

novičke

Spring 2005

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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

9th Adult Education Colloquium **Effective Education and Learning for Active Citizenship**

As part of the Lifelong Learning Week (LLW) 2005, we are organising the ninth adult education colloquium, which will be held on **14 and 15 October** in Ljubljana. This year's colloquium will begin directly after the official opening of LLW 2005, which will mark the tenth anniversary of the learning festival. This internationally flavoured event, under the title ***Effective Education and Learning for Active Citizenship***¹, relates to the European Year of Citizenship through Education - EYCE², so partly it has been made financially possible by the European Commission as part of the *Education and Training 2010 programme*.

This area, declared by the Council of Europe as one of the fundamental and also adopted as a thematic highlight by numerous international organisations, was given a special presentation in Slovenia at the March national conference on Citizenship, Integration and Education³.

Nowadays, increasing credence is being given to the belief that globalisation demands new, better adapted forms of political and social structures in which citizens will be able to play a more active part. At the same time, data indicate that in Europe, participation in traditional democratic processes is decreasing. The most frequent reason for this is that the development of various forms of participation in decision-making requires the involvement of organisations and citizens at lower levels, but many people lack the knowledge, skills and understanding for this. This is especially true for those with lower levels of education and for groups at risk of social exclusion. Among the challenges they encounter with increasing frequency at all levels are: expanding diversity, migration, social exclusion and a considerable democratic deficit, also reflected in a declining electoral participation.

Through presentations by established national and international experts, we wish to use this adult education colloquium to highlight and promote the dissemination of

¹ Slovenian title: *Z vseživljenjskim učenjem do aktivnega državljanstva* (lit. *Through Lifelong Learning to Active Citizenship*).

² More at http://www.mszs.si/slo/ministrstvo/mednarodno/solstvo/leto_drzavljanstva.asp#

³ Conference organised by the Pedagogical Institute in cooperation with the Ministry of Education and Sport in Ljubljana, 11 March 2005.

new theoretical and empirical findings from research projects, whereby special emphasis will be given to the following **salient topics**:

- which are the main shifts in the conceptualisations of »active« and »democratic« citizenship, and what are the inherent implications for the development of education and learning strategies in this area, especially in the inclusion of thus far excluded population groups;
- what kinds of **concepts and strategies** should be drawn up for the successful learning of active democratic participation in society on the national and global levels;
- we will attempt to identify **knowledge, skills and competences** needed to implement active citizenship, both in terms of support for building identities and effective functioning in society;
- we will devote special attention to recognising **effective methods of promoting links** between active citizenship and lifelong learning;
- we will exchange **experiences and best practices** with international experts and examine the possibilities for disseminating successful approaches into post-transitional social contexts;
- another task of the meeting will be to **identify key issues and areas** for further activities and determine their priorities.

The papers given at the **two plenary sessions** – at the beginning and at the end of the colloquium – will derive from the results of theoretical and empirical studies. They will provide a framework for **group discussions**. The work of topic groups will be aimed at a more in-depth investigation of the issues presented, their scrutiny from the aspect of everyday practice and the formulation of conclusions and proposals that will be presented in the closing plenary session.

Thematic areas that will be addressed by individual working groups include:

- knowledge, skills and competences necessary for establishing active citizenship,
- educational and learning strategies for active citizenship in the concept of lifelong learning, and measures for including groups that have thus far been left behind,
- activities that contribute to promoting education and learning for active citizenship.

We invite you to consider participating in this expert meeting. In order for us to effectively plan the content of the programme and formulate working groups, we would ask you to register for the colloquium at the web address <http://llw.acs.si/ac/09/> or by ordinary mail to: Andragoški center Slovenije, Šmartinska 134a, 1000 Ljubljana, Slovenia, envelope marked *9th Adult Education Colloquium*.

Deadlines for registration at the colloquium, which will be held on **14 and 15 October**, are:

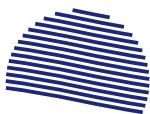
- **30 May** for the registration and submission of summaries (350 to 500 words), if you wish to present a paper;
- **30 August** for registration if you will participate without giving a paper;

- **12 September** for submission of the full text of papers;
- **22 September** final deadline for confirmation of participation.

Papers will be compiled on a CD which participants will receive at the colloquium.

Further details can be obtained from Dr Angela Ivančič (e-mail: aivancic@acs.si) and Petra Javrh (e-mail: petra.javrh@acs.si). We will publish information on the invited lecturers and their papers in the newsletter *Novičke*, in the Lifelong Learning Week 2005 section. Please also visit our website <http://llw.acs.si/ac/>, where we will keep you up to date with colloquium details.

Petra Javrh (petra.javrh@acs.si), external associate of the SIAE



SIAE among recipients as coordinator of
award-winning project

2004 European language awards given

At a ceremony in the assembly hall of the University of Ljubljana held on 7 December 2004, the Centre for Mobility and European Programmes of Education and Training (CMEPIUS) presented the 2004 European Awards for Languages. Keynote speakers were *Dr Milan Zver*, Minister of Education and Sport, *Tinca Štokojnik* from the Delegation of the European Commission in Slovenia, *Majda Širok*, Director of CMEPIUS, and *Zdravka Godunc* from the Education Development Office. The event was linked into a complete celebration through the musical programme performed in Slovenian, English, German, French and Italian by students from Celje's 1st Gimnazija.

European language awards were given to the following projects:

- Access to Language Learning by Extending to Groups Outside – ALLEGRO, which is coordinated by the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SIAE),
- Testing in Polish and Slovenian, coordinated by the Centre for Slovenian as a Second or Foreign Language at the University of Ljubljana Faculty of Arts,
- FLORNET – the 12-language dictionary for florists, coordinated by the Celje Horticultural School.

In his speech, Minister *Milan Zver* mentioned the recommendation of trilingualism for European citizens, and stressed that in the multicultural community knowledge of foreign languages is a vital need, since it enables us to take advantage of the possibili-

ties offered by the common European area. Furthermore, in a letter addressed to those assembled, the European Union ambassador, *Erwan Fouere*, expressed the thought that the European identity is a mosaic of different cultures and languages, so a familiarity with them contributes to economic success and mobility.

Generally, the European Award for Languages is given to the most innovative programmes of teaching and promoting multilingualism. In Slovenia the first awards were presented in 2002, and within the European Union back in 1999 (since then a total of more than 600 awards have been given). Projects have been getting better from year to year, new initiatives must therefore have some special added value.

We are delighted that the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, as coordinator of the ALLEGRO project, is a recipient of one of the 2004 awards. This time the principle *Opening the door to the underprivileged* came to the forefront, and this was indeed a strong point of the awarded project, which was designed in 2002 by *Nataša Elvira Jelenc*. The first three providers have been joined by new ones, so the concept had to be fleshed out and the job of coordinator was assumed by *Darijan Novak*.

The project offers innovative learning of less widespread languages to those groups that experience difficulty gaining access to learning. The project aims to shift language learning away from established educational institutions and bring it closer to the specific needs of individuals who would otherwise find it difficult to opt for language learning, or who would simply not be able to participate in established forms of education. The project involves participation from groups of prisoners, the blind and visually impaired, deaf and hearing impaired, persons with head injuries and mental development difficulties, disabled students and victims of war, pensioners and women who are recovering cancer patients. Each target group is a world in itself, and requires adapted methods of teaching.

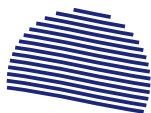
For the project, the tried and tested method of study circles was selected, since it enables participants to determine for themselves their educational goals and to plan the frequency, level and length of study meetings. Study circle meetings are enhanced by songs, games, physical training, making posters and publications, attending cultural events and museum visits, which lend the learning process a cultural dimension and attraction, while also contributing to raising awareness about the all-embracing importance of foreign language learning.

