



HUNGRY FOR KNOWLEDGE



**19 YEARS OF
LIFELONG LEARNING
WEEK IN CROATIA**



Agency for Vocational
Education and Training
and Adult Education



ESF+
**Efficient Human
Resources**



**Co-funded by
the European Union**

Further Development of the Quality
Assurance System in Adult Education
and Raising Awareness of the
Importance of Lifelong Learning



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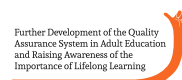
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Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education
Garićgradska ulica 18, 10 000 Zagreb, Croatia
+385 1 62 74 666
ured@asoo.hr
www.asoo.hr

For the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education

Mile Živčić, Director

Edited by: Mario Vučić, Nives Novak, Nives Vučić, Marina Režek Cvetko, Melita Hrčan, Anita Tadić

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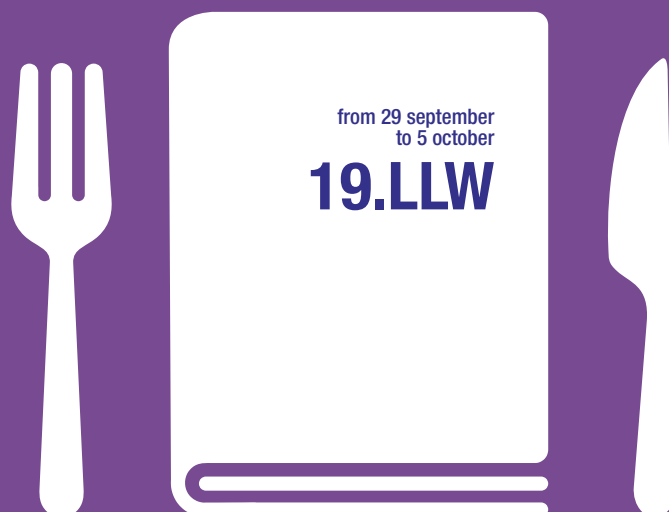
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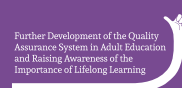
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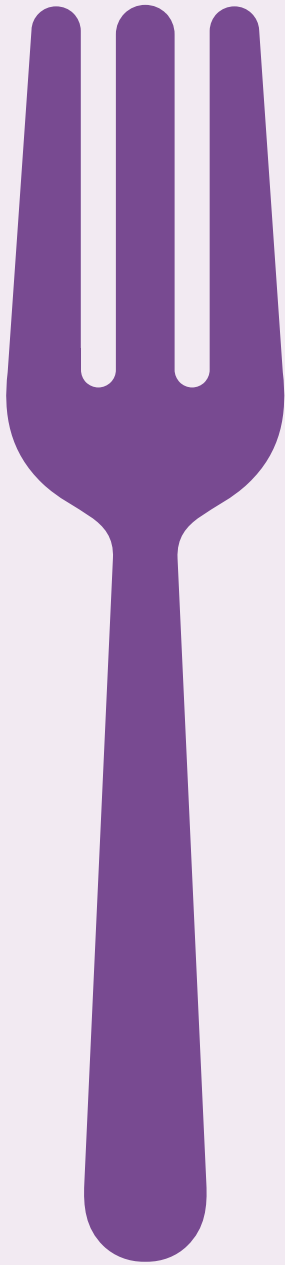
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GLOSSARY

Lifelong learning – is defined as the total learning activity throughout life with the purpose of improving knowledge, skills and competences from a personal, civic and social perspective and/or employment perspective. It encompasses learning at all ages (from early youth to old age) and in all forms in which it is realized (formal, non-formal and informal), whereby learning is understood as a continuous process in which the results and motivation of an individual in a certain period of life are conditioned by the knowledge, habits and learning experiences acquired at a younger age. There are four basic and interrelated goals associated with lifelong learning: personal satisfaction and individual development, active citizenship, social inclusion and employability.

Lifelong education – refers to a concept that views education as a lifelong process, beginning with compulsory schooling and (formal) education and lasting throughout life. The term is often replaced with the term lifelong learning, but the two terms are not synonymous. Lifelong education encompasses only organized learning, while lifelong learning is a broader concept that also includes unintentional, unorganized and spontaneous acquisition of knowledge.

Lifelong career guidance – a continuous process that enables individuals to recognize their own opportunities, competencies and interests at different ages in order to make decisions about education, training and employment and to manage their professional career. Career guidance involves various individual and group activities that include providing information, counseling, assessing competencies, supporting and teaching necessary skills.

Informal learning – learning that results from daily activities related to work, family, or leisure time. It is not organized or structured in terms of goals, time, or learning support. In most cases, informal learning is unintentional from the perspective of the learner.

Non-formal education – any form of education that does not lead to the acquisition of new qualifications, i.e. new diplomas or advancement on the qualification ladder. It denotes organized learning processes aimed at training adults for work, various social activities and personal development.

