

# novičke

## Winter 2006

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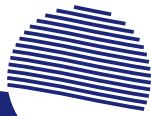
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## PROGRAMME BASIS OF NOVIČKE

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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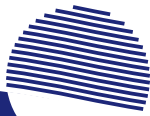
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## Christmas Greetings

Dear friends!

2007 will be an exceptional year, since it will mark the introduction of the euro, preparations for the Slovenian Presidency of the European Union and the start of new financial prospects. We will prepare the Action Plan for *Adult Education* and our national *report on implementing the Lisbon strategy*. For our Institute it will also be an opportunity to reflect on the achievements of our 15-year endeavours in the field of adult education. We will work this anniversary by a number of professional events. This will be a truly exceptional year with a wealth of activity.

I hope that you too will have an outstanding year in accepting learning challenges, rich in achieving personal wishes and generously endowed with the little pleasures that brighten your day.

For 2007 I wish you abundant luck, health and success; may December's luxury and joy remain in your hearts throughout the year, and may tolerance and love enrich your daily lives and work.

Dr Slavica Černoša, acting director of the SIAE

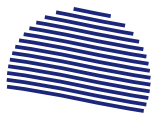


## **SIAE EVENTS**

### **Dr Slavica Černoša takes over management New management of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education**

At its session on 24 August 2006, the government of RS adopted a resolution agreeing to the appointment of Dr Slavica Alojzija Černoša as acting director of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, from 25 July 2006 until the appointment of a director on the basis of a re-advertisement, but for a maximum of one year.

Slavica Černoša graduated in Serbo-Croatian and Sociology from the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, and gained her master's degree from the Faculty of Organizational Sciences in Kranj. She defended her doctoral thesis entitled *Development and progression of educational and adult-educational staff with emphasis on adult education* in 2000 at the Faculty of Organizational Sciences in Kranj. From 1998 to 2003, Slavica Černoša was assistant director for continuing professional training, head of department at the National Education Institute of RS; from 2003-2005 she was coordinator for Education & Training 2010 at the Education Development Office at the Ministry of Education and Sport; and for the last year she has been employed as head of the Department for Adult Education at the Ministry of Education and Sport. She took up her post at the SIAE on 1 September this year. She succeeded Dr Vida A. Mohorčič Špolar, who resigned as director on 25 July 2006.

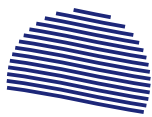


### **Web review of adult education Review of adult education available in Slovenia 2006/2007**

At the end of August, we published on the website of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (<http://www.acs.si/pregled/>, Slovenian language only) a Review of available adult education, offering adults much information on opportunities for education and learning in the new school year. Once again this year, there was a great response from providers, with the Review covering over 300 different adult-education providers offering more than 6,200 educational programmes. Most providers are private organisations and private educational institutions, secondary schools and adult

education units at secondary schools, folk highschool, further and higher professional education colleges and faculties, but you will also find numerous other institutions, such as public libraries, museums and galleries, universities of the third age, societies and associations of societies and many others offering a wide range of interesting educational content. The extensive and rich range of programmes available include educational programmes leading to a higher level of education, enabling training and additional training for work purposes, or helping provide knowledge for individuals' overall development and improving the quality of life in communities. To provide a more comprehensive survey of available education, we added to the Review other important information on adult education and learning, such as independent learning centres, knowledge exchanges, adult education guidance centres and centres for vocational information and guidance, operating around Slovenia.

Erika Brenk ([erika.brenk@acs.si](mailto:erika.brenk@acs.si)), SIAE



## We will reward organisations and individuals **SIAE Awards for outstanding efforts in the development of quality in adult education**

In our work, all of us involved in adult education continually encounter issues of quality. It is essential for the further development of Slovenia that our citizens acquire the knowledge, abilities and skills that will enable them to achieve the results that will allow us to compete in the international economy while ensuring suitable personal and social well-being at home. We can and must make our contribution to realising these goals in the area of adult education. Today in Slovenia there are many educational organisations and individuals who are already well aware of this responsibility and are doing much to fulfil it.

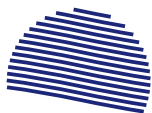
The Slovenian Institute for Adult Education Awards for outstanding efforts in the development of quality in adult education – awarded next year for the first time – are intended for just such organisations and individuals making outstanding efforts towards planned and comprehensive development of quality adult education. The new awards join the established SIAE Awards for outstanding learning and professional achievements in adult education. Through these awards we want to recognise those exceptional organisations and individuals making a major contribution to the development of quality adult education in Slovenia. The awards are intended for those organisations that plan for quality, that have special organised groups for quality and quality devel-

opment plans, that regularly assess quality and respond to the findings, that learn much about how to improve the quality of their work etc. A more precise model is defined by twelve criteria that an educational organisation must meet to be eligible for this award. For individuals, we want through the awards to reward those teachers, professional staff, managers, directors and principals actively involved in the processes of assessment and development of adult education quality in their organisations, and at the same time paying particular care to the quality of their own work. Individuals being considered for the award must demonstrate that they meet at least seven of the nine criteria defined.

We will present the SIAE Award for development of quality in adult education every two years, with a maximum of three awards to educational and other organisations educating adults, and three awards to individuals. The first winners should be selected in January 2007.

We hope that SIAE awards for development of quality will receive a positive response among adult education practitioners in Slovenia, and at the same time, we want to help ensure that educational organisations that have until now invested heavily in quality development receive outside recognition of it. We are also introducing the SIAE awards for quality development as an incentive for all those organisations that today do not monitor and develop quality in a planned and systematic manner, for which examples of good practice from other organisations may encourage them to do so in the future.

Tanja Možina, MA ([tanja.mozina@acs.si](mailto:tanja.mozina@acs.si)), SIAE



## National opening of the festival of learning **LLW 2006 formally launched in Jesenice**

The formal opening of Lifelong Learning Week (LLW), which had been conceived and implemented since 1996 by the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, the national coordinator of the project, was this year for the first time moved to a regional location – Jesenice. By doing this we wished to honour the long-standing efforts of the LLW organising committee at the Municipality of Jesenice, which for ten years now has been preparing numerous LLW events for all generations, fostering and promoting the importance of learning both for the individual and for the wider local community.

On Friday **13 October 2006**, participants in the national opening of LLW 2006 were received in front of the Tone Čufar Theatre in Jesenice by the well-known organ-

grinder *Rastislav Rastko Tepina* from Kranj, who for more than twenty years has been entertaining audiences at home and abroad.