Partnership in the ALLEGRO project is therefore spread out across a sizeable portion of Europe, as well as throughout Slovenia. As the project coordinator, the SIAE collaborates with Nottingham Trent University, a community college and research institution in the United Kingdom, with the non-governmental organisation for informal education of underprivileged groups in Aarhus, Denmark (*Frit Oplysningsforbund*, the Free Education

Association), with the German not-for-profit organisation that works to improve the quality of life for socially at-risk population groups (*Gemeinnützige Schottener Reha Einrichtungen der Jugend und Sozialhilfe GmbH*), with the University of Castilla La Mancha in Spain, and with the association for coordinating the CCI language centre network (*Association de Gestion du Réseau des Centres de Langues des CCI*) in France. The Slovenian network of study circle providers comprises 16 organisations: ATHENA d.o.o. of Postojna, Cene Štupar – Centre for Continuing Education of Ljubljana, The Dolfka Boštjančič Centre of Draga near Ig, the Disabled Students of Slovenia Society, Ljubljana Society of Persons Disabled by War, the Ljubljana Intermunicipality Society of Blind and Visually Impaired, The Committee of Hearing Impaired at the Federation of Deaf and Hearing Impaired Societies of Slovenia, the Radeče Correctional Home, the prisons of Dob, Koper, Ljubljana, Maribor and Celje, the youth and adult penal institution of Celje, the Zarja Institute for Care and Rehabilitation Following Head Injuries of Ljubljana, the Federation of Deaf and Hearing Impaired Societies of Slovenia and the Slovenian Federation of Societies of Persons Disabled by War.

Congratulations and best wishes to all those involved for the award!

Slavica Borka Kucler (borka.kucler@acs.si), SIAE



Promoting lifelong learning

The importance of promoting lifelong learning

Lifelong learning is defined in the Lisbon Strategy (2000) as one of the fundamental driving forces for developing Europe into the most dynamic and competitive knowledge-based society. It should be accessible to all people, and everyone should be included in it¹. But how should we understand the term *lifelong learning*? In 2003 the European Commission and Cedefop conducted a public opinion survey², which showed that in the then 15 member states of the European Union, on average as many as 45.4 % of those polled were of the opinion that lifelong learning was aimed primarily at those that had performed badly in their formal school education; 23.4 % held the view that it was aimed primarily at middle-aged persons, and 13.6 % were convinced that it would only involve young persons. There are clearly major gaps in our

¹ *Lifelong learning for all* – the catchphrase originating from the OECD conference of ministers in Paris, 1996

² Lifelong learning: citizen's views in close-up; findings from a dedicated Eurobarometer survey on lifelong learning, Luxembourg, 2004

understanding, and practice shows that they exist also in actual implementation of this principle, or we could even say, of this ideal!

With the aim of shedding some light on our efforts to bridge these gaps, this article is devoted to the **promotion of lifelong learning** – an area we started developing at the SIAE in 1996³ through the Lifelong Learning Week (LLW) project. We take this opportunity to offer to our readers all three expressions for their consideration.

Learning compared to the term education in many professionals' opinion indicates a more complex concept, since it covers a broader range of study activities, and above all it includes formal, non-formal and also informal routes for acquiring knowledge and skills. There is what is termed a *paradigm shift from education to learning*, which becomes even more topical in the construction *lifelong learning*. Slovenian experts exchanged views on this subject at the first adult education colloquium as part of the LLW 1997. These have been published in the book *Lifelong Education, Lifelong Learning (Vseživljenjsko izobraževanje, vseživljenjsko učenje*⁴; in Slovenian language).

Lifelong is an expression for which we may claim that through the Lifelong Learning Week we opened up the path for its use in the general public. Thanks to the increasingly numerous events, and especially the media support for LLW on the national and local level, the word became more everyday, although it should be admitted that even now it still does not trip off the tongue for many people. Here we wish to underline that it carries two meanings – apart from the dimension of time, which some define by the phrase »from cradle to grave« (life-long), it also indicates that it will accompany us on all our life paths, and in all the roles we take on (life-wide). Consequently, the only correct response to the Eurobarometer question of which target groups lifelong learning is aimed at, would therefore be: all of them! But the purpose of this article is not to provide a broad definition of what actually *lifelong learning* is – for this has already been done in several places. At this point I should mention in particular two important sources: the publication *Learning: The Treasure Within*⁵ (1996) and the *Memorandum on Lifelong Learning* (2000). Practical illustrations of the term are provided in the next article, demonstrating that the most convincing words about lifelong learning come from people who are dedicated to it and who inspire others by their example.

At this point we would rather focus attention on a consideration of **promoting** lifelong learning. Our goal is ambitious, since through the promotion of lifelong learning we wish to **spread awareness** of its necessity in all stages of life, and of its presence in all circumstances of life. We wish to **contribute to the broadest understanding** of lifelong

³ 1996 was declared the European Year of Lifelong Learning (European Lifelong Learning Initiative – ELLI).

⁴ The publication appeared as part of the Studies and Research collection at the SIAE, 1998.

⁵ Delors, Jacques: Learning: the treasure within. Report to UNESCO of the International Commission on Education for the 21st Century. Unesco Publishing, Paris, 1996

learning, which is not limited simply to education and training for work, but also recognises the importance of and paths for attaining other values, such as personal growth. We wish to **encourage** a desire for knowledge and a positive attitude to learning, and also to **change established notions** about its accessibility and hindrances to learning. We are also striving to make the **voice of learners** increasingly audible and influential.

The latest data⁶ indicate that Slovenia, at 15.1 % (in 2003) has already exceeded the EU reference level, whereby on average 12.5 % of the population aged 25 to 64 years would be participating in lifelong learning by 2010. According to other sources, this proportion is supposedly even higher, but the fact is that a significant portion of the population, as a rule those with a lower level of education, older people, unemployed or those with an employment disadvantage, are entirely excluded from this mainstream. Many people do not consider the fact that education could contribute significantly to a higher quality of life for them; and those that are more aware of this often stop in the face of obstacles and prejudices that seem to them unbridgeable.

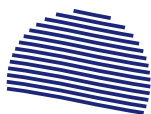
In the past nine years of promoting the lifelong learning culture, we have found enthusiastic like-minded people and active partners among individuals, groups and institutions that are already convinced and involved – be it as providers of learning activities or as participants. We are pleased with what has been achieved, but we are aware that in the future we must link promotion more closely to **research activity**, so that we will be equipped to define the most vulnerable, excluded target groups, to approach them and help them to actually become conscious of their need for learning and recognise the potential positive effects of learning on their personal growth, their employability and on their coexistence in the family and wider communities. On the other hand we must secure an even stronger connection with the area of **information, guidance and education itself**, for if through promotional angles we get the message across to the individual, awaken his hope, give him self-confidence and inspire him to seek new developmental paths, then it is essential to embed promotion in the range of expert activities that will enable dreams to become reality. And ultimately we must devote research to **monitoring and (in terms of quantity and quality) evaluating the effects** of promoting lifelong learning, i. e. identify shifts that have been accomplished on the levels of the individual, the education profession and politics, society and the economy.

Promoting lifelong learning, as we see it and implement it at the SIAE, is not a profit-orientated activity. Admittedly, a significant motivation for our partners from the ranks of education providers is to acquire the greatest possible number of participants, and they regard cooperation in the LLW promotion campaign as an investment in their own business activities. However, by joining forces we do in fact achieve a

⁶ Source: Labour force survey, 2003; published in the working material »Update of the Commission staff working paper 'Progress towards the Common Objectives in Education and Training«.

broader goal, that is the establishing of conditions for fulfilling the principle of *lifelong learning for all*. For this reason it is all the more important that we include among our partners other bodies, not just those in education, and that promoting lifelong learning benefits from the active cooperation of experts, politicians, business people, financiers and many others. And above all, they should understand that the impact of these endeavours should in no way be measured simply in quantitative terms.

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Promoting lifelong learning **LLW as a promotion of the learning culture**

In a world where a mass of things competes for our attention, we must transform learning into a societal and social event. We must seek new, attractive paths for bringing knowledge to people, and for associating learning with positive and festive experiences. This indeed is the area covered by the tasks of promoting the learning culture: striving to break down the stereotyped images of education, which is something that supposedly pertains chiefly to young people, and of school as a coldly rationalistic, hierarchical institution, or of learning as the solitary activity of unsociable adults. Learning is in fact a lifelong, personal and social process, with distinctly intergenerational dimensions. Thanks also to the LLW this process is becoming conscious, planned and socially recognised as necessary and desired.