Adult education - a term that is defined in various ways at the international level. OECD (2003) points out that there is no consensus in Europe on a single definition of adult education for the following reasons: a) it is difficult to define an adult learner – learning, environment and age of learners vary by type of programme and regionally; b) the minimum age for defining an adult learner varies; c) countries differ in their approaches to vocational and non-vocational learning. Some of the existing definitions define adult education as: 1. the whole set of learning processes, formal and otherwise, in which adults (according to the definition of adults in the societies to which they belong) develop their abilities, enrich their knowledge and improve their technical or professional qualifications or redirect them to meet their needs or the needs of their societies (UNESCO); 2. all forms of adult learning undertaken after they have completed the initial cycle of education and training started in childhood, regardless of how long the cycle lasts - therefore, higher education started before entering the labor market is not considered adult education (European Commission); 3. all forms of non-vocational adult learning, regardless of whether they are carried out formally, non-formally or informally (EU, UK).

Leisure education (leisure-time education) – systematic and deliberate creation of conditions for acquiring competencies that will enable a person to lead a creative and active life in their free time (time not dedicated to a profession or earning money in order to solve existential issues).

Adult basic education – adult education related to basic knowledge needed for responsible participation in society: literacy and numeracy, social and life skills and understanding of life in the community. The main function of adult basic education is a compensatory one – making up for missed education and integrating learners into the system of lifelong learning. The goal of the curriculum for adult basic education is to improve basic literacy and life skills in all areas of education. The main tasks are: raising the general education of adults to the level of primary school, training for self-directed and independent learning as a basis for lifelong learning, parallel training for a first profession and acquiring the conditions for possible continuation of education in a secondary school. It relates to areas of primary knowledge and is important for responsible participation in society: literacy and numeracy, social and life skills and an understanding of community life.

Experiential learning – learning derived from general life experience or specific learner activities, mostly outside the traditional (pedagogical) environment.

Knowledge society – a society whose activities and progress are mostly based on the production, distribution and application of knowledge. It is a social community (human society, state) in which knowledge is one of the most important values, that is, where knowledge is the main driver of economic and social development and where society invests in science and the development of experts.

Qualification – implies a formal outcome of an assessment and evaluation process that has shown that a person has achieved learning outcomes in accordance with the standards prescribed by a competent body (institution) and/or that they possess the competencies necessary for a particular activity. It also implies possession of a formal certificate issued by an authorized institution.

Retraining – training that enables people to access occupations or new professional activities that require skills different from those they possess.

Literacy – the ability to recognize, understand, interpret, create, communicate and calculate using printed and written materials related to different contexts.

It is important to point out that the precise definition of literacy differs from country to country and from organization to organization. Today, we are talking about several dimensions of literacy (reading, documentation and numerical literacy), which do not have to be equally developed.

In addition to general literacy, there are also various other types of literacy (information literacy, mathematical literacy, scientific literacy, methodological literacy, ecological literacy, etc.).

Lifelong learning policy – is an approach according to which lifelong learning is the subject of a separate public policy. This policy is broader than educational policy and includes elements of social, economic and cultural policy- whereby it is understood as *policy* – that is, as a cycle consisting of problem definition, identification of alternative responses, evaluation of options, decision-making, implementation and assessment of results. Its creation is determined by three elements: authority (specifically defined within globalization and integration processes), expertise (professional bodies that identify the problem and propose solutions) and order (a shared understanding of how various participants will take part in individual activities) In recent years, lifelong learning policies have gained an increasingly important place in public policies. For example, in the European Union they are recognized as one of the key instruments for achieving its goals, such as the strategic objectives set by the Lisbon Declaration and the Europe 2020 strategy.

Curriculum – a set of activities that are associated with defining an educational or training program. It refers to the content (the material to be learned) and the learning process (the actions and resources associated with learning and teaching). It includes defining educational objectives, content, methods (including assessment) and materials, as well as organizing teacher training.

Learning outcomes – results of the learning process; acquired behavioral repertoires, acquired knowledge and skills; developed competencies in different areas.

Validation of informal/nonformal learning – the process of assessing and recognizing a wide range of knowledge, *know-how*, skills and competences that people acquire throughout their lives within different settings, such as education, work and leisure.

Knowledge – an individual's developmental achievement that arises through learning and manifests itself as a meaningful system of appropriate responses of a mental-verbal and psychomotor nature in situations to which they would not be able to respond without learning. In a narrower sense, it refers to information, or facts, that a person has accepted or has at their disposal within the framework of a science or society. Therefore, knowledge has an individual and social dimension. In its broader sense, the notion of knowledge includes the capacity to apply theories, methods and information to the resolution of problems. There is a difference between declarative knowledge (knowledge of events, facts, generalization) and procedural knowledge (knowledge of methods, strategies, procedures, techniques). In more recent times, this term refers to the totality of knowledge that governs all sciences and human society (see under: Knowledge Society).

Information literacy - different understandings define this type of literacy in different ways: from computer skills and access to information to critical thinking about the nature of information, technical infrastructure and the philosophical context and effect of information.

Voucher for education of unemployed and employed persons – the voucher represents a financial instrument for allocating public funds for adult education. The user chooses the educational program and education provider and the cost of the education program in the amount of the approved voucher is paid directly to the selected education service provider. In the event that the cost of the education program is greater than the amount on the voucher, the difference in the amount may be paid by the user or the employer. An education program for an unemployed person can last up to six months and for an employed person up to 10 months (due to the possibility of harmonizing the implementation of the program with the work obligations of the participants). Vouchers can be used by all unemployed and employed persons over the age of 15, who will be granted the vouchers to acquire the necessary skills for career development, employment or job retention.