More than two hundred friends of the festival of learning, award winners and their proposers, and other guests of all generations from Slovenia were addressed by the host, mayor of Jesenice, *Boris Bregant*. The Minister of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, *Janez Drobnič* MA, emphasised the importance of knowledge as an investment in the future in his speech.

As every year, the central thread of the events was the presentation of SIAE awards for outstanding learning and professional achievements in adult education in Slovenia for 2006. 113 individuals, groups, societies, institutions, companies and local communities have so far been rewarded for their good example, and this year they were joined by further 13 new award winners. The video-portraits of award winners<sup>1</sup> reflected the hard work, effort, personal courage and unselfish actions and immeasurable spiritual wealth of the individual winners.

The awards – together with gift books contributed by respected Slovenian publishers – were presented by *Janez Drobnič* (after his departure, by *Elizabeta Skuber*, chairwoman of the SIAE committee on awards for outstanding learning and professional achievements in adult education) and *Dr Slavica Černoša*, acting director of the SIAE, who also gave an introductory address to the audience on behalf of the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education.

The whole programme reflected this year's main theme of the Week, the *European Year of Workers' Mobility*, aimed at promoting geographical, social and occupational mobility of workers. The very fact that we moved the event from Ljubljana to Jesenice is evidence of mobility. Presentations of award winners were interwoven with highlights of the learning achievements they represented.

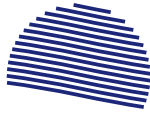
After the ceremonies, participants stayed for a friendly meeting enhanced by *Danica Butinar*. Her zither performance was warmly received by the audience, who could also visit an exhibition in the library lobby on the promotion of lifelong learning in Slovenia and in Jesenice.

The event was financially supported by the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs – MLFSA and the Ministry of Education and Sport – MES, and the quality and scope of LLW 2006 were enriched with the help of valuable contributions from our sponsors.

Nevenka Kocijančič ([nevenka.kocijancic@acs.si](mailto:nevenka.kocijancic@acs.si)), SIAE

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<sup>1</sup> Video-portraits were written by Slavica Borka Kucler (SIAE), filmed by Dalibor Tosić, and edited by Boštjan Abram (both Multimedia Institute and Academy), who also presented the portraits. Music and sound were the work of Matej Pečaver.



## Open learning centres

### **Renewal of basic training for professional staff in centres**

The tradition of organised self-directed learning in Slovenia has already reached its tenth anniversary. The Slovenian Institute for Adult Education's development of organised self-directed learning project has from the outset (1995) developed activities in phases. Today the network of open learning centres includes 34 organisations. In addition to suitably equipped learning areas, where participants can study with the aid of suitable and wide-ranging learning materials, multimedia equipment and other learning aids, open learning centres also provide **professional help**. Such help is provided by suitably trained staff (information officers, counsellors, mentors) who are trained for their work in centres in two programmes of basic training: **Introductory seminar on establishing and managing an open learning centre** and the programme **Guidance and mentoring in organised self-directed learning**. Both are intended for staff from organisations intending to establish organised self-directed learning activities or seeking to train new staff to work in centres.

The programmes were developed in the first five years of development of the project for the needs of basic training of professional staff in open learning centres. With the development and expansion of activities, growth in the number of centres, new approaches to learning and technological development, the need has arisen to update the contents. We carried out the first partial updating in 2002; for 2006 we have obtained funding from the European Social Fund to modernise both basic programmes, coinciding with the establishment of so-called Lifelong Learning Centres (LLCs). These centres will also expand the activities of organised self-directed learning, and so LLCs providers this year enrolled their staff and colleagues from partner organisations in both programmes.

One of the key options for acquiring knowledge in the modern world is over the Internet, which requires a new form of literacy: the ability to use modern information and communications technology (ICT). This technology enables e-learning: over the Internet, in web classrooms, with the use of other electronic aids (for instance: CD, DVD) etc. Experts believe that the Internet is the greatest technological change in education since the first printed book nearly 500 years ago. Predictions that in the 21st century some 60% of learning will take place over the Internet are bold, but nevertheless mean that we must prepare thoroughly for this.



In 2006 we added new and updated forms of provision of both programmes to the renewed contents. In line with modern trends and the possibility of using different resources and ICT, we added an important quality to the provision of education.

It is precisely those working in organised self-directed learning activities who urgently need additional training to handle modern ICT; here it is important that they acquire knowledge and awareness of the possibilities of distance learning and education. It is also they who in centres ensure the possibility of using ICT in a people-friendly manner, and so it is exceptionally important that they themselves have as much experience as possible of the options available. Experience in the use of the Internet for learning and educational purposes in the last ten years show that a combination of meetings in person with the option of providing training over the Internet provides excellent learning and educational results. The phrase '*blended learning*' has become established abroad for this form. In March and April 2006, we provided both programmes for the first time in a combination of traditional (meetings in person in classrooms) and e-learning (distance learning over the Internet in so-called web classrooms, using the Moodle tool). Participants in renewed programmes of basic training for staff in open learning centres thus join the new generation of participants in Internet-based education, while at the same time self-directedly mastering the content they need to successfully carry out their work, thereby experiencing one of the methods of providing organised self-directed learning for themselves.

In addition to modernised content, the main gains for the two renewed programmes are that:

- Participants master part of the contents through individual and group work over the Internet in web classrooms;
- About once a month, both programmes (apart from meeting in person) operate through activities in web classrooms (thus ensuring better mastery of content, and greater activity of participants);
- By mastering contents for the area of organised self-directed learning, centre staff is also trained in the use of modern ICT in learning and education.

The *Introductory seminar* runs for a total of 21 working days: after the initial meeting in a traditional classroom at the start of the programme (6 hours), e-education takes place in the web classroom with active work for one or two hours each working day. In the final week of training, under instruction participants prepare a project on the concept of their own centre and its integration into their local environment and the organisational plan for the establishment of the centre. The *Guidance and mentoring* programme runs for a total of 15 working days with two meetings in a traditional classroom: between the initial (6 hours) and closing (5 hours) meetings, participants are actively involved in e-education in the web classroom.

This year we have already implemented the *Introductory seminar* three times and the *Guidance and mentoring* programme also three times. A combined total of 115 participants have been involved in the programme (56 in the *Introductory seminar* and 59 in the *Guidance and mentoring* programme).