Lifelong Learning Week (LLW) is the main and also the only entirely promotional project of the SIAE, which even at the very beginning (we have held this event since 1996) grew into a national festival of learning, or into a **movement for the learning society**. As such the LLW is also a form of fulfilling the Agenda for the Future (the implementation plan from the Hamburg Declaration of 1997), which notes in point three that *«The development of adult learning requires partnership between government departments, intergovernmental and non-governmental organisations, employers and trade unions, universities and research centres, the media, civil and community-level associations, facilitators of adult learning and the adult learners themselves»*. There should be no special need to justify these assertions to readers of *Novičke*, since they are well acquainted with the project, partly because we devote three issues of *TVU-Novičke* (in Slovenian language) to the festival of learning each year, and if it works out (financially) for us, we also inform professional circles abroad about the LLW, with a special English edition. Nevertheless, we have succeeded in securing cooperation in

creating the Lifelong Learning Week from the Government of the Republic of Slovenia, which is also as a rule the patron of LLW; representatives of competent ministries (the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Ministry of Education and Sport, Ministry of Culture) and of the social partners (Chamber of Trade and Industry of Slovenia, Association of Slovenian Adult Education Centres, unions, universities, providers) participate in the National Committee for LLW, and operating throughout Slovenia are several hundred provider organisations, and a network of regional and thematic coordinators, active individuals, informal groups, societies and associations, which with minimal financial means create a blaze of ideas, materialised in the form of several thousand festival events. We provide an overview of events via a unified database, which we publish in the beginning of October at <http://tvu.acs.si/koledar/> as a web publication accessible to everyone (in Slovenian language). And for two years now the morning channel 1 of Radio Slovenia has joined in the promotion of the festival, drawing people to participate through its selection from the calendar of events.

The festival of learning makes use of the widest variety of possibilities for establishing lifelong learning as a value. LLW has its own bulletin - *TVU-Novičke* (LLW News), its own website (<http://llw.acs.si/>), a single corporate image and joint promotional material (logo, poster, leaflet, info-cube, and occasionally additional small promotional items). Budget funds have been secured for tasks on the national level, but we are also building up an increasingly broad network of sponsors and donors. Animating the public on the national level is ensured by the SIAE through media information and a main press conference, and through continuously new forms of e-promotion, while special highlights that attract people's attention are added by the providers themselves, who know from their own practice how to address people in their immediate environment. With such broad-based cooperation, in nine years we have succeeded in getting news of the festival of learning and its messages to absolutely everybody, including people in the remotest parts of the country.

We would like to illustrate for you the pulse of the festival of learning with highlights from one of the LLW 2004 providers' report:

Emilija Pavlič (Emili - independent publishing and food consultant) introduced herself thus: »I am Emilija. I live in Koper. I am a retired cook. Three years ago, on the invitation of Koper Folk High School I registered as a LLW provider with the course 'teaching and guidance for healthy food'. The first year I was at the open market among the stallholders. At home I made a few sample dishes... and I advised those who wanted to know a little more. Last year I was in the fish market. At first the shoppers were amazed, and many of them heard about LLW for the first time. When they realised that I wanted to teach them how to clean and prepare fish properly, they were very grateful to me. There were plenty of people who learned for the first time that fish should be cleaned in salted water - giving them a 'home-made sea'... Since we Primorska

coast people prefer being outside to being closed up inside, this year I summoned up all my courage and went out to teach cooking in the area where the largest number of people pass by. And I struck lucky! I registered an organic and fish market right by the seashore. It was something different, unusual, so people were happy to stop... Every day I made some different little delicacy free for the children... Cooking is another thing we learn all of our lives!«

This year, too, the biggest proportion of events for the festival of learning was of course in the major towns and regional centres, thanks to a large extent to the network of LLW coordinators, especially the adult education centres, as well as certain private educational institutions and local communities, which organised a truly rich festival programme. Their contribution to promoting lifelong learning has been indeed priceless, and they should therefore also enjoy appropriate systemic (financial) support.

Life stories of those receiving awards as means of promotion

We first decided to begin making SIAE awards in order to inject into the LLW a festive dimension and to honour those individuals, groups, institutions, companies, local communities and civil society organisations active in the learning process that had achieved exceptional results in the culture of learning/education. In the years that followed, our experiences convinced us that presentations of good examples have a very great reach in terms of animating people, since they can identify with the award recipients and with their stories, and at the same time they discover that (through learning) they can open up a new chapter in their lives themselves. We publish the presentations of SIAE award recipients' achievements in a special issue of **TVU-Novičke** and on the LLW **website**, and every year we try to secure cooperation from the printed and electronic media, so that they will devote some space to this in their broadcasts and pages. We are especially pleased by the cooperation with the leading Slovenian family magazine **Niša žena (Our Woman)**, which has since 1999 produced a now traditional September supplement showcasing all the recipients, in words and pictures.

Awareness of the promotional value of life stories encouraged us to start making **video portraits**, which (since 2000) we have offered in various formats to LLW providers as separate video events or as animation aids in carrying out the LLW programme. They are also used by schools as material for civic education. In three years we have also established a range of contacts with regional and private (cable) TV stations, which are prepared to broadcast the video portraits, since in this way they obtain a half-hour free programme, and we obtain the most powerful, **TV-promotion** animation for the culture of lifelong learning. In 2004 we also took the first step into multimedia promotion of award recipients, when for the first time we ran video presentations of last year's recipients alongside the textual presentation on the web page.

Last year we invited award recipients to present to us their views on the importance of lifelong learning. We offer below some excerpts from their thoughts:

- *»How do I understand the culture of lifelong learning? I think that this is something that has always been around and always will be! Long ago, when there weren't so many books and newspapers, when I lived for a while on farms, I saw that the little reading matter people had to hand, they would still read late in life; it was only then that they had time, and they educated themselves as much as they were able. I lived in a village environment, where there was no television, something that changed everything, but I think that people are now rediscovering the advantages of reading and learning...«* asserts Vida Danica Belšak, a teacher of German, head of the German Study Circle at the Ljubljana University of the Third Age, which is a recipient of an SIAE 2004 award.
- *»Lifelong learning is very important for me«* says Ljudmila Marta Šemerl-Šmid, MSc, recipient of an SIAE 2004 award. *»I have invested a great deal of effort in it and it has also brought me a great deal of joy. In the most recent period of my life, the joy associated with learning has been brought to me mainly by beekeepers. It seems that they have fulfilled my dreams: it is not just that they have set up a beautiful education centre in which they are acquiring continuous training, it seems important to me that they are thinking ecologically, that they are adhering to sustainable development, they are thinking of the older people and are establishing inter-generational dialogue...«*
- The observations of Dr Srečko Zakrajšek, who is another recipient of an SIAE 2004 award, seem to us invaluable and quite strategically important. He says: *»I am extremely fond of lifelong learning, since we have shown that you don't have to learn everything by the age of 18, as many people still think today and for that reason goad their children mercilessly – according to the old pattern: when you are 18, you should already have learned everything necessary and you should therefore be ready for life! If we are aware that a person learns until they are 80 years old, we must spread out all the fine and necessary knowledge over a much longer period, take the burden off schools and enable young people to grow up, even to enjoy themselves, do sports, and at the same time to understand the basics which they can enhance and build upon later... If we can truly accept this pattern and build the principle of lifelong learning into the school system, then ... we will always be learning, and we will also rearrange the learning materials so that we will not be cramming everything into the early years unnecessarily!«*

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SLOVENIAN ADULT EDUCATION SCENE

Presentation of the consultation Day of Slovenian adult education centres

On 5 and 6 November 2004, the Association of Slovenian Adult Education Centres (ASAEC) organised at the Congress Centre of the Hotel Mons in Ljubljana a now traditional meeting, which we called *Adult education centres - quality in the area of adult education in the European Union*. The programme of professional development, presentation of successful projects and international consultation was supported financially by the Ministry of Education and Sport (MES).

