

e★bulletin

issue 6

Contributions of Partners in the
"Widening and Strengthening the European Dimension of the Lifelong Learning Movement" Project

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Who Are We?

The project Widening and Strengthening the European Dimension of the Lifelong Learning Week Movement is an endeavor to continue the implementation of the EU policy in the field of lifelong learning. Concrete objectives of the project are:

- ★ the sharing of accumulated experience and expertise of some partner countries (SI, DE, RO and BG) and the transfer of know-how related to the promotion of adult education and lifelong learning to some partner countries (ES, BG, RO);
- ★ the establishment of national frameworks for planning and carrying out national Lifelong Learning Weeks (LLWs), evaluating their impacts and disseminating their results;
- ★ the organization of national celebrations of learning and of one collective event (ES);
- ★ the production and dissemination of high-quality informative and promotional material and services, mainly web-based;
- ★ the establishment of cross-country as well as national networks for the promotion of the 'lifelong learning for all' strategy, thus creating partnerships which will be able to continue their mission well beyond the project's lifetime, and disseminating its results nationally and internationally.

Working together will result in implemented LLW's as an advocacy tools for promoting and raising the profile of adult education and lifelong learning in participating countries, establishment of mutual understanding and partnerships as well as initiating changes in policies of adult education and lifelong learning. Thus, the EU concept for lifelong learning will be put into practice.

These aims are a great challenge to all participating institutions, not only because of the cultural, but also because of the economic differences. Partners from five countries rely on

their experience and competence in order to assure the success of their initiative:

- ★ Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SIAE), Ljubljana, Slovenia;
- ★ Federation of Societies for Spread of Knowledge (FSSK »Znanie«), Sofia, Bulgaria;
- ★ Institute for International Co-operation of the German Adult Education Association (IIZ/DVV), Bonn, Germany;
- ★ University of Barcelona, Centre for Social and Educational Research (CREA), Barcelona, Spain;
- ★ Spanish federation of popular universities (FEUP), Madrid, Spain;
- ★ The National Association of the Regional Centre for Adult Education (AN CZEA), Arad, Romania;

The working area of the above mentioned organizations is in close connection with adult education and so their participation in this project contributes to the widening and strengthening the European dimension of the lifelong learning.

The purpose of the E-Bulletin is to promote our project, introduce news, important events and publications related to the Lifelong Learning Weeks' Movement. The e-bulletin gives all interested readers the opportunity to inquire about the progress and outcomes of our project, presents different facts on the history of Lifelong Learning Weeks and the most important EU documents in the field of Lifelong Learning. It also provides information on Adult Education, Learning Festivals, and different researches in the field of Lifelong Learning.



Team members' viewpoints on the benefits/contributions of our project

Prepared by:

Olga Drogenik, 
Slovenian Institute for Adult Education

On the third meeting of the team members held in Barcelona from 24-27 November 2003 partners conducted an evaluation of their participation in the project Widening and Strengthening the EU dimension of the LLW/LF movement. Partners have written down responses to two questions:

What do you believe are the most important benefits for you from our common project?
What are the most important contributions from you to our common project?

Teams have expressed the most important benefits they have been gaining from the participation and the most important inputs they have been providing for the success of the project. The evaluation statements were created by each national team, the Slovenian and Spanish consisting of four, the Romanian three, Bulgarian two and German of one member. The Silent partner from Switzerland joined the evaluation process as well.

Team members' benefits from the project

National teams have highlighted 28 benefits. They can be structured into the following groups:

1. Benefits for participating institutions.
2. Benefits related to professional and personal growth of team members and their colleagues not directly involved in the project.
3. Benefits for the participating countries.
4. Benefits for the area of lifelong learning and adult education.

It must be emphasized that the categories of benefits are intermingled and transversal. Professional and personal growth brings input to institutional work, creates space for implementing lifelong learning strategies and participative learning for all people. People are changing the maps of lifelong learning in our countries and in Europe. Nevertheless I have decided to categorise the benefits as they are important indicators of the impact of our work in the project.

In the first group – benefits for institutions - some of the common project outputs and new skills developed are most appreciated. These are: professional homepage, e-bulletin as a good idea for promotion of learning festivals and other useful communication tools. The project is also opening ways for starting up future projects, providing experience at local level (knowledge transfer and exchange between regional coordinators of LLW), and deepening the awareness of EU dimension by implementing working model for the transfer of know-how.

In the second group – benefit for personal and professional growth - teams find most useful new experiences in project management, improved knowledge about Learning festivals in other countries, exchange of experiences among partners and increasing friendship among all of us sharing the knowledge. Team members have also reported that they have been developing and improving their computer and language skills. The team work has been developing a new way of functioning in everyday working life: we are surpassing the habitual ways of doing things and gaining new aspects. Dialogic evaluation and communication established in the research work of the CREA and transmitted to the project is a valuable new experience for all other partners.

In the third group – benefits for countries - the first learning festival in Spain is considered as the greatest benefit as well as the collective event of partners which was part of it. Both events made the cooperation between the two Spanish partners and the work of all partners visible. The project is bringing empowerment for our own work and brought new impulses to the German LLW

movement. Transfer and exchange of knowledge between regional coordinators of LLW certainly prove the enhancement of working experience at local level.

In the fourth group – benefits for the area of LL and AE – teams highlighted practical support of the Manual for LF Coordination with its overview of fundamental tasks of LF coordinators and their partners and the dissemination strategy plan with its holistic approach. All team members declared that the innovative Evaluation model, instruments for evaluation of learning festivals, which are putting the expectations and the roles of participants forward in the LF movement evaluation process, as central benefits. Two other processes triggered by the project were mentioned: the project helped to summarise the actual tendencies in lifelong learning and enabled to create a coherent development strategy of the RO partner.

Team members also highlighted the transversal, interrelated issues such as participants' empowerments and dialogic evaluation and communication paving its way into the work of partner institutions.

Team members' contributions to the project

Team members evaluated also what they believe is their most important contribution to the project. They recognise 23 contributions that can be classified into two groups:

1. The input of partners to the planned outputs of the project.
2. The impact of partners on different levels and fields in the area of lifelong learning.

According to the project proposal each partner has some specific tasks in the project assigned to him on the basis of his professional achievements or his networking structure that guarantees the implementation and further dissemination of the projects results.