ESF+ PROJECT

The project “Further Development of the Quality Assurance System in Adult Education and Raising Awareness of the Importance of Lifelong Learning” is a key national initiative co-financed by the European Social Fund Plus (ESF+), with a total value of EUR 10,469,060.56 and implementation running until December 2029.

The project is implemented in cooperation with relevant national institutions, expert bodies and stakeholders in the field of adult education, ensuring a systematic and coordinated approach to quality improvement.

The project’s core objective is to permanently enhance the Quality Assurance System in adult education in Croatia through:

- external evaluation of institutions, programmes and learning outcomes
- strengthening the capacities of teaching and management staff
- developing and promoting lifelong learning through public campaigns, workshops, conferences and national events such as Lifelong Learning Week.

In addition, the project promotes a culture of quality, cooperation between institutions and the use of innovative approaches to learning and teaching.

The project is aligned with national development strategies and the Education Development Action Plan, as well as with European recommendations, with a particular focus on learning flexibility, digital and entrepreneurial skills and the inclusion of adults in continuous self-education and professional mobility. In this way, Croatia positions lifelong learning as a foundation for workforce competitiveness, citizens’ personal development and an inclusive, modern society.

Special attention is devoted to developing a system that responds to labour market needs and enables faster adaptation to changing economic circumstances.

Project activities include:

- continuous monitoring and evaluation of the quality of work of adult education institutions
- conducting advisory visits and providing expert support for the self-evaluation process
- preparing recommendations to improve the organisation, monitoring and development of quality
- organising public promotional activities and events such as national gatherings, symposia and workshops
- strengthening the competencies of teachers and managers through specialised training and thematic conferences.

The project also develops tools for standardising evaluation procedures and digital platforms that facilitate the exchange of knowledge and examples of good practice.

The main target groups are institutions within the adult education system, their employees and associates, as well as all adult citizens of the Republic of Croatia, for whom the project seeks to ensure access to high-quality lifelong learning opportunities regardless of age, prior education or labour market status.

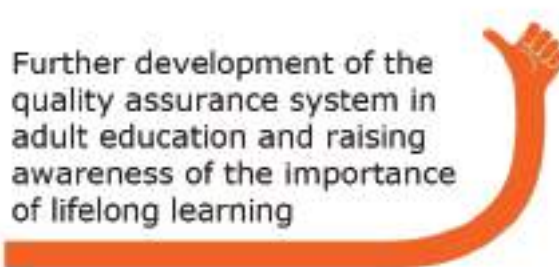
The project contributes to improving the availability of education in all regions of Croatia, thereby reducing disparities in learning opportunities between urban and rural areas.

The project supports the achievement of the objectives of the National Plan for the Development of Adult Education and the European agenda for lifelong learning, with an emphasis on standardisation and transparency of quality and on motivating adults to continuously develop their knowledge and skills. The project results directly contribute to greater competitiveness of Croatian society and the economy, as well as to users' individual professional and personal fulfilment.

It is expected that, in the long term, the project will create a sustainable framework that ensures high quality standards and promotes the values of lifelong learning.

Through this approach, Croatia confirms its commitment to building a sustainable, high-quality and advanced lifelong education system accessible to all.

The project thus contributes to the development of a knowledge-based society, strengthening social cohesion and increasing the employability of all citizens.



EDUCATION VOUCHERS



Education vouchers for adults are an innovative financial instrument provided by the Croatian Employment Service (CES) to employed and unemployed persons in order to encourage lifelong learning, adapt to labour market needs and acquire competitive skills, particularly in the areas of digital and green competencies.

This system enables each individual to access high-quality training that meets the contemporary needs of employers and a knowledge-based society.

Vouchers are available to citizens of the Republic of Croatia aged over 15, regardless of whether they are employed, unemployed, self-employed, students or pensioners who are in employment. Users can independently choose an education programme from the Skills and Programmes Catalogue and apply online via My Voucher application or in person at a regional CES office. The approved voucher amount averages around EUR 1,327, with the possibility for the CES to cover up to 100% of training costs at accredited institutions.

The system is designed to provide users with maximum flexibility and a simple application process, making lifelong learning accessible to everyone without administrative barriers.

Submitting applications has been possible since April 2022 and the system prioritises the inclusion of the long-term unemployed, young people in NEET status, persons from vulnerable groups, as well as anyone interested in retraining and micro-qualifications. Particular emphasis is placed on digital skills (programming, digital marketing, database management) and green skills (resource management, sustainable development, smart tourism).

This simultaneously promotes social inclusion, reduces unemployment and supports knowledge transfer in areas that are crucial for the future of the Croatian economy.

A voucher can be used to obtain micro-qualifications, retraining and professional upskilling, with an obligation to complete the programme within the prescribed timeframe — most often up to six months for unemployed persons and up to ten months for employed persons. If the price of the programme is lower than the voucher amount, the user pays nothing; for more expensive programmes, the remaining costs are borne by the user or the employer.