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## SLOVENIAN ADULT EDUCATION SCENE

### First five years of operation

#### Five adult education guidance centres celebrating in Slovenia

Full of expectation, joy and satisfaction that we had succeeded, on **11 September 2001 we opened the first guidance centre for adult education at Koper Folk Highschool**. This was followed by guidance centres in Žalec, Maribor, Murska Sobota and Novo Mesto. In line with the plan to develop one guidance centre in fourteen environments, these initial five were followed by four guidance centres in 2002 and another five in 2005<sup>1</sup>.

The development and establishment of adult education guidance centres has in Slovenian adult education added another piece to the development of new activities opening up for adults routes to education and learning. Numerous debates and dilemmas were triggered by the decision to select an adult education organisation as the location for a guidance centre; some doubted it would operate neutrally or provide equal information and guidance opportunities to all adults. Today, however, we can safely say that all centres, together with partner organisations within the guidance network for adult education, have shown that this is possible.

The basic mission of all fourteen guidance centres is to ensure confidential and free of charge information and guidance to all adults in the environments in which centres operate – both at the time of deciding on education and during the process itself, as well as at or after the end of education. Analysis of data on the activities of centres shows that in the first two years of operation, centres are dominated by information and guidance prior to enrolment in education, while in later years all centres show an increasing proportion of guidance during education, when we help adults eliminate and overcome various barriers and problems they encounter on the road to successful completion of education, motivate them for learning and 'learn to learn'. The data from the last academic year (September 2005 to August 2006) clearly show that 64% of the services involve information and guidance prior to enrolment in education, compared to 29% during and 7% at or after completion of education. The numbers of visitors or calls to centres have increased every year. Looking at the first five centres only, they offered 5,000 services in the first year of operation and more than 8,000 services in the latest year. The full network of fourteen

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<sup>1</sup> Basic activities of the first nine guidance centres are financially supported by the Ministry of Education and Sport, while five new centres opened in 2005 (Slovenj Gradec, Ljubljana, Krško, Ptuj and Velenje) are financed in 2005 and 2006 by the European Social Fund (75% of funds) and the Ministry of Education and Sport (25%).

guidance centres in the last academic year provided more than 14,600 individual services, with more than 3,500 adults involved in group forms of information and guidance (377 groups). We are particularly pleased by the figure we obtained in 2005 by surveying 141 partner organisations in networks of guidance centres: 85% believe that the establishment of the centres and networks has increased adult access to lifelong learning.

Over these years, adults contacting the centres largely have the following characteristics:

- More women (in recent years around 60%) than men;
- More younger adults (54% aged 21-30, compared to 26% aged 31-40);
- More adults with completed secondary vocational (20%) and secondary professional or general education (26%);
- More employed (in the last two years around 45%) than unemployed (around 35%), with the remainder pensioners, housewives and school pupils and students.

In terms of content, work primarily involves questions and problems relating to formal adult education and work-related education and training. In recent years this has also been reflected in increased adult interest in participation in such programmes. In recent years we have observed underdeveloped demand and/or supply of education and adult learning for personal and social development (education for active citizenship). Such contents, which are also supported by the strategic goals of the Adult Education Master Plan up to 2010 (first priority area), would require additional incentives both for adults and for providers.

We should mention three frequently mentioned barriers to adult education and learning encountered in guidance centres:

- Lack of information on possibilities and support mechanisms for adult education,
- Lack of confidence in their own learning abilities,
- Lack of funds.

We can provide effective help in eliminating the first two barriers through information and guidance in guidance centres. The third barrier will have to be more effectively faced in coming years: on the national level by adopting various incentives and measures in this area, and on the regional level, by bringing the strategy of lifelong learning to every resident in the local community.

The Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, which develops and professionally supports the operation of the network of guidance centres will in future encourage:

- Further development of quality of guidance work (we have developed and will implement a system of assessment and quality development in the network of all guidance centres);
- Development of various approaches to ensuring effective support and assistance to adults during education and learning, with particular attention also paid to the development of new guidance aids and approaches (e.g. by introducing centres oper-

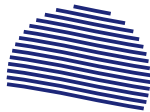
ating outside the main centre, development of mobile services in local communities, where required);

- Development of various promotional activities to bring adult education and learning closer to educationally less active population groups (e.g. implementation of a joint Day of Slovenian Guidance Centres, held for the second time this year, various activities in the Lifelong Learning Week etc.);
- Further development of partnership cooperation with various organisations in the local environment in which centres operate, including the aim of encouraging all organisations responsible for the development of human resources to co-create adult education in their environments.

The SIAE will also coordinate joint activities that will contribute to more comprehensive and better-quality guidance services, and particularly to raising greater adult awareness of educational and learning opportunities with particular emphasis on promoting innovations.

All guidance centres will in conjunction with their partners continue to strive for greater adult access and participation in lifelong learning.

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Quality in adult education

## **Consortium of biotechnology schools ensures development of quality cooperation with partners**

In 2005 the Consortium of Biotechnology Schools of Slovenia formulated a project *Biotechnology area, the best learning environment* and obtained funding from the Ministry of Education and Sport and the European Social Fund. The project set a series of strategic objectives in response to development issues and challenges facing the professions and sectors for which they provide education. One area that seemed very important is the question of quality of education, so within the project they wanted to train for better quality work. They defined a series of indicators important for assessing the quality of education. One of these is cooperation between schools and their environments. They found that agricultural and food-sector schools were characterised by ad-hoc cooperation with outside partners, while the project was intended to achieve greater and better cooperation of all schools in the consortium with their environments and partners within them. They wanted their education programmes truly to reflect the needs of the econo-

my and the environments in which they operate; to be bearers of innovative knowledge; and through cooperation of expert practitioners, to achieve better quality of education.

As early as last year, participating schools organised a meeting to which they invited the National School for Leadership in Education, the National Institute for Vocational Education and Training and the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education with the aim of presenting to them various models for assessment and development of quality. The SIAE presented its model Offering Quality Education to Adults – OQEA.

Five member schools of the consortium – School Centre Ptuj, Vocational and Technical Agricultural School, the Biotechnology Education Centre Ljubljana, the Horticultural School Celje, the Secondary Forestry and Woodwork School Postojna and the Secondary Agricultural School Rakičan – decided to implement self-evaluation using the OQEA model.

First, all participating schools formed a quality group, responsible for transferring information, implementing activities and motivating the whole teaching staff to consider and take action to develop quality. The next step was to review the partners with which they already had established work connections, and those with which they did not. After this phase, each school selected one or more groups of partners so as in the process of self-evaluation to assess in detail cooperation with them, and to evaluate what should be done to further improve this cooperation.