Team members emphasised their input to the:

- ★ analysis of real situation in the area of LL,
- ★ adaptation of the project tools to use them in national language,
- ★ first learning festival and collective event in Spain,
- ★ creation of the Manual,
- ★ e – bulletin,
- ★ other projects tools (web page, forum, other national link sites, designer solutions),
- ★ dissemination and media promotion plans,
- ★ inclusion of the voices of participants in learning festival movement.

Team members highlighted also some broader contributions, spreading beyond the project itself: sharing new knowledge which widens the EU dimension of LLW movement, contribution to the South East EU experience in LLW, dissemination of the European experience in the participating countries and vice versa, dissemination of the project outcomes in other national and EU projects and widening of national LF as a result of the project.

Team members also consider the sense of responsibility and participation in all common “duties” as an important contribution reflecting EU dimension: in the work of the project team cultural diversity is respected, and the tensions deriving from differences are overcome with humour and good will.

★ Evaluation results from the team meeting in Spain

Prepared by:

Darijan Novak, 
Slovenian Institute for Adult Education

The last meeting of the Grundtvig project Widening and Strengthening the European Dimension of the Lifelong Learning Week Movement (Project Reference No. 100924-CP-1-SI-GRUNDTVIG-G1) took place in Barcelona in the late November 2003. In this article we are presenting some results from evaluation on the meeting.

Evaluation of the meeting consists of Daily and Overall evaluation questionnaires. Daily evaluation questionnaire is being filled out at the end of each working day, while Overall evaluation questionnaire is the last act of the meeting. Both questionnaires were adopted from publication A Survival Kit for European Project Management, Advice for Coordinators of Centralised Socrates Projects (www.sokrates.at/survivalkit).

Daily Evaluations

We were discussing the opened issues of the project for three days in Barcelona. Our meetings usually consist of country presentations, or depict certain output of the project with the main goal to concretise further actions in order to provide smooth execution of the Action plan. The participants see the discussions, presentations, reports as interesting, useful and necessary. They are eager to listen and learn about other national realities of Learning Festivals. They especially value clear and concrete 'user friendly' presentations.

Although the presentations were interesting, the participants complain that they are too long. In that aspect, we would be much more efficient if the instructions and the time limits should be followed by all partners. The second most often mentioned

critic was that some of the presentations were not concrete enough.

Expectations of the partners are in close connection to those set in the project proposal and very much in line with the team meeting goals. They want to learn about proceedings of the project in other partner countries, as well as about the forthcoming tasks. The questionnaires contain evidence that generally speaking all the expectations of the partners were met. Anyhow, there was one suggestion worth mentioning for improvement of our team meetings: should include all the participants in the planning of meetings.

The participants were in general in favour of all sessions, though one member was of opinion that some issues could be discussed via Forum. There is no doubt all the sessions are seen as useful, but some of them should be shorter or more structured.

In spite of very intense and tiring meetings the participants seem to be content, as we managed to produce new action plan which is outlining our further work. We were witnessing some time management problems, occurring mainly because all the partners are not following the proposed structure of presentations and not sticking to the time limitations. The problem could be solved with stricter moderating.

Overall Evaluation

The members of the international team consider the extent of the contributions to the meeting from all partners to be more or less equal. It is understandable that partners do not contribute to the same extend for the tasks have been pinned down in our proposal of the project, and they are not the same for all partners. Besides that the concentration of the workload for each of the partner varies in project's course. We find it a bit worrying that there is a certain critique aimed at the work of some partners.

Regarding the extent and quality of the intercultural dimension and the extent of opportunities for participants to share information about their own countries we can be satisfied with our partners' vies on the opportunities for the

exchange of information. While most of the partners feel the level of the communication and opportunities for it have been exploited to the highest extent, those who are not completely satisfied give very different reasons for that. Some have underlined the cohesion of the group is on appropriate level. Shortcomings mentioned in the questionnaires: we are trying to go too deep into certain issues and some partners did not use all the opportunities for communication enough.

In the question about the extent to which a reasonable representation of participants from various countries has been achieved, all the partners have confirmed that the representation of all countries was achieved. As it seems this representation was also reasonable for no one has objected to it. Even more, they have been very satisfied with presence and contribution of our silent partner.

When questioning the organisation of the transnational event, nearly half of participants found the meeting well organised with clear planning and realistic time scales. Others were criticizing timescales or planning, but they do understand that we have quite a heavy work load to carry. In addition to that, we have shortened the meeting for one day as it was originally planned. Therefore it was logical we had some problems following through the planned activities. We managed to finish all the opened questions regarding our project. Nevertheless also those who made some comments agree that a lot of work was done. Partners suggest the following changes concerning the issue: anticipating more social/cultural program, planning the meeting sooner, implementing more flexibility and negotiation.

The majority of team members reported that the effectiveness of the content has been on the high level and the activities were well balanced. The rest noticed that there should be more social and cultural activities, as well as free time. While there were enough opportunities for the social activities in the evenings, there was no free time at all. As one of the partners mentioned inclusion of missing activities would probably foster motivation and

participation. There was one remark concerning the method namely, that other methods besides plenum should be fostered.

Effectiveness of the delivery by trainers, workshop leaders, in our case all the partners, is also being measured. Only the minority of the team members are satisfied with other partners and their involvement. The criticisms put forward were not really hard as no one was completely negative. The partners are noticing differences among partners, especially concerning language skills. There are also some suggestions to improve didactics. Also worth mentioning is the fact that partners in general are evaluating competencies and knowledge as very good.

Partners are of opinion that all of them have the opportunity to contribute their own expertise and that their expectations have been taken into account. Nevertheless they have put out that everything was not perfect. They have listed following reasons: needs and expectations are coming in the way of one another, the time pressure was too big, not enough respect of dialogic principles. Another suggestion that should have been mentioned is the one that expectations of the partners should have been shared in the beginning of the event.

Evaluation instruments are seen as needed as they give us feedback on our work, but also what was left out. We also have the opportunity to evaluate what topics were seen as more useful and interesting than the others. The findings of the evaluations should be taken into account when organising the next meeting. Partners find the evaluations at the end of our already intense meetings quite tiring, but also difficult. One member of the team thinks that we are putting too much stress to evaluation. One of the suggestions state that we should use more quantitative methods.

Partners seem to be very satisfied with the provision and suitability of materials, resources and equipment, but they do suggest that all materials should be prepared in time. Besides that, one of them mentions, that materials should be

studied by all partners. One of participants found materials not concrete and detailed enough.

All the participants of the team meeting were in general very satisfied with the quality and appropriateness of the domestic arrangements and comfort. They have found the distance from the hotel to the venue, where the meetings took place, as well as the distance from the venue to the dining room, too long. In that way we have lost too much time.