Such a financing model encourages cooperation between individuals, educational institutions and employers and enables optimal alignment between the education offer and labour market needs.

CES advisers can help users choose the most suitable programmes in line with their interests and labour market demands. The voucher system is financed through the National Recovery and Resilience Plan and European Union funds, with a planned reach of more than 30,000 users by 2026. Training funded through vouchers increases employability, adaptability and productivity and enables citizens' personal and professional development, while also playing a special role in the green and digital transition of the Croatian society.

Vouchers are also an important instrument of sustainable development as they connect education, the economy and social responsibility.

By the end of 2025, more than 46,000 people had participated in the voucher system, of whom 25,000 acquired digital skills and more than 6,500 were trained in green skills. The plan is to further expand the system so that by 2030 more than 100,000 users improve their competencies, in line with the needs of a modern economy and society.

These results confirm the successful implementation of the programme and the strong interest of citizens in acquiring new knowledge, thereby strengthening the competitiveness and resilience of the Croatian labour market.

19th LIFELONG LEARNING WEEK

The Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education has again successfully organised the **19th Lifelong Learning Week** this year, held **from 29 September to 5 October 2025**. Under the slogans **“Hungry for knowledge?”** and **“Thirsty for knowledge?”**, the campaign was inviting citizens across Croatia to take part in a week filled with free educational, cultural and entertainment events.

Throughout the week, citizens could free of charge participate in numerous educational activities — lectures, workshops, round tables, exhibitions and concerts. Many educational institutions across Croatia opened their doors to present their programmes and encourage adults to learn, upskill and develop new skills.

The implementation of activities in all Croatian counties involved 21 county coordinators who connected local institutions and coordinated promotional activities, ensuring broad accessibility and strong public participation in the events.

This year again, the Lifelong Learning Week aimed to motivate citizens to engage in adult education programmes — which is particularly important in a modern society that is changing rapidly, especially in the labour market. The campaign once again highlighted the importance of lifelong learning as a key to personal and professional development.

The European dimension of the campaign was highlighted through the ESF+ project Further Development of the Quality Assurance System in Adult Education and Raising Awareness of the Importance of Lifelong Learning, co-financed by the European Social Fund. The project encouraged greater adult participation in education, strengthening competencies and competitiveness in the labour market and active participation in society.

Events within the 19th Lifelong Learning Week were available via an interactive map.



Throughout the Week, Croatian cities breathed in a spirit of curiosity, knowledge-sharing and learning together, confirming that learning truly is a lifelong process.

CEREMONIAL OPENING OF THE 19TH LIFELONG LEARNING WEEK IN OSIJEK

On Monday, the 29 September 2025, the **19th Lifelong Learning Week** was ceremonially opened at Hotel Osijek — a national educational event that, organised by the **Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education**, has traditionally been held across Croatia. This long-running campaign promoted the importance of learning at all stages of life and encouraged citizens to acquire new knowledge and skills.



Mile Živčić, Director of the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education

The ceremony began with an introductory address by the Agency's Director, **Mile Živčić**, who emphasised the importance of lifelong education in a modern society that is changing rapidly. Those gathered were also addressed by representatives of local and regional government and the Ministry of Science, Education and Youth: **Josip Jukić**, Head of the Administrative Department for Social Affairs of the City of Osijek; **Miranda Glavaš Kul**, Head of the Administrative Department for Education, Culture and Sport of Osijek-Baranja County and **Tajna Čorak**, Head of the Adult Education Department at the Ministry of Science, Education and Youth.



Josip Jukić, Head of the Administrative Department for Social Affairs of the City of Osijek; **Tajna Čorak**, Head of the Adult Education Department at the Ministry of Science, Education and Youth; **Miranda Glavaš Kul**, Head of the Administrative Department for Education, Culture and Sport of Osijek-Baranja County

The ceremony was further enriched by musical performances by artists and cultural associations from Osijek. Soprano singer **Ivana Medić**, an opera soloist of the Croatian National Theatre in Osijek, performed with a piano accompaniment by **Igor Valeri**, while special ovations were also given to the talented students of the **“Franjo Kuhač” Music School** and members of the **Croatian Cultural and Artistic Society “Željezničar”**, that brought a touch of tradition and youthful energy.



One of the most ceremonial moments of the event was the **presentation of the “Dandelion of Knowledge” awards** that are presented each year to adults who, through their effort, perseverance and learning, have successfully transformed their lives. This year’s winners were **Antonia Čop**, **Zoran Knez** and **Nikolina Papić** — inspiring individuals who proved that it is always the right time for personal growth and change.



Awards of Recognition for Contributions to the Development of Adult Education were also presented at the ceremony to individuals whose scientific and professional work has significantly contributed to the development and improvement of the adult education system in Croatia. **The Recognition for Scientific Contribution** was presented to **Prof. Sofija Vrcelj, PhD**, while the **Recognition for Professional Contribution** was awarded to **Assoc. Prof. Mislav Balković, PhD**, and **Zdravko Čalić, BEng**.