Partners were mostly various agricultural or food companies, cooperatives and also guidance services in primary schools or former participants in education. The partners chosen were then surveyed using questionnaires and interviews as to how they assess certain actions of the school. Similar opinions were obtained from employees. They wanted to know:

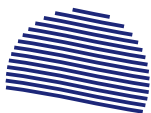
- How companies and other organisations assess the suitability and quality of educational programmes provided;
- Whether companies are prepared to cooperate in the preparation and implementation of additional training for employees in the sector;
- Whether the contents and methods of communications between schools and partners in industry and their local environments are suitable;
- How former students continuing in education assess the knowledge they obtained at school, whether it was suitable and sufficient;
- Whether school guidance services at primary schools receive suitable materials from them that help in presenting occupations and the education they provide.

Based on the conclusions, each school designed an action plan for the development of quality cooperation with partners. This defined various activities with the help of which they will introduce various innovations in the 2006/2007 academic year to achieve (even) better results.

At the concluding workshop, held at the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education at the end of May 2006, participating schools prepared recommendations, which they will submit to the consortium of biotechnology schools, concerning their experiences. They wrote: *"We would recommend the self-evaluation method to other schools and other organisations, since we found that the use of this method was a good choice. Through the set of instruments and anonymous questionnaires we obtained many important results, which confirmed the suitability of the choice of self-evaluation, which we initially expected to be weaker. We would recommend the Offering Quality Education to Adults - OQEA - model, with which we implemented self-evaluation, among other reasons because of the following characteristics: it allows a very systematic approach, aids have been produced to help prepare the set of instruments, suitable literature is enclosed, the quality group manages self-evaluation throughout the procedure, instructions are appropriate and clear, and professional guidance is enabled in the design of self-evaluation instruments and interpretation of the results."*

Participating schools collaborated very well on the project, which would not have been possible without their active participation: at joint workshops, the SIAE provides only some basic theoretical starting points and guidelines for work in practice, while schools implement the project in their work centres, with of course continuous advisory work from the SIAE. Schools were committed to their participation and in our view they will be able to introduce many improvements into their operation, a source of satisfaction at the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education. At the same time, this was an opportunity for us to test the OQEA model in a group of schools, not all of which provide adult education. We found that the model can be used without special difficulties in youth education, which for us is a valuable experience.

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Non-formal education in Slovenia, academic  
years 2001/2002 to 2003/2004

## **Presentation of the survey on continuing education**

Continuing education is the only independent survey conducted within the Statistical Office of RS<sup>1</sup> providing a census of non-formal education of adults and adolescents. We also collect some relevant data through the Labour Force Survey, which includes

<sup>1</sup> Publication available online at <http://www.stat.si/doc/statinf/09-si-030-0601.pdf>.

questions on formal and non-formal education, and through other surveys (census, ad hoc module on lifelong education, etc.). The survey is based on a census of all educational organisations providing non-formal education. Here we encounter the problem of how to ensure full data coverage, since organisations providing non-formal education, particularly programmes with no public validity, are not obliged to register the provision of programmes with professional institutions, and there are many who advertise education but do not provide it due to a lack of applications.

Whereas a decade ago folk high schools were the main providers of all adult education, today they account for only a tenth. In the school years 2001/2002 to 2003/2004 most of the continuing education providers that returned completed questionnaires were specialised organizations providing adult education (about a third). Driving schools represent a similar share, but their share has been changing the most from year to year.

Irrespective of the number of providers, the number of participants and the number of programmes are on the rise. In the school year 2001/2002, 341 continuing education providers carried out almost 20,000 training programmes which were attended by over 250,000 people. In the school year 2002/2003 270,000 people attended 22,000 programmes and in the school year 2003/2004 the number of participants rose to 326,000 while the number of programmes remained the same.

In the school year 2001/2002 the categories within verified and non-verified programmes were changed. Verified programmes are broken down by the required prior education requirements (primary school, secondary school, not required), while non-verified programmes are broken down by the purpose of participation. In the previous classification into work-related education and education for leisure, we expanded the work-related category with various subcategories (preparation for national vocational qualifications (NVQs), individual subjects of the matura, for foreman and management examinations, etc.). It emerged that there is very little education in the categories set; courses and seminars for work-related purposes predominate.

In the school years 2001/2002 and 2002/2003 70% of all participants attended non-verified programmes, 20% attended verified programmes and 10% language programmes. In the school year 2003/2004 the share of people attending verified programmes fell to 13.7% while the share of people attending non-verified programmes grew. The share of people attending language programmes remained the same as in the previous two years.

In the school year 2001/2002 non-verified programmes were broken down by the purpose of participation. However, in terms of the total number of participants, only two types of programmes stand out: most programmes are professional programmes for the needs of performing an occupation (70% in 2001/2002, 83% in 2003/2004) and



programmes for general needs and leisure time (more than 21% in 2001/2002, less than 15% in 2003/2004). In the school year 2001/2002 a strong growth in the number of people attending preparation for obtaining national vocational qualification was registered, but in the next two school years the number fell to half a percent.

In the school year 2001/2002 providers of language courses carried out 3,794 language programmes, of which a third were verified and two thirds were non-verified programmes. The total number of people attending language programmes was over 26,000. The situation was similar the next year. But in the school year 2003/2004 the number of both verified and non-verified programmes grew as did the number of participants. All these years the most popular languages were English, German, Italian, Spanish and French.

The data collected at the level of institutions say much about the programmes that providers offer, equipment and employees, but unfortunately they do not say much about education participants. Providers frequently cite the Data Protection Act, which does not allow them to ask candidates for data such as age and education; for some the records comprise solely the gender of participants. We collect data on age and education from only one-quarter of participants.

Most participants were 30-34-years old (14.2%), followed by 35-39-years old (13.7%). Among participants for whom we had data on prior education, most finished secondary general or professional school (43.7%), vocational college, higher professional institution or university (25.6%), etc., and the fewest had complete or incomplete elementary school (7.8%).

Continuing education takes place only in a third of Slovenian municipalities and in 20% of these municipalities the only form of continuing education is a driving school. On average, in the past three years 22% of the population aged 15-64 was included in continuing education.