Over two days the event was attended by around 140 participants. Slovenian experts and directors of adult education centres (AEC) were joined by numerous experts and colleagues from Austria, France, Germany and Sweden. This year for the first time we invited to the international consultation colleagues from other associations and organisations in the area of adult education in Slovenia, and more than 25 of them took up the invitation.

We devoted the **first day to training directors and professional staff** employed at the AEC. Further on, there were three workshops taking place on this day:

- Directors and professional staff, in a special working group, tackled the basis and salient points for developing quality at adult education centres. Experts from Črnomelj AEC and Koper AEC presented several very topical themes and specific practical experiences (the area of market communication, satisfaction of participants as an indicator of quality, competences of professional staff as a basis for quality work). In the final part, *Željko Čurić*, MD, gave a presentation on emotional intelligence in the area of management.
- In the second working group, following introductory presentations by experts from the Audit auditing and consultancy company of Murska Sobota, *Danica Kos*, MSc, *Darja Lehner Horvat* and *Darja Kianec*, accountancy professionals analysed and debated professional issues and problems brought by the introduction of internal auditing in public institutions in the 2005 business year. They also focused attention on planning the necessary activities in this area and seeking solutions for the joint cooperation of the ASAEC and all members in this area.
- In a special workshop, secretaries and commercial secretaries devoted themselves to the field of communication and to the role of the secretary as an important mod-

erator in the system of communication within the folk high school team. After an introductory presentation by *Daniela Brečko*, MSc, from the Gospodarski vestnik Education Centre, they focused primarily on the analysis of the current situation and on possible ways and activities for raising quality in the area of the communication system and teamwork at adult education centres.

On the conclusion of the workshops, we attended the presentation of four projects whose success has contributed significantly to raising the quality of adult education and learning:

- Ms. *Sonja Klemenčič* (SIAE) and *Nada Žagar*, MSc, (Črnomelj AEC) presented the project *Offering quality education to adults*. They gave particular emphasis to the practical results of implementing the project.
- *Regional coordination of events in LLW* was presented by *Gabi Ogulin* (RIC Novo mesto). She focused primarily on the formation of regional partnerships of provider organisations and local authorities, and on promoting adult learning in line with the strategy of lifelong learning.
- Ms. *Melita Cimerman* (Adult Education Institute of Maribor - AEC) presented the European Union project Festival of Languages. She highlighted in particular the area of marketing and promotion, and the inclusion of language learning in people's everyday lives.
- The project *Marketing in adult education in Europe*, and in particular the exchange of good practices, an analysis of the common basis and formulation of a common definition of marketing in the area of adult education in Europe, was presented by the project coordinator Bernhard Wolf (VHS Hessen Institute of Frankfurt, Germany).

The second day of the meeting was devoted to a consultation opened by the deputy mayor of the City of Ljubljana, Mr. *Miloš Pavlica*. We designed the programme so that papers were presented in two parts. In the first part, two papers were given:

- *Jože Miklavc*, MSc, secretary at the MES, summarised the development strategy and goals in the area of adult education quality in Slovenia, as defined by the Resolution on the Adult Education Master Plan;
- *Elizabeta Skuber*, secretary at the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, presented the quality and development of professional competences in the area of employment policy.

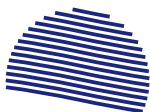
This was followed by four papers from foreign experts, who spoke about their own experiences and presented quality projects in their countries:

- Implementation of the TQM quality project at adult education centres in Germany;
- Quality and projects in the area of general informal education of younger adults in Sweden;
- Experiences and practices in the area of education for democracy in France;
- Fundamental points of emphasis in the area of the strategy of adult education quality in rural Austria.

We concluded the consultation by presenting an analysis of the situation regarding the education offered by ASAEC members and of developmental prospects. *Dr Andreja Istenič Starčič* presented the project of introducing the model of adult e-learning at adult education centres, as one of the possible further development strategies and the areas of network cooperation of adult education centres in raising quality and in ensuring common standards in the area of adult education.

Following the conclusion of the consultation and the informal chat, we also held a working meeting for representatives of the associations and education organisations of Slovenia, Germany and Sweden. At this meeting we presented and analysed the possible areas and projects of further cooperation, and set out certain specific assignments and goals for joint work in 2005.

Andrej Sotošek, MSc, (andrej.sotosek@guest.arnes.si), ASAEC



Developmental prospects

ASAEC and adult education centres in Slovenia

The paper entitled *The Association of Slovenian Adult Education Centres: situation analysis, educational trends and developmental prospects* was presented at the above mentioned international consultation *Adult education centres - quality in the area of adult education in the European Union*. Presented below are some excerpts from the paper.

In the *national development programme*, which was adopted by Slovenia back in 2001, we noted that we wished to become «...a knowledge-based society with an internationally competitive economy and with sustainable, regionally balanced development». We cannot define adult education in Slovenia without recourse to the Lisbon Strategy, which among other things envisages an increased proportion of adults involved in education, and the Adult Education Act, which provides declaratory regulation of adult education in Slovenia. This year also saw the *Resolution on the Adult Education Master Plan*, which is founded on the concept of lifelong learning. Highlighted below is the role of the adult education centres in fulfilling the Resolution, from which three priority areas may be discerned:

- Raising general education and in this way the literacy level,
- Raising the educational level of the population,
- Education and training for the needs of the labour market.

Programmes for raising the general educational and cultural level of the population represent an important part of folk high school activities. These are programmes for active citizenship, healthy living, personal development, environmental protection and more. According to the statistics, their number and scope of provision at adult education centres is growing. In the 2001/2002 academic year we recorded a 21 % growth in these programmes. In the same year we have recorded a 48 % growth in publicly recognised programmes, and the number of people participating in these programmes has grown by as much as 178 %.

Primary education for adults, which represents the other priority area, is provided exclusively at adult education centres. We are successfully providing the nine-year programme, although many systemic and regulatory issues remain unresolved. Of exceptional importance is the fact that by providing secondary education for adults who complete their primary education, adult education centres also facilitate an easier progression to a higher level of education.

In the **area of infrastructural activities** adult education centres are providers of programmes such as: study circles, Lifelong Learning Week (LLW), Learning for enhanced life efficiency, learning exchange, Project Learning for Young Adults (PLYA), IGAE – information and guidance in adult education, and more.

I could summarise by saying that without the good work of the adult education centres, we cannot expect to fulfil the goals of the Resolution, let alone make any significant progress in the areas mentioned.

At the ASAEC we have therefore set ourselves certain priority development goals, with which we wish to maintain, develop and strengthen the importance and role of the adult education centres and make a major contribution towards fulfilling Slovenia's developmental goals in the area of adult education.

Commercial linking of association members is generally project-based, and is founded on the interests of the members involved. Currently underway are several programmes (*Socrates, Grundtvig, Phare 2001, Phare small projects*) which enjoy the participation of individual members which have joined together in the project through the ASAEC, and also a joint project for all members entitled *Informatizacija ASAEC (Computerisation of the ASAEC)*.

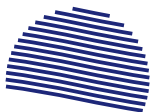
Another permanent priority goal is **ensuring and raising quality in adult education**, which is closely linked to **drawing up and formulating common standards**. The heritage of the adult education centres serves as a starting point, since they have been operating for the most part for almost half a century, and continuous professional development represents a foundation for maintaining and raising quality. The priority task of

all members is strengthening our trademark. Members of the ASAEC cooperate professionally at home and abroad, and exchange knowledge and experiences. The ASAEC systematically organises professional training for all professional staff employed at adult education centres. The ASAEC programme of work also includes the organisation and implementation of expert meetings, especially with colleagues from European Union countries and even broader. In this way, last year we visited colleagues in France and Italy, and in the coming year we are planning to visit Sweden and Germany.