As part of the ceremonial opening, the **17th Lifelong Learning Fair** was also held on the promenade in front of Hotel Osijek, bringing together numerous adult education institutions from Osijek-Baranja County. Visitors had the opportunity to learn about a wide range of educational programmes, professional development opportunities and to get information on current projects, including adult education through vouchers.





The atmosphere at the opening was filled with optimism, fellowship and a desire for knowledge. This year's **Lifelong Learning Week** once again confirmed that education knows no age limits and that learning remains the key to personal development, professional advancement and active participation in society.



“DANDELION OF KNOWLEDGE” AWARD FOR ACHIEVEMENTS IN ADULT LEARNING

As part of Lifelong Learning Week, the “Dandelion of Knowledge” awards are traditionally presented. The main purpose of this award is to highlight and promote real-life examples of adult learners who attend various programmes and forms of learning and thereby encourage and motivate citizens of the Republic of Croatia to engage in some form of education and personal development.

The award consists of a small sculpture, a certificate and a voucher for free attendance of an education programme of the winner’s choice. Over the years, the “Dandelion of Knowledge” has grown into one of the most important and most recognisable elements of the Lifelong Learning Week.

In 2025 as well, within the 19th Lifelong Learning Week, the “Dandelion of Knowledge” awards for achievements in adult learning were presented. This award has become one of the key recognitions within the lifelong learning promotion campaign, because by highlighting the personal stories of individuals who, through education, overcome life’s difficulties and obstacles in an environment that is not always supportive, we motivate citizens to take their own steps into the process of learning and development.

Winners of the “Dandelion of Knowledge” Award for 2025 – Antonia Čop, Zoran Knez and Nikolina Papić

Antonia Čop – learning, perseverance and a love of nature as a path to achieving a dream

Through personal and professional transformation and thanks to learning and perseverance, **Antonia Čop** fulfilled her long-standing dream — she opened her own craft business, **Garden’s Gift**.

Her educational journey began in the heart of Gorski kotar, in Fužine, where she completed primary school. She continued her secondary education in Rijeka and then in Poreč, at the agricultural department, specialising in winemaking. Her love of nature and interest in plants naturally led her towards the field of natural cosmetics. **At the Public Open University – the Education and Culture Institution Rijeka**, she completed a training programme to obtain the micro-qualification Preparation of Natural Cosmetic Products. Although she had previously made cosmetic preparations independently, attending this programme gave her confidence and professional knowledge that she now successfully applies in practice.



Antonia Čop (1995)

During her education, she faced numerous challenges — alongside motherhood, employment and daily travel from Fužine to Rijeka, she also suffered a workplace injury that temporarily limited her mobility. However, despite all obstacles, with the support of her family, professors and colleagues, Antonia successfully completed the programme. This opened the way to an important life achievement — she expanded the range of services of her craft business **Garden’s Gift**, specialising in running natural cosmetics workshops.

Today, Antonia lives with her husband and children in the village of Slavica in Gorski kotar, on a property that once belonged to her grandparents. There, she has developed a biodynamic garden at an altitude of 830 metres, where she grows most of the medicinal herbs needed for her workshops, as well as vegetables for her family’s needs.

Thanks to the knowledge gained through the micro-qualification, in 2024 Antonia expanded her business activities and began producing cosmetic preparations based on medicinal herbs, as well as organising educational natural cosmetics workshops. The newly acquired professional knowledge encouraged her to take a further step — she designed workshops for children, where they learn about natural ingredients, skin health and the importance of using environmentally friendly products. Antonia's workshops creatively and educationally connect participants with nature and its benefits, while emphasising the importance of environmental protection. This approach enables both children and adults to learn about sustainability, natural resources and the development of life skills in a fun and engaging way.

Alongside **Garden's Gift**, Antonia also owns a tourist apartment and regularly runs natural cosmetics-making workshops for adults. Through her work, she shares knowledge, encourages others to adopt a sustainable lifestyle and contributes to environmental conservation. In doing so, she enriches the local community and offers her guests a unique experience that connects nature, practical activities and education.

Inspired by her success and engagement, other members of her family follow her example as well. Her husband decided to pursue further education and obtain new qualifications, confirming the importance of mutual encouragement in learning and personal development. Together, they have created a solid foundation for a family business that is growing in line with their shared values—love of nature, knowledge and fellowship — and contributes to the development of the local community.

To conclude, we would like to highlight the words of the award winner Antonia Čop:

"I believe that adult education knows no obstacles or time limits — it is a path of self-development, discovering one's own potential and overcoming challenges. I hope that by my example I will encourage others to believe in their dreams and invest in themselves regardless of age and circumstances."

Zoran Knez – an amateur astronomer who tirelessly spreads knowledge and a love of science

Zoran Knez, an amateur astronomer from Split, through his many years of dedicated work, represents a true example of **lifelong learning**, knowledge-sharing and the popularisation of science in the wider community.



His selfless dedication to learning — not only for personal development but also with the aim of sharing knowledge with others — makes him an ideal candidate for the **"Dandelion of Knowledge"** award. As the founder and active editor of the public Facebook group **AstroMosor**, Zoran voluntarily and on his own initiative, every day shares, translates and popularises the latest scientific articles and research in the field of astronomy and other natural sciences.

