attracted as many as 57 providers), Vitra from Cerknica (which is extending its operation to the border areas in Croatia), the Breznikar Creative Centre, certain municipalities (for instance, Dravograd, Škofja Loka, Jesenice) and folk high schools (Radovljica, Maribor, ...). Experience shows that in future we should pay particularly careful attention to acquiring and training coordinators.

Undoubtedly one of the areas in which providers have to acquire additional knowledge is the evaluation of events, since evaluation of the content, scope, method of implementation and accompanying events - with regards to the response and structure of participants - is essential for the further development of the LLW. Outstanding in this area this year was the Maribor Adult Education Institute - Folk High School, and so Alenka Sagadin presented their method for evaluating events, which could become an exemplary model for evaluation for all regional coordinators. The Maribor Adult Education Institute was the coordinator for thirty events, and in addition to the interesting programme it also prepared a special questionnaire. The questionnaire was designed not to require much time to complete while providing important information on the age, education and (un)employment of event participants, who also stated how many LLW events they had attended, whether this was the first year they had attended the LLW, how they found out about events, what they liked, what they felt was missing and what they would like to see in the future. This allowed planners of the Week to draw conclusions which will help them in planning future tasks.

### **Working not just with ideas, but with “thinking eyes”**

Vesna Dular, director of the Novo Mesto Development and Education Centre (RIC), briefly presented her experience of coordinating LLW providers and events. Maja Korošak MA then spoke on the topic which drew the greatest number of participants to the meeting - cooperation between LLW providers and state bodies, and the possibility of bidding for tenders from ministries and other government services to obtain financial support for the educational and promotional project.

The question of how to obtain money to implement the LLW was also addressed by a “man of practice”, Bojan Žnidaršič (Vitra Centre for Balanced Development Cerknica), who works on the territory of fifteen municipalities in “the land of wood products”. He



feels that successful work requires four elements: ideas, time, people and of course money. Ensuring the fourth element requires constant monitoring of publications in the Official Journal of RS with - as Žnidaršič puts it - "with thinking eyes"! In addition it is good to monitor needs in our environment, where possible to help formulate them and to participate in municipal projects. Money is also available internationally, although of course you need to know how to collect it. We will have to learn how to appropriately present our projects and obtain application forms and guarantees. Finance can also be obtained from international funds to expand border-area ties, particularly if both sides are involved. This will require study of the projects and "philosophy" of the European Union, otherwise we will not be able to submit suitable applications! We will have to focus on larger, strategic links between education and enterprise (both in terms of the content of events and the need for sponsorship). Even here much still needs to be learned, since it is difficult to achieve the desired response. We have to take time to ensure that our partner understands us. This will thus require individual animation (anything not addressed to the individual tends to get thrown away) and implementation of mutual benefit.

Thus the meeting formulated an initiative addressed to the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education and the Ministry of Education (represented at the meeting by Jože Miklavc MA, head of the adult education division) for the preparation of a programme and the provision of funding for training LLW coordinators and providers to enable them to monitor public tenders, thereby attracting funding, of which more is available than might at first appear. Experienced partners also raised a further interesting idea: "We have to start from the belief that we are rich - including in knowledge."

This was followed by a brief presentation of the starting points for the 2001 Lifelong Learning Week prepared by Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik, while Olga Drofenik summarised the most important experience gained from LLW 2000.

A special exhibition of promotional materials sent by providers together with their reports on the implementation of the Week was intended for those attending the meeting, while the festive mood was further encouraged by the appearance of the Zvok quartet who, in addition to songs suitable for the holiday period, also sang *Pod oknom* ("Beneath the window") to mark the 200th anniversary of the birth of poet France Prešeren. After the official end of the programme, delegates continued discussions in a relaxed atmosphere.

Slavica Borka Kucler, SIAE



## SLOVENIAN ADULT EDUCATION SCENE

### Economic development strategy 2

#### **New step towards establishing adult education**

The Office of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development is preparing the Economic Development Strategy for Slovenia up to 2008 (EDSS-2), a continuation of EDSS-1, prepared by the same institute six years ago. The document, which will be ratified by parliament and will thus represent a platform for the formulation of suitable policies on the national level, was produced on the basis of exhaustive studies by the most respected Slovenian experts on actual and possible guidelines, steps and projections for the development of all key elements on which economic development depends. The new EDSS differs from the previous version in two key characteristics: it is based on the assumption that Slovenia will be a full member of the EU from 2003, and considerably more attention is paid to the environment and social status of the population, in terms of the benefits and restrictions, opportunities and risks.