All together - both the individual members and the ASAEC - we are **adjusting to the method of project financing**. We are successfully participating in the project *Grundtvig 2: Marketing in adult education in Europe* and in promoting e-learning. In these projects we are not linking up just with colleagues from the European Union countries, but are also cooperating significantly in project groups of the SIAE and the Ministry of Education and Sport.

The adult education centres and the ASAEC have clearly defined developmental goals, we have elaborated a strategy for achieving them, we are well equipped for the journey, which we know will not be easy, and we therefore anticipate responsible and reliable partners in those institutions whose domain is adult education.

Brigita Kruder, MSc, (brigita.kruder@lu-sb.si), president of ASAEC



Will the policy of lifelong learning continue to increase social differences?

Educating elderly people supports local, economic and social development, and ensures social cohesion

The colloquium *Will the policy of lifelong learning continue to increase social differences* took place in a small town of Ajdovščina in Western Slovenia at the end of November 2004 and was organised by the local Third Age University.

Not only has The Slovenian Third Age University grown into the most numerous¹ voluntary educational movement of adults in the country over the last twenty years, but

¹ It incorporates 35 universities throughout the country, 19,740 elderly students and also long-term unemployed elderly workers, plus several hundred mentors and volunteers.

it has also induced many crucial changes in Slovenian adult education. Presently, it is one of the few organised structures in this country where older and younger people can learn from each other and construct new knowledge together. Alongside younger mentors there are also older, socially marginalized but often outstanding experts who act as mentors and/or students. Within the structure of the Slovenian Third Age University they have found an opportunity to transfer their knowledge to different generations - i.e. to younger generations and various generations of elderly people - and to offer it, at the same time, to the local, national and even international environment.

In a knowledge-based society, access to lifelong learning is a condition for economic growth of a healthy and cohesive society (Co-financing lifelong education, OECD, 2004). Here the question arises of *how to ensure an appropriate level of investment in lifelong learning at different governmental levels (municipal and national) and consequently also in the education of elderly adults; how to fairly distribute chances to learn among different adult age groups; and how to create out of a predominantly maintained group of the elderly a group firmly integrated into society.*

The effects of educating elderly adults are demonstrated in their extensive contribution to local, economic and social development; they can be seen in their personal growth and also in the consequent growth of knowledge in other generations. This is only partly true because the transfer of knowledge goes both ways from older to younger generations and vice versa resulting in their common constructing of new knowledge and better skills. This can also result in a marked easing of the burden on various national and local budget items. Namely, older people who progress, and who gain a better understanding of themselves and the world through education, transform themselves from a »social burden« into an integrated group participating significantly in the advancement of all.

To date adult education has to a large extent been aimed primarily at those who in one way or another already had a better position in society, mostly employed university graduates. However, if societies do not succeed in increasing the participation of de-privileged social groups in lifelong learning, it might actually happen that the lifelong learning policy will further increase social differences, no matter how well-conceived it is.

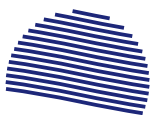
Financing is one of the fundamental political levers to tackle these changes. Representatives of the third age universities at the Colloquium have drawn attention to the fact that the area of educating older adults - older people are now the largest social group in Slovenia - requires a changed policy or policies. The Slovenian Third Age University has been a member of the European PEFETE PROJECT and has contributed towards a Proposal for a European Educational Policy for the Elderly in an Ageing Society.

There is a need for extensive empirical research to measure the impact of this education on economic growth and social cohesion, and at the same time to enable further formulation of the concept and application of findings in practice.

Furthermore, there is a need for measures that will enable budget support, which will (help to) ensure continuity of this education. Given the scope of the programme and the number of participants, mentors and volunteers, the third age universities are in fact changing into barely manageable (semi-)institutions. Therefore on mere funds obtained through contracts, and through performing additional work to suit the changing whims and needs of finance providers. Their activity is permanent and extensive, it meets professional criteria and cannot rely merely on extensive voluntary work and occasional, uncertain and negligibly low co-funding. Moreover, *an asymmetry arises here, whereby the effects of educating older people are enjoyed to a large extent by the local community, while the co-financing from municipalities is inappropriately low.*

At the colloquium in Ajdovščina, representatives of the third age universities declared that they were preparing an extensive public campaign to contribute towards understanding the importance of educating older people for all generations and for economic and social development.

Dr Dušana Findeisen (dusana.findeisen@guest.arnes.si),
The Slovenian Third Age University and Faculty of Arts,
Department of Pedagogy and Andragogy



Evaluation of Learning and New Approaches to Learning

Is there a danger that acquisition of a national vocational qualification through the certification system will require participation in predefined training programs?

The fundamental reason for the introduction of the certification system in Slovenia was to provide adults with economic and social recognition of all their knowledge and skills, regardless of how they had acquired them. The advantage of the certification system is that adults do not have to participate in pre-defined training programmes to obtain formal vocational qualifications. Instead, they can choose different paths to

acquire the necessary knowledge and skills. Taking into account the need for workers in individual employment segments and the high percentage of the working population without formal qualifications, we anticipated a greater response to this opportunity than shown in actual demand, both on the part of employers as well as individuals.

There could be different reasons for the small number of qualifications obtained through the certification system. In general, it takes a considerable length of time for a new qualification to win its market value; some of them never become highly valued in the employment market. For employers, the credibility of these qualifications – and the related costs – play an important role. Of course, we cannot avoid the questions of who is responsible for the validity of the qualification and which interest groups can promote the new qualification or hinder its recognition. For individuals, it is undoubtedly of paramount importance how the new qualification will pay off, both materially and non-materially. In Slovenia to date, no evaluation dealing with these issues has been carried out, and thus we can only speculate about the actual situation and the reasons for it:

- In terms of the demand of individuals, the fact that national vocational qualifications (NVQs) are still not considered in the wage system is certainly significant. The holders of qualifications do not know what, if any, the benefits are of a qualification in material terms.
- On the other hand, certain certification and examination bodies are no longer prepared to perform examination and certification procedures, as the officially set price does not cover their expenses.
- Perhaps the system is not interesting, either for employers or for individuals, because it is limited to lower levels of qualifications.

The Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs (MLFSA), responsible for the certification system, considers NVQs to be among important measures of active employment policy, specifically as a means to increase the employability of unemployed and surplus workers (*10,000+ Programme*) and as a way to promote lifelong learning (*Resolution on the Master Plan of Adult Education*). With the *10,000+ Programme* (up until 2003, the *5,000 Programme*), it was anticipated for the 2003/2004 school year that 2,100 unemployed and surplus workers would improve their formal qualifications via the certification system. Unfortunately, the goal was not reached. Similarly for 2004/2005, the *10,000+ Programme* envisages the participation of 2,100 people in the certification system. This undoubtedly requires additional measures to promote the acquisition of NVQs. Lately, representatives of MLFSA and the Employment Service of Slovenia have been encouraging adult education providers to design training programmes as preparation for the NVQs. In itself, this should not necessarily be viewed critically. Lastly, we can assume that not all those participating in the accreditation procedures obtain certificates due to a lack of knowledge and skills. Advisers can direct these individuals to appropriate vocational education/training programmes

where they will acquire the missing knowledge and skills. However, promotion of the development of special vocational education and training programmes leading to NVQs can have other, undesirable consequences, particularly if the providers of such programmes also administer accreditation procedures. It could readily happen that access to the accreditation procedure could become conditional on participation in a specific training programme. If we further establish procedures for choosing which providers can hold VET programmes, such a danger is even more likely, particularly if there are no measures planned for preventing this. We can expect, and not just because of special initiatives, that adult education providers will begin to develop programmes that will take into account the standards of knowledge and skills defined in the certification system. In order to ensure standards of quality and equal access, we would also have to ensure that the provision of educational programmes and accreditation procedures remain separate. The same institution should not be the provider of both assessment and accreditation procedures, and preparatory training programmes for the same NVQ. To be certain that the certification system will continue to achieve its basic mission – ensuring economic and social recognition of prior knowledge and experience that was informally acquired in different environments – we should in practice not allow the accreditation procedure to be linked to a predefined preparatory programme. Of course, the acquisition of NVQ would also be possible through participation in a preparatory programme, but only as a possible option.