In the last five years alone, he has translated more than 3 800 scientific texts, giving the wider public — especially adults who are not professionally connected to science — easy and understandable insight into current global scientific achievements. His work is an important contribution to promoting a culture of lifelong learning and developing scientific literacy in society.

Zoran Knez (1965)

Through his involvement in the association **Zvezdano selo Mosor** (Star Village Mosor), one of the most important organisations for promoting astronomy in Dalmatia, Zoran actively contributes to educating citizens — especially through the project **Little School of Astronomy**, within which he runs an astronomy course on a weekly basis, making this science accessible to the wider public. In addition, he regularly volunteers at the Science Festival, where in recent years he has delivered numerous public lectures.

His original articles have been published for 17 years in every issue of the magazine *Čovjek i svemir* <*Man and the Universe*> of the Zagreb Observatory, through which he continuously contributes to the popularisation of astronomy at the national level.

His work with young people is particularly valuable — Zoran is an adviser and co-mentor to primary and secondary school students who participate in national astronomy competitions. Over the past five years, he has mentored, among others, the students **Nando Dujo Kuprešanin**, **Luka Jerčić** and **Marta Jerčić**, who achieved outstanding results at the national level. In this way, Zoran not only shares his extensive knowledge but also encourages a new generation of young people in research work, scientific curiosity and educational advancement.

His long-standing contribution to spreading scientific literacy among adults and young people has been recognised within the **Croatian Astronomical Society**, **educational institutions** and among the wider interested public.

Through his example, **Zoran Knez** shows what true dedication to lifelong learning and the promotion of science means. His work and enthusiasm fully reflect the values and goals promoted by the **“Dandelion of Knowledge”** award — curiosity, selfless sharing of knowledge and faith in the power of education as a driver of social progress.

Nikolina Papić – an example of perseverance, dedication and the strength of lifelong learning



Nikolina Papić (1994.)

Nikolina Papić left secondary school after the first year due to illness and frequent absences. She married very young and became a mother at the age of 19. At that time, she devoted all her energy and attention to her family and caring for her children. After her first child, the second child arrived and then the third — requiring a great deal of strength, patience and many sleepless nights.

Education then took a back seat. She worked as an assistant worker in logistics for a low salary but her desire for personal development never disappeared. One day, she decided it was time for change and a new beginning. In 2021, she enrolled in an economist programme at the **Public Open University Pouka**.

With three small children, daily household responsibilities a large vineyard and the family farm run by her husband, Nikolina diligently attended classes and sat exams. She studied at night, once the children had fallen asleep, determined to achieve her goal. She completed her final paper with excellent results and the certificate she earned represented not only personal pride but also a powerful example to her children of the importance of education and perseverance.

Soon after completing the programme, she found a better job in Zagreb with a higher salary and an indefinite-term contract. Although she commutes more than two hours every day to and from work, Nikolina decided to return to learning once again. She is currently attending a training programme at the **Public Open University Pouka** to obtain a micro-qualification in the production of homemade fruit brandies and liqueurs, together with her husband, with the aim of improving and enriching the offer of their family farm.

In addition, she plans to further improve her Excel skills, which will help her in her continued professional development and in her current position.

Through her example, **Nikolina Papić** shows that personal and professional progress is possible despite numerous life challenges. Her story confirms that learning is a key tool for change — a source of self-confidence, strength and new opportunities.

They opened the door to new opportunities

The life stories of **Antonia, Zoran and Nikolina** remind us that it is never too late for new beginnings and that education has the power to change lives—for the better. Every step towards knowledge, regardless of age or circumstances, opens doors of new opportunities, personal fulfilment and more active participation in society.

Through learning, we become more aware of our own potential and better able to face everyday challenges.

The “Dandelion of Knowledge” award is not only a recognition of their achievements, but also a powerful message to everyone — that investing in yourself is always worth the effort and that change is possible when we believe in our abilities and never stop learning.

RECOGNITIONS FOR CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF ADULT EDUCATION

For the ninth time, the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education has presented **Recognitions for Contributions to the Development of Adult Education in the Republic of Croatia** at the professional and scientific level.

These recognitions are awarded within the educational campaign Lifelong Learning Week, which is implemented as part of the **ESF+ project “Further Development of the Quality Assurance System in Adult Education and Raising Awareness of the Importance of Lifelong Learning”**.

The recognition is presented to individuals who have actively worked on developing adult education practice for at least 15 years during their working life as well as to those who have actively engaged in the scientific development of adult education for at least 10 years.

Winners of the 2025 Recognitions for Contributions to the Development of Adult Education

Prof. Sofija Vrcelj, PhD – for scientific contribution to the development of adult education



Prof. Sofija Vrcelj, PhD

Prof. **Sofija Vrcelj**, PhD, is a full professor with permanent tenure at the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences of the University of Rijeka, Department of Pedagogy.

She completed her Bachelor's degree, Master's degree and PhD in pedagogy at the Faculty of Pedagogy in Rijeka, where she began her scientific and teaching career in 1987. Over the course of a distinguished academic career, she progressed from an assistant to a full-time professor with permanent tenure (2011) and for many years she has taught and led courses in the fields of General Pedagogy, Comparative Pedagogy and School Pedagogy at the undergraduate and graduate levels of pedagogy studies.