The results of the meeting evaluations are quite encouraging, for all of the partners of the project seem to be content with all various aspects of the project. Of course, there are things that can be improved. We should start planning the last meeting in Romania a bit earlier involving all partners in its development. We should collect our presentations before the actual meeting, so partners are given time to read them in advance. In that way a substantial amount of time can be saved, which could be used for social activities, or free time. Also, we all should devote more attention to keep all the partners' presentations in line with the envisioned structure, and especially with the set time limits for each presentations.

★ Evaluation of LLW 2003 in Bulgaria

Prepared by:

Milka Atanasova,

Dr. Maria Todorova,

LLW-National Coordinators for Bulgaria



Introduction

During the *LLL Days, 2003* in Bulgaria two questionnaires that were prepared by the Slovenian team were distributed. They were given to all the coordinators in each of the cities participating in this *LLL* forum. Responsible for distribution and collecting of the questionnaires were students, collaborators from IIZ/DVV – Sofia and volunteers from various NGOs. They were

instructed to motivate the *participants* at the forum to fill in and return at the very day the questionnaires so that they could individually express their opinion and thus contribute to more effective *LLL Days* in the future. The total number of received questionnaires is 700 out of 1200 distributed. The questionnaires were filled during the work of the different sections at the last day of the forum.

The survey of the representatives of the different *organizations* was done through e-mail. Each participating organization and the coordinators of the *LLL Days* were informed about the structure of the questionnaire and the deadlines for their return.

Aims of the survey

1. Aims of the survey on the participants:

- ★ To define the demographic profile of the participants in the *LLL Days*;
- ★ To register the level of satisfaction of the *participants* at the *LLL Days*;
- ★ To collect a data base of well defined important thematic fields which could become the focus of the next forum.

2. Aims of the survey with the providers: To investigate:

- ★ the expectations of the participating *organizations*;
- ★ the fields of interest;
- ★ the level of satisfaction of their participation at the *LLL Days*;
- ★ their intentions for the next *LLL Days*.

A. The form of the survey for participants

The issues addressed concerned:

- 1) The way of receiving of information about LLW
- 2) About the experience in LLW
- 3) Rating of the event and comments
- 4) Recommendation to organizers of the LLW for next year
- 5) Remarks and proposals

- 6) About the influence of the LLW upon the motivation of the individuals to continue to learn

B. The form of the survey- for providers

The issues addressed concerned:

- 1) About their aims and expectations;
- 2) Rate of achievement of the goals and expectations;
- 3) Interesting topics
- 4) Events and participants- quantity indicators
- 5) About the experience in LLW;
- 6) Future plan of participation;
- 7) New topics;
- 8) About the benefits;
- 9) Ways of informing of the audience;
- 10) Supports

A. Respondents to the survey: participants

Demographics

Respondents of different age groups took part in the survey. The largest group are respondents in the age group of 18 – 55, which is quite logical. This age group is composed of potential or active workers. Consequently they are the most interested part in the society as they have achieved already basic education and some professional and life experience. In fact they are the key element in every economy and educational policy. In the future the age group of the students (14 – 18) should be further involved as they represent only 10% of the respondents. In the context of the fifth key message of the Memorandum on Lifelong Learning, focusing on rethinking the professional consultancy, a basic moment is the creation of more opportunities for timely and personified consultant services not only for employed people, but also for young people. In this relation attracting larger quota of students in the Lifelong Learning Days would benefit their orientation in the business requirements, the opportunities for education and qualification and the employer's expectations. Relatively low is the representation of the last age group – above 55. Their participation is only 5%. In the future, considering the demographic shrink, the experience of these age group and their qualifications would be mostly

needed. To keep them informed and to get them involved in the Lifelong Learning Days will be needed “to keep their competence in good shape” and to create a sort of “parallel” career. For the next Lifelong Learning Days men seem to be another of the target groups. Their participation of only 20% is modest compared to women's participation of 80%. Similar proportion could be noticed in many university courses and the NGO sector. Unfortunately the people with lowest education are also of the target groups of this forum. Based on surveys, on national scale the conclusion could be reached that the least educated are also the least motivated to keep on learning. Probably at the next forum a more effective strategy for attracting larger numbers from this target group should be prepared, so that gradually their negativism, mistrust and unwillingness for learning are overcome. Interesting are the data about the professional affiliation of the participants. The biggest number are the participants working in the field of education and culture - 70%, followed by the unemployed- 25%, representatives of the trade and industry- 10%, NGOs- 15% and politics- 3%. Based on the essence of work in the various sectors, most satisfactory are the data about the participation of the representatives from the education and cultural sectors. They are the ones whose support the future attempts to create a Law on Adult Education in Bulgaria will be of vital importance. In the discussion experts should be involved, who are not only competent, but also convinced about the need and importance of creating such a law. The Lifelong Learning Days are an important factor stimulating the discussions on this topic and creating a larger community of people who can “speak the same language” so to say. For the next Lifelong Learning Days more representatives of the other sectors will be attracted as all the citizens of a modern society are interested in achieving a higher living standard and professional status. Parallel to this, specified approaches for awakening the interest of the people from small towns (only 30%) and villages (only 10%) should be used.

1. The data analysis shows that the participants in the forum got informed mainly through

leaflets, posters advertising, personal contacts, media and Internet. These known and well proven information tools work very well in promoting the Lifelong Learning days and are easily accessible from an economic point of view.

2. It turned out that about 70% of the respondents do not participate for the first time, which is a good proportion compared to those who have no idea about the aims of the forum.
3. The level of satisfaction is very good and this refers to 80% of the participants at the forum. Therefore the results of the above mentioned point are clear. Obviously the people enjoy good conditions during the Lifelong Learning Days, beneficial to the establishment of new contacts, exchange of experience and provision of useful information on relevant topics.
4. Regardless of the fact that a very high level of satisfaction has been registered or may be because of this, the participants recommend to the organizers to widen the context of the forum and to include more complex issues to be discussed such as methodology for education of disadvantaged people, modern approaches to professional consultancy for Roma people, ideas for law on Adult Education, design of new teaching material etc.
5. Other than the suggested thematic discussions, interesting are the recommendations and the additional notes of the respondents. They believe that the media should be more involved before, during and following the Lifelong Learning Days. Even if the Bulgarian media took different initiatives in promoting the Lifelong Learning Days still they are few in numbers and somehow remain on a second place compared for example with the printed advertisements. Therefore this is a field that needs more work in the future. A good reference point for actions are the guidelines in the handbook specifically prepared within the project for the implementation of Lifelong Learning Days. Another interesting idea is to foster an intensified information exchange

between the licensed centers. Practice shows that during the forum these centers strive to create a special section devoted to the issues of maintaining and improving the quality of education, but still there are few willing to openly share their problems and their ways of being competitive. It is probable that by gaining more experience through European projects these centers would become more open and willing to present their positive characteristics and how they were created.