In the spirit of European guidelines, the identification and validation of knowledge and learning exists in all environments, the educational environment being only one of them. Ensuring the credibility and relevance of qualifications obtained should enhance the attractiveness of the certification system. The constant verification and improvement of standards for knowledge and skills, further development and refinement of methods of accreditation, along with high level of expertise of examiners, would ensure that the qualifications are up-to-date. At the same time, social partners should also ensure that the investments of individuals in NVQs will also result in suitable material benefits (better wages). This, specifically, is the most obvious indication that the employment system recognises NVQs, not only formally, but also in practice.

Dr Angela Ivančič (aivancic@acs.si), SIAE



INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

The Grundtvig 4 project Participation in the International Adult Learners' Forum

Holding an *international forum*¹ is one of the three activities of the *Learners' Voices* working group within the project *Grundtvig 4: International Adult Learners' Week in Europe - IntALWinE*. The purpose of this meeting was to familiarise the representatives of participating countries - adult learners - with the role of the forums and the skills that are needed to function within such a group. Based on the example of the British national forum and with the help of its experienced members, participants should acquire training to carry out similar forums in their own countries. Slovenia was represented by Ms. *Dušica Kunaver*, recipient of an SIAE award in 2002, whereas I myself attended the forum in order to gain as much information as possible on the procedure for holding the forum and its method of functioning, since we would like to set up the first forum(s) in Slovenia in the year 2005.

The international forum was led by two external associates of the NIACE², Sue Duffen and *Val Saunders*, who designed the activities in a very dynamic way, and based them on group work. The atmosphere was relaxed, and something that appeared at the beginning to be like a game bore fruit and brought new awareness. In practical cases we practiced the skills of listening, group work and presentation of views, while our fundamental goal was to identify the essence of the forum and acquire the ability to establish and manage it. We defined the forum as a form of coming together of adult learners, where participants could on the basis of their experiences and awareness have discussions with experts, education providers and those who on various levels decide on these things. The subject of such an exchange of opinions is not just the context of education, but everything related to participating in education.

A successful adult learner and even more successful member (former president) of the British national forum, *John Gates*, presented the roles that learners can take on in promoting participation in education. The learner can be: an enthusiast, activist, adviser, advocate, ambassador, champion, mentor and tutor. This last role means that the learner has returned to the education process, but now as a teacher.

¹ The forum was held in the residential education centre of Knuston Hall, Northamptonshire, United Kingdom, from 3 to 6 October 2004.

² NIACE - The National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (England and Wales)

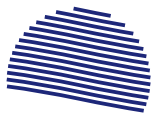
A panel part of the meeting was also organised, and here in particular the coordinators asked their British colleagues about how to proceed in implementing the forum and how to monitor its work. The roles of the SIAE and NIACE could be similar, so I was interested in how the NIACE encouraged the creation of a national forum. I learned that they started from the list of their award recipients asking them whether they would be willing to be involved in promotional and advocacy work. NIACE of course took care to ensure equal representation of regions, genders and age groups. They also told us that they pay the costs of transport and accommodation for forum participants, and they also offer them various forms of training and professional assistance, administrative support and access to the network of institutions with which NIACE cooperates. In exchange for this, NIACE gains the support of forum members whenever there is a need for media or other appearances. While their local forums are focused more on issues of what education is on offer and on the possibilities for taking advantage of it, the national forum is also involved in lobbying – members participate in numerous committees and meet with politicians.

We concluded the meeting with an action plan for the future:

- Under the IntALWinE project we will produce an international publication which will collect learners' stories from each country (by May 2005).
- As part of the British ALW (21 to 27 May 2005) forum participants will meet up again and verify what has happened in individual countries in the meantime. At the May meeting we expect to formulate a vision of the International Forum of Adult Learners, and we will attempt to find ways of announcing the new project, which would facilitate regular meetings and also support for implementing forums in individual countries.
- In the meantime in individual countries we will try to take steps towards implementing the forum.

In closing I should also mention that Ms. *Dušica Kunaver* was an excellent representative of Slovenia, involving herself actively in all aspects of the meeting and delighting participants with her warmth and wisdom. On her return to Slovenia she took part in the ceremonial opening of LLW 2004 and in the press conference, and in the future we will join forces to set out the first steps towards establishing the forum as part of LLW 2005.

Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik, MSc, (zvonka.pangerc@acs.si), SIAE



International Adult Learners' Forum

Highlights of the meeting

The world is becoming increasingly »small«, and there are no longer distances in time and space. Millions of people across the world are conversing by means of computers, as if they were sitting together at the same table. The days when the apprentice became the master and then jealously guarded his knowledge all his life have gone. Gone also are the days when the school diploma signalled the end of formal education. Today it signals just the beginning of a vocational path and the start of some other learning – the kind that keeps a person's head above water, enabling him to swim with the current that is now washing over the world through globalisation.

With all this rapid »swimming« we encounter the essential question of how to acquire continuously increasing knowledge in the shortest time. Modern teachers mingle with the students and together they acquire knowledge by investigating. In the second – lifelong – period, the boundaries between teacher and student are less and less evident. The teacher becomes a mentor, adviser and guide for acquiring new knowledge. With this new role of the teacher, and with the »explosion« of a huge quantity of new knowledge in all areas of human activity, a need has arisen that binds the world in seeking out the best, shortest and most interesting paths to knowledge. The need to modernise the approach to knowledge has become a global issue.

As part of the effort to find this and put it into practice, the International Adult Learners' Forum was set up. The meeting was attended by more than 15 participants from 12 countries; *Ms. Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik*, and myself, we represented Slovenia.

We returned from the meeting with new and fascinating experiences, as well as with self-confidence at the realisation that many forms of learning which we heard about, are already in everyday practice of adult education in Slovenia.

The programme of our three-day gathering was fascinating for me, especially the beginning. The participants really got to know each other at the very first meeting. Above all we had to remember everyone's name and some interesting features about each individual there. Then we had an interesting game in which we mingled with each other and asked each other questions until we found out who »likes gardening, who is learning Dutch, who loves their dog, who wants to become a kindergarten teacher« and so on. In this fun way we guessed »who's who«, and in doing so we got to know each other and became friends.

This was followed by a promise that we would respect the basic rules of our meeting: we would stick precisely to the timetable, we would be considerate to each other and we would support each other in carrying out assignments. Our biggest distinction at the meeting would therefore be mutual solidarity and comradeship, and not competitiveness. We would learn how to listen to each other properly: we would watch body language and eye contact, we would always sit in a circle, we would encourage the speaker with nods when we agreed, we would express disagreement with what had been said openly, but with consideration, and so on.

There were no »ex cathedra« lectures at our meeting. Work was conducted in small groups. This is without doubt the best way of learning. The individual is more effective in a small group, he can learn to express his opinion and at the same time learns a responsibility to the group and its tasks. After talking within the group, we formulated important points and then wrote them down. Through discussion, knowledge was »broadened«, and through written summaries it was »shrunk« down to its essence.

Each group had one British facilitator, who jumped in quietly any time that we got »off the track«, and then the train moved ahead.

Amusing games created a friendly atmosphere, and in this way they taught us that little games can actually lead to very specific results, and above all they contribute to creativity and mutual cooperation. Just to illustrate, let me describe one such game: each group was given their own room, around ten sheets of an old newspaper, a roll of sticky tape, scissors and five paper clips. Our assignment was to make the highest possible Eiffel Tower. For a while we just stared, bewildered and despairing, and then someone shouted out: »Why don't we make bags for chestnuts from the newspapers?« We dived into the old newspapers, and bag upon bag produced an Eiffel Tower! The neighbouring group covered one of their members, a tall and slim girl, with newspapers, and she became their Eiffel Tower – even taller than ours! But we didn't mind a bit.

When we arrived in Northamptonshire we were acquaintances, but we left as old friends. This is without doubt the nicest achievement for a meeting of people from such different countries and with such differing lifestyles.