She has participated in and led numerous research projects focused on the development of pedagogical science and the improvement of the adult education system. Her work makes a significant contribution to the theoretical and practical understanding of adult education, lifelong learning and the professional development of teachers.

For her scientific and professional contribution, Prof. Vrcelj, PhD, has received a number of recognitions, including in particular:

- the University of Rijeka Award for the Development and Promotion of Gender Equality (2023)
- the “Ivan Filipović” National Science Award (2011)

Prof. Sofija Vrcelj, PhD, is also actively involved in professional and scientific bodies: she has been a member of the Parent Committee for the Field of Pedagogy (since 2024), the Regional Scientific Council for Social Sciences (since 2021) and the Croatian Academy of Educational Sciences (since 2015).

Through her dedicated work, scientific contribution and commitment to the quality of adult education, Prof. Sofija Vrcelj, PhD, has made a lasting contribution to the academic and professional community in the field of pedagogy.

Assoc. Prof. Mislav Balković, PhD – for professional contribution to the development of adult education

Assistant Professor **Mislav Balković**, PhD, graduated and completed his Master's degree at the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Computing, University of Zagreb, where he also earned his PhD in 2016. He has been actively involved in the field of education since 1998 and since 2000 he has been permanently employed at **Algebra University College**, where he works as Director. In that position, he initiated and took part in the implementation of key development projects of the Algebra Group and since 2009 he has assumed the role of the Dean of **Algebra University**.



Assoc. Prof. Mislav Balković, PhD

Since 2008, he has been intensively engaged in the development of Algebra University, its study programmes and its Quality Assurance System. At the same time, he has been actively involved in national initiatives aimed at improving education at all levels. He participated in the drafting of the Strategy for Education and Science and was a member of numerous expert bodies, including in particular: the National Council for Science, Higher Education and Technology (2010–2016), the Commission for the Establishment of the Croatian Qualifications Framework (CROQF), the Commission for drafting the Adult Education Act, the Scientific Activity and Higher Education Act and the Quality Assurance in Science and Higher Education Act.

He currently works as the President of the Croatian Employers' Association in Education (HUP-UPO) and President of the Sectoral Council for Electrical Engineering and Computing.

Assistant Professor Balković, PhD, was actively involved in the drafting and adoption of the CROQF Act and the Regulations on the CROQF Register and his doctoral dissertation and related scientific research provide the foundation for introducing a system for the recognition of non-formal and informal learning in the Republic of Croatia, based on the qualifications framework paradigm.

Through his professional and scientific contribution, Mislav Balković has made an exceptional contribution to the development of modern education, the linking of the academic and business sectors and the building of a lifelong learning system in Croatia.

Zdravko Čalić, BEng. – for professional contribution to the development of adult education**Zdravko Čalić, BEng**

Zdravko Čalić, BEng, is the Director of the **Instructional Centre**, an adult education institution that is among the first specialised institutions in the Republic of Croatia in the field of training for internal transport and goods handling. The Instructional Centre has a long tradition of training operators of internal transport equipment, which has been carried out continuously since 1965.

Under the leadership of Zdravko Čalić, the institution has continued to develop programmes focused on safety, efficiency and the professionalisation of internal transport activities, thereby contributing to the development and recognition of adult education in the vocational field of logistics and technical occupations.

THE 19TH LIFELONG LEARNING WEEK SUCCESSFULLY CELEBRATED

Following the ceremonial opening of the 19th Lifelong Learning Week, a series of interesting events was held throughout the Republic of Croatia. Their success was made possible by adult education institutions and their partners as well as dedicated county coordinators — key individuals in the preparation, organisation and implementation of promotional activities.

The success of this year's Lifelong Learning Week is also reflected in an impressive statistics: as many as 270 institutions took part in the campaign and **747 events** were held.

We extend special congratulations and thanks to all educational institutions and organisations that took part with commitment in marking Lifelong Learning Week and through their engagement, contributed to a rich and diverse programme in all counties.

We also thank the county coordinators, whose work was crucial in encouraging the participation of a large number of institutions and in raising awareness of the importance of lifelong learning. Their contribution motivated many citizens to join activities that promote knowledge and personal development.

We would particularly highlight **Koprivnica-Križevci County**, this year's record-holder, with as many as **29 participating institutions and 106 events held**.



THE ROLE OF SOCIAL MEDIA IN PROMOTING LIFELONG LEARNING WEEK

The social media channels of the Lifelong Learning Week — especially Facebook and Instagram — proved to be an exceptionally important communication tool in the organisation and promotion of the **19th Lifelong Learning Week**. Through these platforms, messages reach users, partners and the wider public quickly and effectively, sharing the latest information, event announcements and engaging stories.



Facebook and Instagram enabled dynamic and timely communication, greater visibility of activities and easier engagement of participants from across Croatia. As fast and accessible information channels, they strengthen the recognisability of the **Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education** and contribute to promoting the importance of lifelong learning in society.