6. The Lifelong Learning Days seem to be a strong catalyst for the intentions to continue the education and training. This conclusion is based on the responses of 75% of the respondents. They are convinced that Lifelong Learning is very important for their professional and personal development in accordance with the high European requirements: knowledge of 2-3 foreign languages, computer literacy and many social skills. In 2007 Bulgaria will become a member of the EC and people are well aware of the responsibility for their own development.

B. Respondents to the survey: providers

Demographics: 108 - providers and 12 - coordinators.

1. *The aims* of the participating institutions could be defined in three key areas:
 - ★ to promote equal treatment of formal, non-formal and informal learning;
 - ★ to offer informing and counseling on learning;
 - ★ to celebrate outstanding learning achievements.
2. These aims partly reveal what values are dominant in the educational policies of the different organizations and what trends have priorities in their development. Unfortunately due to the limited number of possible answers (3) it is not possible to completely reveal the

total profile of the participating institutions. The aims that were listed are important, but on a second plan there are many others that could support the culture of learning and create a positive attitude to learning such as: to arouse curiosity about and appreciation of learning, to promote own institution/activity, to facilitate the contacts with the potential learners.

2. According to the data *the level of satisfaction* from the achievement of the goals is relatively high. It is possible that after some time with the accumulation of experience the organizations and the institutions to set higher goals for participation in such forums that would benefit more people.
3. The most interesting for the public fields are: European projects and programs; “best practices” in the context of the different types of education and at last the problems of the “early leaving school”. In Bulgaria these topics occupy central place due to many reasons. On one side the projects and the “best practices” provide chances for experience sharing and development of various professional and social skills, on the other – provide opportunities for an easier adaptation to the values of the European educational policy. The interest towards the “early leaving schools” is self explicit. In our country their number grows very fast during the last few years. The growing attention towards this group of young people will most probably unite the efforts of the representatives from the formal and non-formal education to seek joint pragmatic way out of the situation. At the *Lifelong Learning Days* specialists discussed how to support these people to cope with the requirements of the school environment and to continue their education. These discussions will go on in the future as well.
4. The participating organizations at the Lifelong Learning days initiated many events: exhibitions, Days of Open Doors, round table discussions, seminars, presentations of educational programs, working meetings, training sessions, excursions with educational

aims, museum visits etc. The highest number of participants attracted the following events: the opening of the *Lifelong Learning Days*, exhibitions; educational materials markets. The lowest numbers of participants attended round table discussions, seminars and working meetings. This fact is understandable viewed from the perspective that these initiatives are specialized. In order to attract more people from the wide public together with the specialists more attention will be given to diversified activities both in scope and purpose. During the “Days” special attention should be given to the good mood of the participants so that they get informed and in the same time motivate representatives from different institutions to seek ways together to overcome any challenges.

5. The survey shows that 80 of the partners’ institutions have participated at the previous *Lifelong Learning Days* as well and 40 are the organizations participating for the first time at this initiative. What is very inspiring is the fact that all participating organizations have the intention to be involved again at the next *Lifelong Learning Days* in autumn. They plan to set up a PR strategy, a new culture of interaction with the other organizations and to include more sections. Additionally the organizations intend to involve more foreign partners and to present “open lessons” in the context of adult education, to initiate discussions in the methods of Roma education.
6. The main benefits for the organizations are: new contacts, exchange of experience and ideas, more information about Lifelong Learning.
7. About 25-30% of the individual participants have expressed their interest to receive information on courses that were presented by the organizations during the forum. This interest might grow over time if a way is found to effectively promote and advertise such educational services. This is an issue on which there is lots to be achieved in Bulgaria. About

35% are the participants that would get subscribed in the offered courses.

8. A very important task is the spread of information about the Lifelong Learning Days, because a good advertisement attracts more participants.

The organizations have used the following in order to inform the public: internet, TV, radio, newspapers, mouth to mouth advertisement, through the centers for adult education, by telephone and through flyers.

9. Cooperation with other organizations and institutions proves to be very useful. Representatives from different sectors agreed on the opinion that related to the organizing and implementing of the *Lifelong Learning Days* conditions were created for mutual support.

The regional and thematic coordinators in the capital and whole country contributed largely to this aim. The representatives from the organizations shared that they are truly satisfied from their work.

10. The support by the coordinating institutions could be diversified in three: financial, moral/personal and promotional. The support from the State administration is on different levels and could be defined as satisfactory. The recommendations are that the support is bigger in financial and moral dimensions.
11. The general recommendations are all in one direction: the creation of a LLW-network all over Bulgaria and establish contacts to foreign networks.

The two types of questionnaires gave the possibility to collect lots of data, which after being analyzed with adequate statistical methods such as factor analysis and/or content analysis will be made available to ministries involved in adult education. Based on this analysis they could

prioritize the national initiatives for the forthcoming development of the adult education in Bulgaria.

The analysis could be useful for the development of the National Marketing Strategy for vocational education & training and to explore the attitudes, values and behaviours of employers and the general community about skills and learning.

It would be useful for the implementation of the next *Lifelong Learning Days* to include questions on the barriers for learning and how to ease the access to educational services on national and local level.



First results of the LLW evaluation in Slovenia

Prepared by:

Olga Drofjenik, 
LLW-Grundtvig project coordinator

1. Introduction

Since October 2002, partners¹ in the '*Widening and strengthening the European dimension of the Lifelong Learning Week movement*' (hereafter LLW-Grundtvig) project have accomplished a series of tasks and produced a number of outcomes such as national reports on the status of lifelong learning in participating countries, a manual on LLW coordination used further on to establish networks of regional and thematic coordinators, the project web site and high-quality promotional material (five-lingual poster, bi-lingual leaflet). Partners also contributed to the implementation of the first learning festival in Spain, developed a

¹ Partner institutions from Bulgaria, Germany, Romania, Spain and Slovenia are joining their forces; the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education is the project coordinator. In addition, Switzerland is acting as a silent partner.

strategy for the dissemination of project outcomes and media promotion plans. An evaluation model has been established and the Slovenian LLW calendar is being used as a point of reference in the process of establishing a European web-based calendar of LLW/LF events. More information on project developments and outcomes can be obtained at <http://www.llw5.org>.