**A pilot study** took place in October at the Statistical Office, the Adult Education Survey, prepared as an independent survey based on a sample. The persons selected in the sample gave data only on themselves. The pilot study was telephone-based. The main survey will take place in October and November 2007. The results of the pilot study will determine whether it will be done by telephone or by personal visits from interviewers. Given the results, the survey will be carried out every three years and will replace some existing surveys in the area of education.

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## INTERNATIONAL CO-OPERATION

International cooperation in the area of festivals of learning

### Activities completed in the *IntALWinE* project

Throughout the duration of the *IntALWinE*<sup>1</sup> project (2003-2006) Novičke has reported several times on meetings of the working group, study visits and other tangible outcomes of our cooperation. At the end of September 2006 activities were completed by a meeting in Rome, and so it is time to round off the image of the project and present its results. To this end we invite readers to take the opportunity to visit the project web site <http://www.ALWinEurope.net>. Here we can only provide some concise information.

The *IntALWinE* project is the third<sup>2</sup> extensive example of international cooperation by the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education in the area of festivals of learning, this time under the Grundtvig 4 programme, meaning that financial support was largely provided for the organisation of working meetings. Nevertheless the partners, generally national coordinators of festivals of learning from 16 European countries (Austria, Bulgaria, Cyprus, Estonia, Finland, Iceland, Italy, Lithuania, Hungary, the Netherlands, Norway, Romania, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland and the United Kingdom) together with the coordinator, the Unesco Institute of Education (now 'of lifelong learning') carried out a great deal of work between meetings as well.

The purpose of project cooperation was to exchange experience and gain further initiatives for the development of national festivals of learning in three thematic areas:

- the voice of learners,
- operational improvements in the organisation of festivals of learning, and
- instrumental importance of festivals of learning; tool for mobilisation and advocacy.

The Slovenian Institute for Adult Education was most actively involved in the **first thematic group**, the strategic objective of which was to present and introduce the concept of learners' forums. Representatives of participating countries (generally winners of awards/prizes for outstanding achievements in adult education) attended the

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<sup>1</sup> The full title of the project is International Adult Learners' Week in Europe - IntALWinE.

<sup>2</sup> The other two projects are Lifelong Learning Week in South-Eastern Europe (2000-2003) and Widening and strengthening the European dimension of the Lifelong Learning Week movement (2002-2004); for further information, see <http://tvu.acs.si/mednarodno/>.

International Learners' Forum in the United Kingdom in October 2004. There they learned about this form of advocacy, which is already successfully operating in England, Scotland, Catalonia, several African countries and Canada, and which is being introduced in Australia and New Zealand. The group met again on a study visit to the Adult Learners' Week in the UK in May 2005, coming to the conclusion that the introduction of forums requires professional, financial and moral support on the national and international levels. Participants in the first Slovenian learners' forum, organised in September 2005 as part of the anniversary Lifelong Learning Week (LLW), came to similar conclusions.

Partners in this thematic group also prepared an international publication *I did it my way: Journeys of Learning in Europe*<sup>3</sup>, bringing together the life stories of adults from participating countries who have fundamentally improved the quality of their life and had a significant impact on their environment. The publication was issued in several languages, with the English version available from the author of this paper at the SIAE.

The results of cooperation in the **second thematic area** are shown on the website, under Tools and products. The bulk of the content consists of concrete examples of good practice (festival events, promotional measures, forms of cooperation with the media and sponsors, and awards to learners), models of cooperation and evaluation methods for festivals of learning from participating countries.

In the **third thematic area** the network of partners produced recommendations intended for organisers of festivals of learning and national, regional and local politicians. We will describe this document in detail at another time, since we will be able to use it to consolidate the role and importance of LLW. Learners, representatives of the International Forum, also formed their own recommendations; they are also intended for politicians as well as co-creators of festivals, setting out the views of participants in education (adults) and lifelong learning which on a declarative level<sup>4</sup> form the starting point for policy formulation in practice, but which in real life are most often not adequately respected.

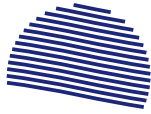
In addition to the complex and content-rich website and the publication mentioned earlier, the *IntALWinE* project also resulted in a promotional brochure, while the deeper personal contacts among experts in this area cannot be overestimated. The project is (was) without doubt an excellent opportunity to promote our festival of learning, to present and introduce our examples of established practice and to learn from and follow the examples of others. We will use this in planning the Lifelong Learning Week 2007!

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<sup>3</sup> Publisher: NIACE, UK and Unesco Institute for Education, Germany (2005)

<sup>4</sup> This approach is supported by among others a Memorandum on Lifelong Learning (2000).



## Presentation of the Grundtvig project **Establishing *Let Me Learn* in Europe**

Seven partner countries - England, the Czech Republic, Italy, Malta (project leader), the Netherlands, Slovenia and Spain - have participated in the *Let Me Learn* (LML) project since March 2004, when we first met in London. One special feature of this European project is the inclusion of an American expert, *Dr Christine Johnston* from Rowan University, author of the *Let Me Learn* philosophy. It was shown that it is important to open the European space up for exchanges of knowledge and experience with other parts of the world.

The main **purpose of the project** was to establish the LML philosophy. This is a process involving a complex view of learning. An individual's learning, as the author says, cannot be characterised by individual characteristics; it is important to observe it as an evolving process, and to seek new opportunities for individual growth and development. To determine so-called learning patterns she developed a set of instruments (Learning Connections Inventory, LCI) for different target groups (adults, children of various ages) which experts have been using for almost fifteen years in developing individual and group approaches to learning in all US states and in some parts of Europe. The LML process is based on the Interactive Learning Model (ILM), taking account of metacognitive processes and helps in:

- Promoting awareness and recognition of learning methods;
- Developing the ability to show own learning methods;
- Effective approaches to learning in all circumstances with a large degree of self-confidence.

**Individual goals** of the project can be summed up in:

- Planning models for the introduction of LML in individual countries;
- Education and training of experts of partner organisations in the use of LCI and expanding the LML process with the acquisition of licences;
- Introduction of the LML process and the use of LCI in individual partner countries;
- Acquisition and granting of LML licences;
- Planning further development and publication of results of the use of LCI in partner countries and the wider European space.