In our view, human resources are once again given suitable weight in EDSS-2 as the key factor of development. Much is also written about adult education (summaries draw on studies conducted by the SIAE) concerning the need to establish the concept of lifelong learning, the urgency of increased investment in adult education, both from public sources and by employers, and the need to design new instruments to motivate people, in particular the less educated, to enter education. The results of literacy research (OECD 2000) are also adequately presented, together with the many implications we can derive from them.

Peter Beltram, MA, SIAE



National Examination Centre

## External assessment of knowledge of foreign languages

Adults have now been studying for over a year under the new publicly certified education programmes for English, German, Italian and French adopted by the Professional Council for Adult Education of RS. These programmes stipulate among other matters external assessment of knowledge, for which the National Examination Centre is responsible under Article 48 of the Adult Education Act.

For now, examinations are still conducted under the old system, but this year we are planning the transition to external assessment of knowledge and the issuing of new documents. Under the new system, the National Examination Centre will prepare and organise uniform tests of knowledge of foreign languages which will ensure uniform knowledge standards. Examinations can be taken by people attending foreign language courses or by self-taught individuals. After successfully completing the examination, candidates will receive a **publicly certified document**. Examinations are comparable with other international examinations, since they have been prepared in line with the recommendations of the Council of Europe.

Examinations can be taken at a basic or higher level, while the scope of examination material and the method of assessment of knowledge are determined by the examination catalogue. Tasks for external assessment of knowledge are prepared by a group of experts bringing together teachers of foreign languages from organisations providing adult foreign language programmes and experts from the universities. Candidates will sit for written examinations in individual languages in one diet of examinations on the same day at the same time in **authorised centres** which will conduct the examinations. Schedules for written examinations will be determined by the National Examination Centre and will be announced in the public media. Assessment will take place under uniform instructions, and authorised assessors will be trained in a uniform manner by the National Examination Centre. The oral part of the examination will be conducted before an examination committee, and assessors will mark candidates using uniform criteria.

We are planning a pilot examination, through which we will check examination procedures and inform candidates and organisations of the format of the examination, in April, while students on courses in the spring semester will likely be able to complete their education by taking the first uniform examination.

Suzana Bitenc Peharc, National Examination Centre



## How to interpret the Law provisions

### VAT still disputable

A representative of a private education company recently sent us a record from the tax office on an “inspection regarding the correctness of the time and manner for charging VAT at the taxpayer” at his company. The body responsible determined that those in charge at the company had committed a tax offence by failing to charge VAT on language courses. In so doing the body made reference to the Value Added Tax Act (the ZDDV), the Rules on the Implementation of the Value Added Tax Act (the Rules), and the Organisation and Financing of Education and Training Act (the ZOFVI).

In our opinion this is a case of incorrect interpretation of the relevant legal provisions, as it fails to take into consideration the Constitutional Court ruling of 13 April 2000 (odločba, Ur. l. RS, No. 42/2000, p. 5745), in which the judges, albeit in complicated legal language, nevertheless clearly stated that almost all forms of education are exempt from VAT. This ruling has been overlooked because it rejected as unfounded a proposal to examine the constitutionality of Article 52 of the Rules submitted by the Adult Education Society, the SIAE and the Faculty of Arts. According to the proposers the article should restrict the scope of educational programmes exempt from VAT (point 4 of Article 26 of the ZDDV: *services of preschool education, and education and training for children, young people and adults, including the trade of goods and services directly linked to such activities, if such activities are performed in accordance with regulations governing this area*), as it states that only those educational services aimed at the acquisition of public qualifications are exempt from VAT.