The aim of this article is to present the new evaluation model and its first results related to the Slovenian LLW. But first of all, on behalf of the LLW working team I would like to express our gratitude to all LLW providers and coordinators in Slovenia who responded to our initiative and used our questionnaires in addition to the regular LLW evaluation thereby providing us with feedback from LLW participants as well as with some additional aspects concerning the providers' and coordinators' point of view.

2. LLW evaluation model

The theoretical evaluation model has been prepared by our Spanish partner CREA. It is based on the principle of dialogic evaluation. The model defines evaluation aims and instruments as well as criteria for its high-quality, efficient and reliable implementation. In general, three evaluation instruments were developed: questionnaires, general assemblies and communicative discussion groups. Within the framework of the Slovenian LLW 2003, only the testing of the first instrument has been carried out. For this purpose, two questionnaires have been used:

- *The questionnaire for participants* – designed to explore participants' needs as well as impacts of LLW on their participation in lifelong learning; these aspects of LLW evaluation are considered to be innovative in the Slovenian as well as in the international LLW/LF arena;

The questionnaire consists of the following clusters:

- ★ *information source of LLW event,*
- ★ *experience with LLW,*

- ★ *evaluation of and commentaries on the LLW event,*
- ★ *initiatives given to providers of events,*
- ★ *remarks and recommendations,*
- ★ *LLW impact on motivation for participation in lifelong learning.*

- *The questionnaire for providers* – basically, the international (project-related) version of this questionnaire derives from two traditional Slovenian LLW questionnaires and covers some additional aspects of LLW coordination and implementation. For purposes of the Slovenian evaluation, a third questionnaire was designed in order to capture these supplementary aspects only, and it was applied in addition to the two traditional questionnaires.

The questionnaire consists of the following clusters:

- ★ *contents: aims and expectations of LLW providers, evaluation of their attainment; most interesting LLW themes,*
- ★ *participation: events and participants – quantitative indicators,*
- ★ *impact: experience with LLW, plans for further cooperation, new contents and forms, benefits,*
- ★ *modes of information,*
- ★ *organisation: cooperation among LLW providers,*
- ★ *support: types of support, evaluation of the role of coordinators at various levels*
- ★ *resources*
- ★ *media promotion: quantitative indicators.*

3. Implementation of the survey

Within the LLW 2003 evaluation framework, more than 100 LLW providers (approx. one fifth of all LLW 2003 providers) took part in the testing of questionnaires. In about 250 LLW events where the questionnaires were applied, about 6,200 participants took part (out of approx. 80,000 of all LLW participants). The questionnaires were filled in and returned by 1,981 persons (32.3% of all

LLW participants)², which means about 2.5% of all LLW 2003 visitors of events.

The involvement of providers in the testing of evaluation instruments was strictly **voluntary**; the choice of events where the testing took place was left up to providers. Due to this, it is necessary to emphasize that the **evaluation results are not representative for the whole Slovenian Lifelong Learning Week**. Together with other partners' findings they will be presented as case studies for each participating country.

However, in spite of this limitation, the results can be used for orientation – at the level of national coordination as well as at the level of regional and thematic LLW coordination and the level of providers. A short presentation of some survey results related to LLW participants is given in the following chapters.

4. Survey results – LLW participants

On participants

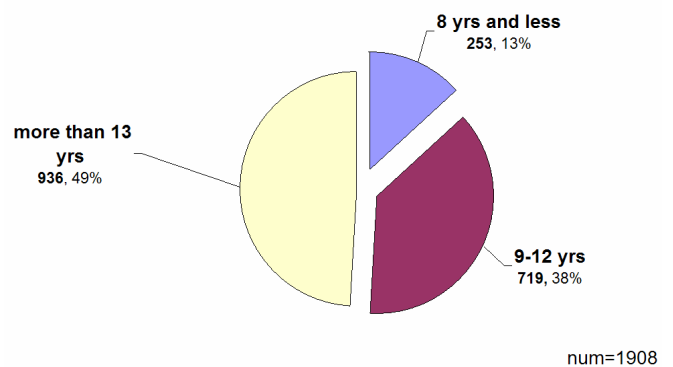
Nearly 2,000 visitors of about 250 LLW events have filled-in and returned questionnaires. A presentation of their years of schooling, field of employment, place of residence and age structure will be presented.

Data on participants' years of schooling are quite encouraging. In spite of the fact that the majority of them (46%) has more than 13 years of schooling, the share of those with 9-12 years or 8 years and less is relatively high as well (38% for

² The Bulgarian partners distributed 1,200 questionnaires for participants and got back 700 of them. They collected 108 questionnaires filled in by providers and 12 by coordinators. All feedback information is in Bulgarian, except for 194 questionnaires (from two events) filled in by participants. The Spanish partner (CREA) evaluated one event (a daylong literary circle) attended by 300 people; the questionnaire was filled in by 42 of them. Romanian partners and the second Spanish partner (FEUP) have not submitted their results yet, whereas the German partner envisages the implementation of these evaluation instruments in September this year.

the first age group and 15% for the second one). For before mentioned methodological reasons these results can not be generalised, however, we can assume that LLW events address and consequently motivate for participation in lifelong learning that part of population with lower educational attainment.

Graph 1: LLW visitors by years of schooling



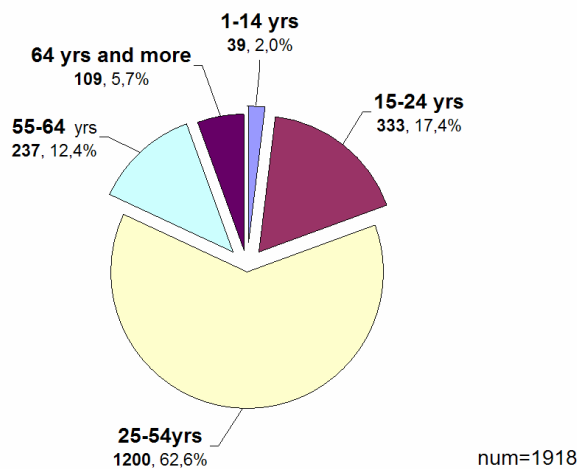
Source: Questionnaire for participants, Slovenian LLW 2003, LLW-Grundtvig project, SIAE 2003

The majority of interviewees are working in the field of education (18%), industry and trade (11% each). The share of unemployed participants is 18%, of retired people 14%, and of pupils and students nearly 6%.