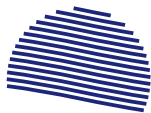
**Partner organisations** participating in the project have different missions, meaning that they provide learning and education to different target groups. The following participated in introducing LML:

- Czech Republic (town of Hradec Králové): primary school children and teachers, and professors of the Faculty of Informatics and Management and the Faculty of Education;
- Italy (Sviluppumbria): Regional Economic Development Agency of Umbria in cooperation with professors of the University of Umbria;
- Malta: University of Malta, European Unit: Let Me Learn Malta (Faculty of Education in cooperation with employees of the College of Art, Science and Technology);
- Spain: L@TE Rovira and Virgili University of Tarragona (professors and other employees of both universities);
- United Kingdom: European Access Network (organisation which had a linking function in the project between the USA and Europe);
- The Netherlands: ECHO - non-governmental organisation undertaking various projects for refugees and immigrants;
- Slovenia: Jesenice Folk Highschools (in cooperation with SIAE and experts of Adult Education Guidance Centres - ISIO).

The methods used to establish LML were different due to the variety of participating institutions.

The LML approach or process is hard to compare with any other known method of determining learning characteristics or styles, since, as *Dr Christine Johnston* said at the closing conference in Malta, "*its basic characteristic is not a tool, but a process*" that is important to trigger, initiate and guide, both in the individual and in group learning. This is definitely a process worth trying, starting and building upon. Its basic note is pure and noble: to recognise one's own learning process, be aware of it, accept it and learn more successfully and work with it further, wherever and whenever.

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## Validation and accreditation of adult abilities for education and employment

### **How can ICT influence the development of key competences?**

In the modern information technology age possibilities for the most diverse forms of learning are continually open. The computer, an irreplaceable aid in the work place and in everyday life, represents the basis for acquiring knowledge and skills in the area of information-communications technology (ICT), while at the same time being a

condition for acquiring other knowledge, skills and competences. The extent to which the use of computers and computer tools can encourage the acquisition and development of basic competences was a question that arose on the European level and as hypothesis actually checked in a project entitled *Key Skills Portfolio Assisted Learning - Key PAL*.

The basic **purpose of the project** was to determine the extent to which the use of electronic tools to design personal portfolios influences the acquisition and development of key competences in young adults. Key competences have an important role in achieving the strategic objective of the European Union, which is to become the most competitive and dynamic knowledge-based society, capable of maintaining continuous economic growth with more, better jobs and social cohesion.

Individual partner countries<sup>1</sup> tested the hypothesis in the project on a concrete case. The SIAE was involved in the project with a group of participants of the *Project Learning for Young Adults (PLYA)* programme, a publicly certified programme designed as integrated help for young adults without education or basic occupation. They confirmed some of the expectations of the project group that access to computers does not represent a necessary incentive for learning with ICT. The fact that this possibility exists is not enough for potential users to take advantage of it. Users with deficient key competences are often unaware of such opportunities for learning and generally do not take advantage of them. Encouragement in such cases is extremely important, as demonstrated in the practical work of the *Key PAL project*.

Participants in the PLYA programme designed their personal electronic portfolios (eP) using the ELGG platform (<http://elgg.net/>), which offers free Internet space for designing personal eP. The platform itself represents one important animation factor for acquiring key competences with the help of ICT, since it is designed to enable structured recording of knowledge, skills and competences acquired in different ways, which encourages individuals to carefully consider their learning activities and achievements.

Thorough consideration of learning activities and particularly learning achievements for participants in the PLYA programme was even more important. They were supported in this by their mentors, who encouraged them to consider the matter. Participants themselves emphasised that before starting to design a personal eP they helped themselves by asking the following questions: "*What do I know?*" and "*In what contexts do I know how to use what I've learned?*" Although the idea that "*the more you*

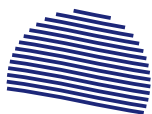
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<sup>1</sup> European Institute for E-learning - EIFEL of Paris (France), School of Second Chance (France), Edinburgh University Settlement (United Kingdom), Careers Wales North West (United Kingdom), The MRS Consultancy Ltd (United Kingdom), Deutsches Rotes Kreuz (Germany), Paper Free Systems Ltd (United Kingdom) and Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (Slovenija).

*know, the more you're worth"* was not unknown to them, before designing their ePs they had the feeling that they know nothing, since – in their opinion – only formally acquired knowledge counted, something they had not yet achieved. By gradually designing the eP, their thinking also gradually changed, since they recognised that everybody knows something; all knowledge has different values in different contexts, including knowledge that we acquired in everyday situations (for instance through hobbies).

One important advantage of designing an eP that PLYA participants mentioned was that such activity had encouraged them to think of themselves and others, particularly what others expect of them and how they actually see them, and recording their own considerations and views of others. They also began to gather evidence of the knowledge, skills and competences that they obtained in different ways and recorded in their personal eP. Their recognition that they have also learned through all these activities particularly pleased members of the project group. Although some participants only had access to computers and the Internet within the PLYA programme, although they only had basic knowledge of ICT, and although use of the platform for designing eP was only possible in English, PLYA participants achieved the goals set – both personal and those of the project. Their personal eP with the help of the ELGG platform were designed at the end of the project, which means that they contained recorded knowledge and skills acquired in various activities and evidence of the knowledge acquired. Achieving personal goals was possible through the development of key competences such as: ability to use ICT, communication in native language, learning to learn and personal and citizenship competences. PLYA participants defined precisely these competences as the ones they developed in the process of designing eP using the ELGG platform, thus demonstrating that the basic objective of the project had also been achieved.

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## Possibilities for developing and implementing a national system

### **Findings of the national conference for recognising knowledge and skills in higher education**

People learn all their lives. Only a (small) part of this learning takes place in formal institutions awarding certificates or diplomas for knowledge demonstrated. Nevertheless, such certificates are very important in life, sometimes even more than

the knowledge acquired non-formally or informally. It is therefore extremely important that the full range of an individual's knowledge and experience becomes visible and evaluated, irrespective of where and how the knowledge was acquired.

At the UP Faculty of Management in Koper (FM) we are completing the international project *Implementing a system of recognition of non-formal and informal learning in the Slovenian higher education space*, co-financed by the Ministry of Higher Education, Science and Technology (MHEST). In the project, we are studying the possibilities and methods for recognising and evaluating knowledge that individuals acquire through working experience, at various training courses, seminars and in everyday life. The project involves *Dr Nada Trunk Širca, Doris Gomezelj MA, Živana Marčeta* and *Katarina Košmrlj* from UP FM.