The ruling explains in detail why the disputed article of the Rules is not in accordance with the ZDDV. The constitutional judges refer to the Adult Education Act (the ZIO), which expands the public validity of qualifications to the entire scope of education in which programmes are VAT-exempt under this article of the ZDDV. To quote: *“It proceeds from the ZIO as the prescription governing the area of adult education that participants in adult education acquire particular knowledge, expertise and skills, and may also acquire public qualifications (Article 6) under special educational programmes for adults and parts of educational programmes for young people. Educational programmes are only cited by way of example in the second paragraph of Article 7 of the ZIO (...), which means that other individual types of adult education (also cited in Article 24 of the ZIO) are not excluded. The approach to education is thus based on continuity of education through all stages of life; this is subordinate to*

current life and work needs and to the individual's personal and professional development. In terms of assessment of constitutionality and legality the ZIO provisions that follow are significant, as they govern matters relating to educational programmes. The third paragraph of Article 7 of the ZIO stipulates that knowledge, expertise and skills acquired under the following programmes have public validity proved through public documents:

- educational programmes for adults, and
- other educational programmes adopted under regulations that do not cover education and training for which the relevant expert council has determined an equivalent educational standard, or
- parts of educational programmes for young people under which public qualifications are obtained

In accordance with Article 8 of the ZIO public qualifications are obtained:

- under publicly valid educational programmes for adults
- through determination and confirmation of knowledge
- through examinations, and
- on the basis of the public documents specified in the third paragraph of Article 7 of the ZIO

The total range of adult education services thus comprises:

- education inside and outside schools
- formal education, i.e. education that should lead to some type of formally confirmed educational results such as a specific level of educational qualification, degree or vocational qualification
- informal education, and
- organised independent study and self-education.

Given the above, the scope of adult education programmes proceeding from the ZIO that are exempt from VAT pursuant to point 4 of Article 26 of the ZDDV is the same as the scope of adult education programmes that are exempt from VAT on the basis of the classification of educational programmes in the first paragraph of Article 52 of the rules." (ruling)

We are convinced that the section of the ruling quoted leaves no room for doubt: **provider organisations that do not charge VAT for their own educational programmes are acting in accordance with the law.** In the autumn we sent a request to the Ministry of Education, Science and Sport asking for the matter to be officially defined. We have not yet received any reply; perhaps it can be partly found in their contracts with education providers, which expressly state that VAT is included in the sums covered by the contract. We feel that those at the Ministry of Education and Sport, as the best qualified, should be the first to stop charging for educational programmes, as this would certainly apply the Constitutional Court ruling.

Peter Beltram, MA, SIAE





## INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

### International workshop for the Second Learning Festival in Bosnia-Herzegovina **Learning Festivals are expanding**

Learning festivals are forging ahead rapidly, both within individual countries and on an international scale. The recommendation in the Hamburg Declaration that every country in the world should organise at least a Learning Day if not a whole week, was realised under the wing of the International Adult Education Week in 2000 by around 40 countries; we can justifiably expect this number to continue increasing year on year. The reason for this lies in the first instance in the "infectious" enthusiasm of all those who have already organised such events and who have been richly rewarded for their efforts by the response of those for whom the festival is intended. We are the most eager promoters and so-called multipliers of the festival, which is probably one of the most convincing concepts for the promotion of education and learning.

Slovenia has a rich tradition in its festival, since last year we celebrated the fifth anniversary of the Lifelong Learning Week. All of the quantitative and qualitative factors with which we measure the success of the project were once again more than satisfactory, leading us to continue and increase our efforts. We are proud that through the Week we have almost alone promoted the strategy of lifelong learning, which from year to year increasingly proves to be the right approach. It allows us to identify the most diverse of providers, an increasing number of which are not engaged in education as their primary activity. The contents of events are extremely varied, the barriers between generations and between social roles of participants are demolished at LLW events, so that the Week is ever more becoming a method and reflection of links amongst all participants.

Last year's Lifelong Learning Week was exceptional on account of international participation marking the 4th Adult Education Colloquium, with the most numerous being guests from south-eastern Europe whom the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education hosted within the context of the EbiS international project (*Erwachsenenbildung in Suedosteuropa - Adult education in south-eastern Europe*). Representatives of Albania, Bulgaria, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia, Romania and Yugoslavia viewed a number of na-