More than 50% of interviewees live in cities, 21% in towns, and 26% in rural areas.

The age structure of interviewees confirms the speciality of the Slovenian LLW: although the majority of LLW visitors are adults of age 25-64 years, other age groups are represented with considerable shares as well.

Graph 2: LLW visitors by age



Source: Questionnaire for participants, Slovenian LLW 2003, LLW-Grundtvig project, SIAE 2003

The fact that among 2,000 of interviewees the share of those who visited LLW for the first time was 60% indicates the role of LLW in attracting new people to lifelong learning. From 40-44% of these visitors concluded 9-12 or even more than 13 years of schooling, whereas the share of those with less than 8 years of schooling was 15%.

The majority of visitors rated the event they visited by 'excellent' (45%) or 'very good' (43%); the rate 'satisfactory' was used by 12% of interviewees. However, certain target groups were quite critical when rating certain events, e.g. one fifth of 325 unemployed people rated the events they visited by 'poor' or 'satisfactory'. In their view, especially informative and counselling events deserved the rating 'satisfactory' (26%) and presentations of educational programme the rating 'poor' or 'satisfactory' (23%).

On participants' initiatives

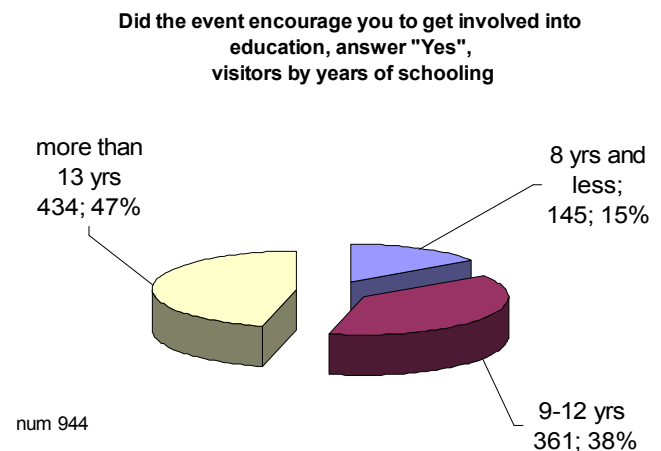
More than 1,000 initiatives related to future contents of LLW events were formulated by interviewees. First analyses show that events in the field of health, education, culture, environment protection, overcoming of disabilities, employment, basic skills for life and work, and politics are the most desired ones. Many

interviewees share the opinion that changes or novelties are not necessary. We expect that these initiatives will become important incentives for providers to enrich LLW contents and ways of presenting them – within LLW as well as in the provision of adult education in general.

On LLW impact on participation in education

To the question whether their participation at the LLW event stimulated interviewees to get involved in education themselves 56% (944) responded positively, which indicates the role LLW can have in enlarging the participation of population groups – also those with less years of schooling – in education and lifelong learning.

Graph 3: LLW as a stimulating factor for participation by years of schooling



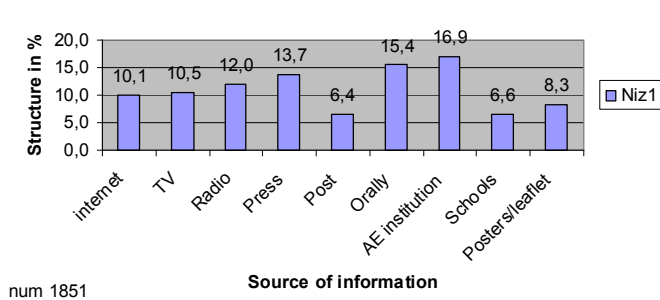
Source: Questionnaire for participants, Slovenian LLW 2003, LLW-Grundtvig project, SIAE 2003

The age structure of interviewees who expressed their interest for getting involved in further education shows that the majority comes from the 25-54 age group (61%), followed by those from the 55-64 age group (15%) and by the young ones (up to 14 years - 15%). The great majority (74%) are women.

On LLW information sources

All answers to the question ‘How did you receive the information about LLW?’ were grouped into eight previously defined groups (1,851 replies) and into the group ‘Other’ (486 replies, out of these ‘libraries’ and ‘societies’ represent 73 replies). The graph below shows the structure of information sources according to the eight groups.

Graph 4: How did you get the information about LLW?



Source: Questionnaire for participants, Slovenian LLW 2003, LLW-Grundtvig project, SIAE 2003

The most important source of information on LLW are obviously educational institutions for adults and youth, followed by information acquired from acquaintances, relatives, friends, business partners – nearly 40% of all replies refer to these sources. The Internet is still lagging behind traditional media, whereas the relatively high share of answers referring to LLW posters and leaflets comes as a surprise. Providers actually showed great inventiveness in using the latter by exhibiting them in various places such as shops and market places, health centres, museums, municipalities, insurance companies, city centres, post offices, announcement boards in enterprises, and similar.

5. Conclusions

The messages derived from the first results of the survey on participants provide LLW coordinators and providers with sufficient ground for LLW planning by taking into account participants' socio-

economic characteristics, their evaluations, recommendations and needs.

More in-depth analyses will shed light upon the structure of participants' needs – not only according to years of schooling and age groups but also with relation to the place of living (city, town, rural area) and field of work.

By crossing certain feed-back information from participants with replies from providers (based on the questionnaire for providers), LLW impacts will be illuminated even more: LLW's role in motivating people for further education, needs for new contents and the readiness of providers to respond to these needs, partnerships among providers in the process of initiating and satisfying learners' needs in cities and rural areas.

The analysis of data collected from providers of events will also shed light on the organisation's aims that they try to place as priorities within LLW as well as on the compatibility of the latter with national goals and demands in the field of lifelong learning.

In the opinion of LLW-Grundtvig collaborators, the evaluation tools that have been developed and tested present a valuable outcome of our international project. The meeting with our LLW providers and coordinators on 6 May 2004 proved that they share the same opinion and the interest for upgrading the Slovenian LLW evaluation process with the above mentioned aspects.

The Slovenian Institute for Adult Education will address the National LLW Committee with the initiative to ask the Ministry of education, science and sport to support the upgrading and systematic implementation of the LLW evaluation morally and financially. A similar initiative will be sent to the National Committee on behalf of LLW providers and coordinators as well.