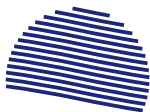
And finally this experience to end with: when you look down from the air on London, that huge city of sixteen million, you realise the significance of your own small country. We Slovenians number no more than two million. Not even enough to make up a London suburb. We can muster a paltry two million people, but we have world famous sports people and scientists of world standing. In the toughest encounters with the natural world, Slovenians are in fact world leaders. In top alpinism, skiing, super marathons, swimming the longest rivers and so on, Slovenian names are up there at the top of the world ladder. And in science, too – relative to our numbers and capaci-

ty - we record enviable successes. There are even doctors of science among our sports world record holders.

Do we know how to take pride in all these achievements of our nation? We still have to learn this! And we still have to learn a lot of things!

Lifelong learning, facilitated by the SIAE and hundreds of different institutions without doubt raises significantly the quality of life in our country. It lends a new substance to the third age, it trains personnel for the requirements of their jobs, it raises everyone's personal worth and builds a better tomorrow.

Dušica Kunaver (info@dk-sp.si), Ljubljana



SOCRATES - Grundtvig 3 seminar

Project management: how e-learning can be planned and implemented in organisations

Within the organisation INTER-ES we have been actively involved since 2000 in the development of e-learning - at first owing to our own needs, since we wished to make it easier for our students from the professional sales college to study alongside their everyday work and family obligations. To begin with we developed a web environment in support of educational management (LMS - Learning management system), and gradually we also added individual modules for e-learning (LCMS - Learning content management system) (<http://www.inter-es.si>).

In order to determine what stage of development we have reached, and also to obtain further information on this field, in March 2004 I applied for a grant under the *Socrates - Grundtvig 3* programme, specifically to participate in a course entitled *E-learning - project management: how e-learning can be planned and implemented in organisations*, held in Prague from 2 to 7 November 2004.

The course was not limited simply to these six days; we already had preparatory activities before the start of the course, and concluding activities continued on our return home. Everything was conducted via the BSCW (basic system for corporate work) web environment, and within this framework we were able to obtain the desired information, get to know each other and upon conclusion to carry out the allocated assignment.

The main emphasis of the course was on establishing effective project management in planning and implementing e-learning in organisations. To begin with we were given a presentation on the general theory of project management and of the tools that are used in this, then this was all incorporated into the development of the e-learning project, within which we were shown all the steps in the process of development for such a project: forming a working group, marketing, gathering funds and establishing public relations. We then combined all these steps to formulate a practical business plan for setting up e-learning in a hypothetical organisation.

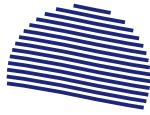
Why is carefully planned project management important in introducing e-learning in an organisation? Usually, the instruction to implement e-learning in an organisation comes out of the blue, expectations are very high, and the managers want big results for the least possible financial input, while generally they know little about it, and there are also (excessively) high expectations that e-learning will make everything better. Which projects succeed? Those that included the end user, clearly defined and understood requirements, efficient planning and realistic expectations of success. An efficient organisational project management structure for establishing e-learning in an organisation must comprise experts in internal and external marketing, experts in the area of finance and legal regulations, computer programmers, tutors, teachers of e-content design and, of course, a leader, who will be the link between the organisation and the e-learning project group.

As I already mentioned earlier, we had to use the knowledge gained at the actual course in drawing up a business plan for transferring e-learning into a hypothetical organisation. We divided ourselves up into groups depending on the type of organisation in which we were working. Within our team we divided up the assignments for drawing up a business plan. On our return home we were given four weeks to draw up the business plan. The work of individual working groups was conducted via the aforementioned BSCW web environment, and within this the work of each individual in the team was visible. When the project was concluded, we published it, so others could then also see it and comment on it.

The course provided me not just with a wealth of new knowledge, but also with an insight into the systems of e-learning in the other countries from which the participants came (Romania, Greece, Bulgaria, Italy and Belgium). And most importantly I gained a large number of new acquaintances and possibilities for future mutual cooperation.

Participation on this course was a very rich and welcome experience for me, so I hope that I will be able to take part in this kind of education again some time.

Jana Jan (jana@inter-es.si), INTER-ES, d.o.o.



Grundtvig 4: International Adult Learners' Week **IntALWinE third working meeting and opportunity for lobbying**

The national coordinators of festivals of learning from 14 countries attended the third meeting of the project group *IntALWinE (International Adult Learners' Week in Europe)*, and for the first time we were joined by participants from Spain and Hungary.

The first part of our stay at Maastricht in the Netherlands was devoted to participation in the informative day *A bridge from policy to practice – from Copenhagen to Maastricht*, which was aimed at presenting Leonardo da Vinci projects. The event was a component part of the ministerial conference on the future of vocational education and training in Europe. We presented the *IntALWinE project* in the exhibition space, where we offered promotional festival material from all the partner countries, and information on national and international projects in this field. We also organised a one-hour workshop, at which we presented our joint project in general, and highlighted in particular the results of the working groups. Sadly there were relatively few participants at the workshop, which confirmed our fear that such a contribution in events that are otherwise aimed at promoting vocational education and training will not be noticed or interesting for visitors.

The second part of the meeting was devoted to a review of assignments undertaken and to formulating an action plan for individual working groups:

- **Learners' Voices Group** (collaboration of representatives from the United Kingdom, Norway and Slovenia)
We set the date and content for the study visit to Adult Learners' Week in the UK (22 to 26 May 2005), which will be attended by members of the International Learners' Forum. We agreed on the content and structure of the international publication *Learning journeys*, which will appear in May 2005 and will bring together life stories from successful adults in each participating country.
- **Examples of Good and Bad Practices Group**
Group members will draft a questionnaire aimed at collecting successful and less successful approaches to preparing and carrying out festivals of learning. Examples will be gathered from all the partner countries and presented in a simple way on our common website. The survey will also be extended to other European countries that are members of the learning festivals' movement.
- **Forms of Cooperation Group**
Members of the group will formulate strategic and operational guidelines for cooperation with the media, sponsors, providers and politicians. They will proceed from

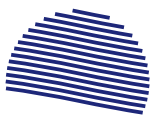
the Manual for LLW Coordination, a result of cooperation in the *LLW-Grundtvig 1* project, which was headed by the SIAE from 2000–2004¹. All partners will supplement the guidelines in the light of their experiences.

- **Evaluation Group**

The task of this group is to draw up systematic methods of evaluating the effects of learning festivals. Group members tackled this task by first defining the three fundamental aims of learning festivals: activating and motivating non-participants in education and learning, spreading awareness of the importance of adult education and contributing to raising the profile of adult education/lifelong learning. We all agreed that achieving these goals could not be measured merely in terms of quantity, so there was a need also to take into consideration qualitative methods. We set up a structure: needs analysis and definition of goals; activity; target group; possible method(s) of evaluation. Through joint efforts we will fill in this table with activities we are carrying out in our festivals, and we will define them in terms of the aforementioned categories. Based on a review of existing and potential new methods of evaluation, group members for individual activities will propose the most appropriate methods of evaluation. Here, too, one of the starting points will be the evaluation model developed in the aforementioned *LLW-Grundtvig 1* project.

A great deal of work therefore awaits us before the next meeting this June in Iceland, while we may be able to make good use of many things already now in preparing this year's festivals of learning.

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Study Tour

Adult education in Wales

From 20 to 25 February 2005, a nine-member group from the SIAE took part in an interesting study tour of Wales. The visit was hosted by UK's *National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (NIACE)* which is involved in education and training after the completion of full-time education; in this it cooperates with institutions in other areas whose strategies envisage education of the adult population. The basic areas of inter-

¹ The project *Widening and Strengthening the European Dimension of the Lifelong Learning Week* was led by Slovenia and saw the participation of Bulgaria, Germany, Romania, Spain and Switzerland (as a 'sleeping partner').

est for NIACE are: the system, planning and financing of adult education in Wales, education out of/for the needs of work, learning in the civil society, local provision of education services, programmes with college and university-level courses aimed at adults and so forth.