Some EU countries which have already introduced such a system found in the system numerous positive effects: it motivates individuals to enroll in formal education, and it increases the motivation and interest of employees for participation in training and organised courses available in their company and elsewhere. By shortening the duration of study, it becomes more accessible to individuals who due to work or other commitments find it difficult to opt for formal education, and it reduces the costs for both potential students and educational institutions. UP FM has been recognising knowledge and skills acquired prior to enrolment since the beginning of this academic year. Recognition of non-formal and informal learning can be seen as an attempt to adapt study programmes, as well as forms and methods of educational work to the needs of the labour market.

During the project, the UP FM organised two conferences to this aim. The first was held on **28 June** in Koper on the theme of *Including lifelong learning in higher education*, while the second, entitled *Recognising knowledge and skills in tertiary education* was held on **19 October** in Brdo pri Kranju.

The importance of the topics is shown by the fact that the opening speech at the second conference was given by *Dr Jure Zupan*, minister of MHEST. The primary aim of the second conference was to familiarise participants with the statutory basis for recognising knowledge and skills in tertiary education in Slovenia and presenting examples of good practice from other countries. These were described by *Prof. Dr Arnaud Haeringer* of the University of Haute Alsace (France) and *Dr Aune Valk* of the University of Tartu (Estonia). The system for recognising knowledge in France has been operating successfully for over a decade, while the Estonians have been operating their system since 2003. *Anita Jesenko* from MHEST spoke about the statutory possibilities for establishing such a system in Slovenia. The basis for introducing a system of criteria is provided by Article 35 of the *Higher Education Act* (Official Gazette of the RS 100/2004), while Article 49 of the same Act requires the Council for Higher Education to determine detailed criteria for the



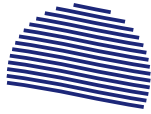
recognition of knowledge and skills acquired prior to enrollment in higher-education programmes. This was achieved to some extent by the adoption of the *Criteria for accreditation of higher education institutions and study programmes* (Official Gazette of the RS 101/2004), in which the criteria for recognition are specifically defined in Article 9.

Participants were more active in the second part of the conference. Three themed workshops attempted to determine guidelines for the design of the system: tools, criteria and assessment procedure, abbreviation and form of the system, and elements of a promotional campaign.

We conducted a survey among conference delegates on recognising the opportunities the system offers and proposals about it. We found that a large majority of participants – who came mostly from various educational institutions (not from business) – were unaware that knowledge and skills could be recognised and that some faculties already do so for individuals. Opinions differed considerably regarding the proportion of knowledge and experience that should be recognised, and regarding the role of employers in the recognition procedure. Most respondents suggested portfolio as one of the main tools for presenting knowledge and skills.

One of the workshops determined the contents of portfolio in detail. Inclusion of formal certificates and description of work and other experience was proposed. Employer recommendations should not be included due to questionable objectivity. Instead, interviews were proposed as a more efficient assessment tool. Criteria should be set at the national level, while assessment should be carried out at each institution individually by a four-member committee following the French example. It was also proposed for candidates to be assisted throughout the process by a specially trained advisor. The cost of the procedure was estimated to € 600-850 for one candidate. Delegates failed to reach a consensus on who should bear the costs. The most common proposals were employers, educational institutions, the relevant ministry and the candidate himself, of course. In any event the ministry and educational institutions should cover the costs for promoting the system. This should be based on leaflets with basic information and publications with a more detailed presentation of the system and the procedure for recognising knowledge.

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Experts from various fields prepare a programme of education for healthy work and living

## ***Education for Healthy Work and Living* project completed successfully**

The start of August saw the completion of a fifteen-month Phare project *Education for healthy work and life*, part of a broader multi-annual project to promote health in the workplace entitled *Fit for work*. The purpose of the project is to influence employers and workers in the context of lifelong learning to master knowledge and skills for healthy work and life and to introduce to the working environment changes that benefit health. In the long-term this should lead to a better workers' health, a gradual reduction in sick leave, prevent injuries and work incapacity and reduce regional differences, while at the same time contributing to greater satisfaction in the workplace and thereby increased productivity and general welfare of the population of Slovenia.

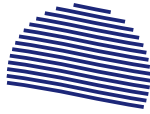
The project was managed by the Clinical Institute for Occupational, Traffic and Sports Medicine in cooperation with partner organisations: Slovenian Institute for Adult Education, Department of Technical Safety of the Faculty of Chemistry and Chemical Technology, the Murska Sobota Institute of Public Health and the Association of Free Trade Unions of Slovenia. As well as partners, numerous outside staff, experts in various fields (occupational medicine, health promotion, occupational psychology, safety at work, employee rights etc.) were also involved. Funding for the project was provided by the European Union from Phare funds for lifelong learning and by the Slovenian Ministry of Education and Sport.

Data for Slovenia show that workers are absent from work primarily due to injury, skeleto-muscular diseases and mental illness. These three categories of problem can be controlled with suitable measures to promote health at work, by investing in knowledge and skills for healthy work and life and by changing the environment to benefit health. Therefore the programme covers seven educational modules for areas that data indicate are the worst and to date fairly neglected. In line with the programme recommendations, companies should first conduct an analysis of worker health and on the basis of the results of this modul elucidate the problems to be resolved with one or at most two of the remaining modules: preventing injury, ergonomic measures, prevention of burdens due to chemical pollutants, organisational measures, controlling stress and preventing the use of psychoactive substances.

The programme will be expanded with the help of specially trained workplace health promotion counsellors; they will provide health groups in interested companies with knowledge and skills for independent implementation of the programme. Examples of good practice from other countries show that measures to promote health are successful only if they are implemented by employees themselves, and not outside experts. In the pilot phase of the project, which took place in Prekmurje, the first group of advisers (more than 15) – most of whom had already started to introduce the programme into their companies – completed a 100-hour education programme. The project management at the Clinical Institute for Occupational, Transport and Sport Medicine will attempt to secure funding for the work of advisers in other companies in the region and elsewhere in Slovenia.

The project resulted in numerous products, including a website with useful information on health and safety at work (<http://www.cilizadelo.si/>, in Slovenian language only; in near future also in English), a handbook for promoting health at work, and information-teaching materials that advisers will use in their work. In addition to the programme of health promotion, a draft concept was prepared for a network to promote health at work, which will ensure expansion of the programme in companies. This network will link at various levels organisations and individuals that can in any way contribute to improving the health of workers and the development of health promotion at work in Slovenia. One important link in this network is advisers on health promotion at work, who will provide knowledge and skills for independent implementation of the programme to health groups in interested companies.