Through the support of the Ministry of education, science and sport, SIAE will complement the evaluation tools and establish an on-line programme to enable providers and coordinators to make their own analyses. A plan which will assure

an adequate representation of geographical areas, target groups and LLW providers will also be prepared. Survey results based on such a systematic approach will provide solid grounds for decision-making – related not only to the learning festival itself but also to adult education in general.

★ Preparatory activities for Slovenian LLW 2004

Prepared by:

Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik, MSc 
Slovenian national LLW coordinator



From **October 18 to 24**, Slovenia will witness its ninth celebration of lifelong learning. Educational, promotional, informative, cultural, and social events will be held in cities as well

as in villages, in schools and also in non-formal settings, at meeting places for different generations, and in homes, enabling people to get in contact personally but also over the telephone or Internet. This year the European year of education through sports will dictate the central theme of the festival although coordinators and providers will once again be free to tailor their events according to the needs of their environments.

While still in the process of analysing results of LLW 2003, especially of data acquired by evaluation instruments generated by the *Widening and Strengthening the European Dimension of the LLW Movement* (LLW-Grundtvig) Project, the Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SIAE) has already carried out several preparatory activities for LLW 2004. As far as **national coordination** of the Week is concerned, the LLW 2004 action plan was prepared in March and published in the first issue of LLW-Novičke. For the first time in the LLW bulletin the report on the previous festival and the action plan for the next one were combined. According to the reaction of readers,

the bulletin's functionality thereby increased considerably and from now on we will continue with this editorial policy. In addition, a new media was introduced for promotion and documentation purposes – a CD compilation of documents, photos and graphic solutions related to LLW 2003 milestones and highlights was prepared, and another one for 2004 has been initiated. Thereby, all detailed information on the festival will be recorded and made available to people who are interested in getting to know not only the most visible LLW outcomes but also its background and preparatory as well as concluding activities.

Among the most important activities that have been carried out at the national level up to date, there were **two meetings** held with our partners, i.e. the meeting of **LLW providers and coordinators**, and the meeting of the **National LLW Committee**. On 6 May 2004, about 40 representatives of institutions which take active part in the organisation of LLW at local and regional level got together in Ljubljana. The analysis of LLW 2003 was presented to them – first, through indicators obtained by the two traditional evaluation questionnaires, and in addition, from the viewpoint of LLW participants. This aspect has been analysed for the first time due to evaluation instruments developed within the LLW-Grundtvig project; the contents of this presentation are given in a separate article of this bulletin. Participants in the meeting were intrigued by the potentials of information derived from such an evaluation of the learning festival therefore they agreed to send an initiative to the National LLW Committee expressing their interest for this work to continue.

On the other hand, guidelines for LLW 2004 were given to providers and coordinators who then vividly discussed various aspects of their work and addressed several expectations to SIAE in the role of national coordinator and to the Ministry of education, science and sport in its capacity to financially support their endeavours. A representative of the Ministry gave a statement concerning future financing of LLW activities (coordination and organisation of events). The postponement of the public tender, the main source

of public LLW financing at the local level, from spring to autumn has caused uncertainty and consequent diminishing of activities in LLW 2003; a similar effect can be expected in 2004 as well therefore participants in the meeting urged the Ministry to carry out the tender as soon as possible.

The meeting of the National LLW Committee, a steering board with representatives of competent ministries and other important bodies, took place on 11 May. Beside the above mentioned aspects, some additional themes were discussed in order to obtain the Committee's approval and guidance for long-term activities such as the celebration of the tenth anniversary of the LLW project (in 2005), Slovenia's participation in the new international project *International Adult Learners Week in Europe - IntALWinE* (see article in e-bulletin 4&5, p. 21), and the initiative to enrich the LLW evaluation by upgrading evaluation instruments acquired through cooperation in the LLW-Grundtvig project. The Committee took great interest in all initiatives, granted its moral support and promised to initiate actions for acquiring financial support wherever possible.

To date, the LLW working team at SIAE has had several meetings not only to set solid conceptual grounds for this year's country-wide manifestation but also to define the contents of, and necessary steps leading towards **LLW events organised by SIAE** at national level. As a result, the framework of the eighth Adult Education Colloquium has been outlined. On October 22 and 23, domestic and international professionals will meet in Ljubljana for discussions on the theme *Teacher education and training in adult education*. The international dimension of the colloquium is due to the fact that its contents are linked to the project Grundtvig 1: *Adult Education Driving Licence – ADDED*). In the project, partners from Estonia, Greece, Norway and Slovenia are attempting to define the necessary competences of teachers for work with adults rejoining formal ways of education for various reasons. The adult education colloquium will thus be an opportunity to present and evaluate the first results of project work. More

information on this topic is available at <http://llw.acs.si/ac/08/>.

The process of adding new names to the existing list of ninety 1997-2003 SIAE award winners for exceptional achievements in adult learning is currently underway. The public call for nominations has resulted in 23 applications which are now being checked and summarised for the Awards Committee to select the most suitable ones. During summer months, SIAE award winners will be interviewed for purposes of preparing a written and a video-based presentation. Awards will be presented within the framework of the LLW 2004 grand opening taking place on Friday, 10 October. This aspect of LLW will be enriched by the outcomes of cooperation within the before mentioned Grundtvig 4 project - IntALWinE. Out of the current pool of twenty-three individual award winners Slovenia will choose one to participate in the International Learners Forum near London (4-6 October 2004) – an event organised by NIACE, UK, and designed to empower representatives of participating countries to introduce the concept of *learners forum* in their environments.

Obviously, the preparation of this year's festival will open up new challenges and opportunities for learning, responding to obstacles in creative ways, and above all, for strengthening ties and partnerships that have been developing over the years. Consequently, our main aims this year are to invigorate the network of LLW friends, successfully carry out LLW 2004 by introducing some novelties, and prepare grounds for our tenth anniversary next year.

★ **The Sixth Congress for Literacy Participants, Valladolid, 2004**

Prepared by:

Sergio González,

Elena Duque,

Lidia Puigvert



On the 27th of March 2004, the Sixth Congress for Literacy Participants has taken place in Valladolid. For a sixth consecutive year different adults learning to read and write in centres and associations, connected with the Adult Education in the whole Spain, has assembled to meet with their dream for an educational model that they want. The event was organised by CONFAPEA³ (Confederation of Federations and Associations of Participants in Democratic Culture and Adult Education) and the Asociación Familiar de la Rondilla de Valladolid. More than 300 people from different cultures, ages and origins gathered together with the will to establish some bases that will allow the improvement of the literacy.