In the five days of the visit we became acquainted with the system, planning, financing, implementing and evaluating of adult education in the region, and certain target groups as well. The model of adult education in Wales has a pyramid shape, with the national priorities occupying the peak and those of individual local communities at the bottom. The model is a combination of the 'top-down' and 'bottom-up' approach, meaning that the state formulates priority tasks, while the local communities, by fulfilling their own strategies, which are adjusted to the national priority tasks, contribute to their performance. At the same time they cooperate in creating and adopting the national goals.

Alongside a presentation of the concept, we were provided continuously with examples of good practices, since through visiting a wide range of institutions and providers of more or less formal types of adult education on the local level, we had the chance to form our own perceptions about how this system works in practice.

Below I offer a brief presentation of just some of the institutions we visited during the study tour:

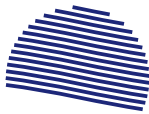
- **Powerhouse** - this institution operates in a less developed part of Cardiff, and strives to include in educational programmes in particular unemployed persons, older adults, single parents and groups of adults from less developed environments who encounter a wide variety of problems in their everyday lives or at work.
- **Gwent College** in the town of Usk is the largest institution in Wales, with approximately 35,000 individuals attending and around 1,400 employees. The college incorporates six campuses and two centres for acquiring skills in the area of information technology. The college operates over a wide region (five local areas), so in planning and formulating the curriculum it cooperates closely with the local authorities. The Education Act for Wales defines compulsory self-evaluation for those educational organisations that are financed from public funds. So the Gwent College must also perform regular self-evaluation, or rather it must have an established system for ensuring quality. Although this act has been in force since 2000, the college has been already working to ensure quality before then, setting its own quality standards which it endeavoured to attain and in this way improving its own range of provision.
- At the campus of **The Settlement in Pontypool** we met tutors and course participants. This centre offers a diverse range of non-formal education programmes, and particular emphasis is given to programmes for improving basic skills (such as computer programmes). One of their distinguishing features is the products of the

patchwork making courses, which are displayed in the centre's entrance hall.

- **The Cynon Valley Museum** has been in operation since 1996, and aims primarily to promote the history of the relatively undeveloped mining valley. The museum offers a wide variety of education programmes, since it is designed as a local learning centre, with courses covering a multitude of fields related to mining, health, education, religion, entertainment and family life in the valley. The museum also aims to promote the Welsh language and offers free courses for all residents of the valley. It obtains funds from three sources: local authorities, European structural funds and national funds.
- At the **school of Rhondda Cynon Taf** a programme of family literacy has been provided now for seven years. This has been funded by the regional authority and is free for parents (participating in the programme). It lasts 60 hours a year, and classes are held in the school premises once a week. The purpose of the programme is to facilitate for parents the highest possible quality methods of forming agreements, understanding and helping children to learn, and resolving life problems.

During this excellently organised and thoroughly prepared five-day programme, we had the chance to familiarise ourselves with a significant part of the system and practice of adult education. We were also provided with interesting materials. The organisers of our Study Tour and all the providers of education programmes that we visited in Wales inspired us with their hospitality and their willingness to cooperate.

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New international development project

Applied maths for adults: *Mathematics in Action*

Since last December the SIAE has been cooperating in a new European project within the framework of the *Grundtvig 1 programme: Mathematics in Action - MiA*, which deals with the learning of mathematics by less educated adults. Alongside Denmark, which is the project coordinator, this three-year project has been joined by Lithuania, Hungary, the Netherlands, Norway, Slovenia and Spain.

The project is a continuation of *Adults Learn Mathematics Across Borders - ALMAB*, a project that ended in October 2003. That saw the cooperation of three organisations from countries that are now also included in the MiA project. The ALMAB project dealt

primarily with the collection, adaptation and exchange of material for adults learning mathematics. This gave rise to a manual which contains examples of good practices¹.

In the project *Mathematics in Action*, which aims to improve the mathematical capability of adults and (functional) mathematical literacy, the cooperating partners research various methods of learning the basics of mathematics among adults, especially outside the school environment. Based on examples of good practices, proposals will be made for effective learning and teaching of mathematics in formal and non-formal adult education.

The **Manual for Teachers**, which the cooperating organisations are preparing, will be composed of two parts:

- the **theoretical part** will gather together findings from research on the learning of mathematics in life situations in all seven countries;
- the **second part** will feature examples of alternative methods of learning and teaching mathematics, which will be tested and evaluated in practice during the project.

The aim will be to present to mathematics teachers models for taking into account in the education process different life situations in which adults encounter mathematical problems, and in which they also learn, such as at the work place, in the family and in their wider environment.

The project focuses primarily on adult participants in education who have gained insufficient mathematical knowledge and skills, adults who have forgotten this knowledge after leaving school, and on teachers of mathematics in non-formal and secondary vocational adult education. Each participating country has therefore included in the project two teachers of mathematics to adults, and these teachers will be active participants at international meetings as part of the project and will cooperate in testing models in practice.

Mathematics in Action is one of the rare projects dealing on the European level with learning mathematics among less educated adults. In truth a variety of international research has shown that among certain groups of adults, mathematical skills do not meet the requirements of technological progress. International research into literacy² from 1998 shows that in Slovenia, 65 % of adults between 16 and 65 are below the international average in their ability to perform calculations. Adult education teachers themselves also frequently find that the education programmes in which adults

¹ Groenestjin, M. Ed.: *Adults Learning Mathematics Across Borders*. 's-Hertogenbosch, 2003.

² Možina, E.: *Pismenost odraslih v Sloveniji* (Adult Literacy in Slovenia). *Ib magazine*. ISSN 1318-2803. 34 : 3-4 (2000) 28-40.

learn mathematics are not as effective as they would like them to be. Adults usually do not see a connection between learning mathematics at school and its applicability in everyday life.

Further information on the project can be found at: <http://www.statvoks.no/mia/>.

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SLOVENIA FROM NOVIČKE TO NOVIČKE

More secondary schools pupils, more students¹ According to the numbers in continuing education, we are already on a level with the developed countries

The educational profile of Slovenia's population is improving. The percentage of young people aged 20-24 years who had attained at least upper secondary education (i.e. with an education level ISCED 3-4 minimum) in 2003 was 90.7 %. The percentage of the adult population (25-64 years old) that had completed at least upper secondary education was 76.8 %. Women are better educated than men and have, by and large, an education better suited to the requirements of the work they do. The best educated are those employed in the area of education and public administration, and the unemployed are still less educated than those in employment. More than 15 % of persons aged 25 to 64 was in some form of education or training in 2003.

A new act introducing a certification was passed in 2000. It enables the assessment and verification of vocation-related knowledge, skills and experiences acquired out of school. It thus makes it possible for individuals to obtain a vocational qualification in ways other than through formal schooling. Candidates undergo a knowledge assessment procedure by a special commission to obtain a state-approved certificate (called certifikat in Slovenian) attesting their competence in performing certain vocational tasks. Vocational qualifications obtained in this way can be used by their holders to find a job or, in further training, demonstrating that part of an education programme has already been mastered.

Altogether 98 % of primary school leavers decide to continue their education, and 84 % of secondary school leavers go on to tertiary education. With regard to secondary education, more and more pupils are opting for four-years secondary school programmes. There are twice as many students in higher education as there were at the beginning of the nineties. The number of graduates is increasing too: in 1998 there were 50 % more than in 1990. The number of graduates in the year 2000 for the first time ever exceeded 10,000. Life-long learning is also increasing. Adults attend universities, educational and study centres, schools and higher education establishments, as well as courses organized by companies, administrative bodies, organizations and societies. Adult programmes are organised within schools and outside them, education can be formal or informal, and there is also organised self-learning.

¹ Source: <http://www.uvi.si/eng/slovenia/publications/facts-book/booklet.pdf>

God's blessing on all nations,
Who long and work for a bright day,
When o'er earth's habitations
No war, no strife shall hold its sway;
Who long to see
That all men free
No more shall foes, but neighbours be.

F. Prešeren: The Toast
Slovenian national anthem