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## Transfer of experience of validating knowledge from banking to other sectors

### **Progress of the *Value of Work* project**

Activities within the Value of Work<sup>1</sup> project, which began in November 2005, are at about the half-way stage; they will end in September 2007 with an international conference in Iceland. One of the objectives of the project is to enable employees with low levels of education and knowledge acquired non-formally and through experience to further develop their abilities, improve their position in the labour market and increase their access to education and training.

The project focuses on an important learning environment – the workplace. Target groups are employees without suitable formal education for their work (incomplete secondary education) who have acquired non-formal and experience-based knowledge and skills in their work. Since banks in Iceland employ many staff who have not completed secondary school but who have acquired considerable experience on the job, the project focuses on bank staff.

The purpose of the project is to transfer experience of validating informally and non-formally acquired knowledge and skills in the banking sector to other sectors. The Slovenian Institute for Adult Education chose the area of home care employees for the latter. Slovenia, as elsewhere in the European Union, is facing the pressing problem of an ageing population, for which we need ever more people to care for the elderly as well as their own families. Home care employees are an important link in the chain of those looking after the elderly. In Slovenia 'home care employee' is not an occupation that can be acquired through formal education, but rather it is possible to acquire a certificate on the basis of experience and the assessment thereof within the framework of national vocational qualifications. Validation of informally and non-formally acquired knowledge and skills for home care employees has been operating in Slovenia since 2000. One hundred and eighty-two home care employees had acquired a certificate by the end of 2005<sup>2</sup>. Sweden too will concentrate on the transfer of expe-

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<sup>1</sup> The *Leonardo da Vinci* was registered by the Icelandic Education and Training Centre of Reykjavik, with partners Synthesis Centre for Research and Education of Cyprus, the Danish Institute for educational Training of Vocational Teachers in Copenhagen, the Centre of Validation in the city of Malmö (Sweden), the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education (UK) and the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education.

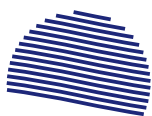
<sup>2</sup> Hrovatič, Danica (2006), Non-formal education and knowledge validation, master's thesis, Ljubljana: Faculty of Social Sciences.

rience of validating informally and non-formally acquired knowledge and skills to other sectors (apart from banking), specifically to administrative workers. Although the SIAE is not producing a pilot study in the case of bank workers, we regularly inform representatives of several major Slovenian banks and representatives of banking associations of the progress of the project.

The fourth partner meeting was held in Copenhagen from 27-30 September 2006. Since one of the goals of the *Value of Work* project is to develop various methods and tools for validating informal and non-formal learning, the working meeting focused on methods and tools in participating countries. The goal of the project is to introduce an innovative approach to these methods and tools. One day of the meeting was given over to training in methods and tools, and so representatives of professional working groups from participating countries were also involved. From Slovenia, the meeting was attended by *Danica Hrovatič MA*, who is an advisor and assessor for the national vocational qualification 'home care employee'. She passed on her years of experience in assessing informal and non-formal knowledge and skills of home care employees. All partners will for the duration of the pilot study supplement a handbook of methods and tools prepared by the Swedish partners, which is one of the products of the project.

Also being prepared is a handbook of standards of knowledge and skills in banking and other sectors. Another product of the project will be instructions for assessing informally and non-formally acquired knowledge and skills for companies, counselors and trade unions.

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International youth exchange

### ***Fashion in the forest – a breathtaking combination***

Lifelong learning – a modern necessity – offers exceptional opportunities to all age groups. This applies to both organisers and participants of various events. Themes vary, as do approaches, while innovation is limitless. Participants prefer to choose interesting themes and approaches that enable creativity. If the organisers are sensible, the situation will show us the right path.

Since it was founded – in 1994 – Vitra has operated in various areas of sustainable rural development, seeking the right paths. We devote an important share of our energies –

perhaps even the most important – to various forms of learning for the rural population (young people, adults, businesspeople, the unemployed, farmers and non-governmental organisations). Cooperation with the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education has enabled us to operate in the Lifelong Learning Week (LLW) and to recognise the wealth of the countryside. We incorporate the knowledge derived from our cooperation into our activities, and pass it on.

This summer our references were enhanced by an international youth exchange. From 17-26 July we ran an international project *Fashion in the Forest* – Youth programme, action A1. The ten days youth exchange took place in the municipality of Cerknica. 43 young people took part in the project together with youth leaders aged 15-25 from five European countries (England, Bulgaria, Germany, Slovakia and Slovenia).

Fashion and forests (nature) were the main themes of the exchange, but not the only ones. Presentations of individual countries included an exhibition, a national-themed dinner (cooked by participants), talks and dancing. Learning about places, customs, similarities and differences in such a manner is straightforward and effective. More interestingly, each country was presented by participants from another country. Alongside learning about Slovenia we prepared five fashion shows.

By 'making' fashion we want to bring natural history and skills and knowledge from the treasure house of the Slovenian countryside closer to young people. Fashion, which is continually changing, is a challenging area that encourages imagination and creativity. The forest is an endless source of inspiration (quiet, consideration, creation, colour, structures...) and materials for models. There was boundless enthusiasm for forest resources, since young people come from countries that can only dream of the forest resources that Slovenia has. They were understandably envious of us.

Someone once wrote: *Where there's a will, there's a way*. Organising a youth exchange such as *Fashion in the Forest* requires a great deal of will. Many routes open up but also close. Without cooperation, such activities simply could not be achieved. We used all the communications skills that we had learned/taught to find partner organisations and funding at home and abroad. The bulk of funding was provided by the National MOVIT Agency (EU Youth programme), while some funding was also provided by the Youth Office of RS (programme financing), the Ministry of the Environment and Spatial Planning (system financing), and the Municipality of Cerknica. The Red Cross Cerknica provided materials, and the national and local media response was very good.

The very-well organised youth exchange (as confirmed by the evaluation) consolidated the partnership. *Martin Clark*, from the English non-governmental organisation

Grampus, the man behind the *Fashion in the Forest* project, invited us to cooperate. On several occasions I told him of the wealth of knowledge and skills of the Slovenian countryside, most often demonstrated during LLW. We will therefore host several groups from England next year. Students in vocational education (five to eight in a group) will undergo practical training in several groups for five to eight weeks in knowledge of three areas (archaeology, traditional skills and environmental activities).

Since you can never have enough (good) ideas, I invite *Novičke* readers to help us prepare the programme. For more information visit <http://www.vitra.si/>.

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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