The three key axes about what was dealt with at the Congress were:

1. What do the participants want to learn?
2. How do the participants want to learn?
3. How is the right to have a say and a vote in the entities dedicated to Adult Education applied?

1) What do the participants want to learn?

One of the priorities that the participants themselves consider as essential is to foment quality training. For this it is necessary to work towards the improvement of reading comprehension and oral expression. In this way it was stated that it is important that the reading

materials are related to people's daily-life and that they could read current news in the papers.

The society nowadays also demands new skills related with the processing and selection of information, for this reason is it considered essential to start introducing computing in the initial levels. Another of the demands explained in the Congress was the want to learn languages (Spanish, Catalan, English) and mathematics, in fact a pedagogy of maximums is demanded because all people are capable of learning.

2) How do the participants want to learn?

On this point many ideas arose. One of these revolved around the promotion of educational methodologies based on dialogue and of an egalitarian and democratic character that allows the generation of illusion in the participants. Learning should be based on interactions with other people and with the professors, in this way it is possible to accelerate performance and overcome those difficulties that appear in the classroom.

Other demands explained were, the flexibility of timetables to increase the participation in the educational centres, the creation of spaces where it is possible to realise training activities and the development of an intercultural education in which a real exchange between different cultures exists.

3) How is the right to have a say and a vote in the entities dedicated to Adult Education applied?

In order to foster that all people can participate in an egalitarian manner in the associations and educational centres, it is essential that there exist assemblies giving possibilities to these people to take part in the decisions set there. Activities should never be carried out if participants have not discussed them; this consists in the active participation of the people in the management of the entities.

³ More information in web page: <http://www.neskes.net/confapea>

Some of the proposals that arose on this point were:

- ★ To foster a dialogue between cultures in the organs of decision of the distinct associations.
- ★ The meetings should be open to all people and based on democratic principles.
- ★ The participants have to be present at the evaluations.
- ★ The associations that are geographically distanced can meet and organise themselves through virtual meetings⁴.
- ★ Egalitarian dialogue should be the basic premise for the management of adult educational and cultural associations.

★ **The Workshop "Adult Education in Democratic Countries", Barcelona**

Prepared by:

Montserrat Fisas,
Oriol Rios



On the 12th of February in Barcelona, Spain, was held a Workshop with main topic Adult Education. It was organised by CREA and the Special Centre for Research in Theories and Practices for Overcoming Inequalities, and took place in the Scientific Park of the University of Barcelona.

The title of the Workshop was *L'educació de persones adultes als països democràtics* (Adult Education in Democratic Countries) and dealt with the importance of promoting dialogue between the scientific community and the citizenship in this issue. With this objective, University Professors and Social Agents, whose lines of research and daily practice are focused in Adult Education, took part.

⁴ <http://www.neskes.net/confapea/assamblea.php>

The Workshop, which lasted throughout the day, counted on the presence of Professor Peter Jarvis, from the University of Surrey, director of the Centre for Research in Lifelong Learning and author of the book *Adult Education and Training in Europe*⁵. Jarvis opened the event with a paper in which he highlighted the importance of adult learning in democratic countries. Subsequently a round table was organised with participants from adult educational and cultural centres that expressed their concerns and experiences to members of the public administration among the audience.

At midday, the Full Professor of Social Pedagogy of the University of Barcelona, Antoni Petrus has had a speech about the importance of training educators in Adult Education and its link with the university world. Following this, another round table was organised in which the different Trade Unions of the Regional area presented the main necessities of working people in relation to education. At the table there were representatives from the two main trade unions in Catalonia UGT (Unió General de Treballadors – The General Workers Union) and CONC (Comissió Obrera Nacional de Catalunya – National Workers Commission of Catalonia). The scientific community was also represented with the participation of the Vice-President of the European Network ERDI (European Research Development Institutes of Adult Education), Dr. Jesús Gómez. Gómez signalled the importance of quality European Research in the field of adult education. On the other hand, Marta Soler, Doctor of Harvard University and Ramón y Cajal⁶ researcher explained transformative experiences such as the Highlander case in the United States, a centre dedicated to education and research and whose main objective is the creation of collective actions that allow overcoming social inequalities⁷.

⁵ Jarvis, P. 1992. *Perspectives on Adult Education and Training in Europe*. Leicester: NIACE

⁶ The Ramón y Cajal programme deals with an action of the Ministry for Science and Technology centred on fomenting RTD research and that falls on University personnel that have realised third level education abroad.

⁷ More information: <http://www.highlandercenter.org>

Finally, a third round table was organised which focused on the training offers of some Regional administrations in the area Adults Education. Council representatives of different towns presented their experiences and concerns related to the area. The closure of the Workshop was carried out by Angel F. Merino, president delegate of the Area of Education from the County Council, one of the main public administrations of the city of Barcelona.

"Widening and Strengthening the European Dimension of The Lifelong Learning Movement"

Co-ordinator: Slovenian Institute for Adult Education

Project Co-ordinator: Olga Drogenik

Partners:

- ★ Slovenian Institute for Adult Education (SIAE), Ljubljana, Slovenia;
- ★ Federation of Societies for Spread of Knowledge (FSSK »Znanie«), Sofia, Bulgaria;
- ★ Institute for International Co-operation of the German Adult Education Association (IIZ/DVV), Bonn, Germany;
- ★ University of Barcelona, Centre for Social and Educational Research (CREA), Barcelona, Spain;
- ★ Spanish federation of popular universities (FEUP), Madrid, Spain;
- ★ The National Association of the Regional Centre for Adult Education (AN CZEA), Arad, Romania;

Silent Partner: Swiss Federation for Adult Learning (SVEB) Zurich, Switzerland

- ★ Slovenian Team: Olga Drogenik, Zvonka Pangerc Pahernik, Darijan Novak, Franci Lajovic, Alenka Mavsar, Nina Špolar
- ★ Bulgarian Team: Milka Atanasova, Nikola Ovcharov, Maria Todorova
- ★ German Team: Sabrina Boscolo Lips, Sebastian Welter
- ★ Spanish Team: Isabel Garcia Longoria, Montserrat Morales Corraliza, Manuel Perez Castell, Elena Duque Sanchez, Sergio Gonzales, Lidia Puigvert
- ★ Romanian Team: Camelia Bran, Lucian Cernusca, Mariana Matache, Ludovic Sosnak, Cristiara Vlad
- ★ Silent Partner: Ruth Jermann