A STRONG MEDIA MESSAGE

The **Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education** continued to implement a strong multimedia campaign focused on promoting its key activities. This extensive campaign included outdoor digital advertising spaces, television, radio, print media and online portals, thereby spreading the message about the importance of lifelong learning to a broad and diverse audience throughout Croatia.

ŽUPANIJSKI KOORDINATORI 19. TJEDNA CJELOŽIVOTNOG UČENJA:

1. Zagrebačka županija: Pučko otvoreno učilište Vrbovec
2. Krapinsko-zagorska županija: Učilište Piramida znanja - Ustanova za obrazovanje odraslih
3. Sisačko-moslavačka županija: Pučko otvoreno učilište Koprivnica
4. Karlovačka županija: Pučko otvoreno učilište Pouka
5. Koprivničko-križevačka županija: Pučko otvoreno učilište Koprivnica
6. Bjelovarsko-bilogorska županija: Centar za cjeloživotno učenje Bjelovar
7. Primorsko-goranska županija: Narodno učilište-ustanova za obrazovanje i kulturu u Rijeci
8. Ličko-senjska županija: Strukovna škola Gospić
9. Virovitičko-podravska županija: Srednja škola Stjepana Sulimanca
10. Požeško-slavonska županija: Pučko otvoreno učilište Obris
11. Brodsko-posavska županija: Pučko otvoreno učilište Libar
12. Zadarska županija: Učilište Finis
13. Osječko-baranjska županija: Učilište Studium -ustanova za obrazovanje odraslih
14. Šibensko-kninska županija: Pučko otvoreno učilište Šibenik
15. Vukovarsko-srijemska županija: Pučko otvoreno učilište Vinkovci
16. Splitsko-dalmatinska županija: Centar za kulturu i cjeloživotno obrazovanje Zlatna vrata
17. Istarska županija: Diopter-otvoreno učilište
18. Dubrovačko-neretvanska županija: Centar za karijere-ustanova za obrazovanje odraslih
19. Međimurska županija: Pučko otvoreno učilište Čakovec
20. Grad Zagreb: Obrtničko učilište-ustanova za obrazovanje odraslih
21. Varaždinska županija: Pučko otvoreno učilište Varaždin

LAJKAJTE NAS NA DRUŠTVENIM MREŽAMA

facebook.com/19tjedanCjelozivotnogUcenja
instagram.com/19tjedan_cjelozivotnog_ucenja/

ŽEDNI ZNANJA?

19. Tjedan cjeloživotnog učenja
od 29. rujna do 5. listopada 2025.

Agencija za strukovno obrazovanje i obrazovanje odraslih
Garićgradska ulica 18, Zagreb
Telefon: 01/61 26 730
Faks: 01/62 74 606
E-mail: tcu@asoo.hr

SADRŽAJ LETKA ISKLJUČIVA JE ODGOVORNOST AGENCIJE ZA STRUKOVNO OBRAZOVANJE I OBRAZOVANJE ODRASLIH

Sufinancira Europska unija

ESF+ Učinkoviti ljudski potencijali

Agencija za strukovno obrazovanje i obrazovanje odraslih

19th Lifelong Learning Week leaflet



The messages were further reinforced through a range of visual and informational materials — promotional videos, a leaflet and a poster — which made the campaign more recognisable and facilitated key information sharing in various settings.

FROM 29 SEPTEMBER
TO 5 OCTOBER 2025



Poster for the 19th Lifelong Learning Week

A special message was conveyed through the **Dandelion of Knowledge** project, which invites applications from new candidates and through the announcement of the jubilee **20th Lifelong Learning Week**, which will be held from **28 September to 4 October 2026**.

Through carefully planned and targeted media content, the Agency successfully strengthened the recognisability of its activities and further highlighted the importance of accessible and high-quality adult education.



HUNGRY FOR KNOWLEDGE?

DANDELION OF KNOWLEDGE

Award for achievements in adult learning

Do you know anyone who has shown it's never too late to learn?

The Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education rewards courage, perseverance and love of knowledge.

Award: voucher of EUR 1200 for education

APPLY CANDIDATES

Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education

ESF+ Efficient Human Resources

Co-funded by the European Union

Further Development of the Quality of Education and Training and the Improvement of Learning Outcomes

Banner for online portals

Alongside traditional media, the Agency's social media also played an important role. They enabled fast, dynamic and interactive communication with the public and served as an extended arm of the campaign—a place where information is shared in real time, where users engage, share content and create a community that actively supports the idea of lifelong learning.



HUNGRY FOR KNOWLEDGE?

Do you know anyone who, despite life's challenges, regardless of age, experience and prior knowledge, chose learning to achieve their goals?

As part of the Lifelong Learning Week, the Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education presents the **"Dandelion of Knowledge" award** each year for outstanding adult learning achievements.

This award is one of the most significant and recognizable parts of the lifelong learning campaign, as by showcasing personal examples of individuals who have overcome life's challenges through education, not always in a stimulating environment, we encourage others to take up learning and education in all its forms.

The award consists of a sculpture, a certificate and a voucher worth EUR 1200 for an education program of

APPLY CANDIDATES

Agency for Vocational Education and Training and Adult Education

ESF+ Efficient Human Resources

Co-funded by the European Union

Further Development of the Quality of Education and Training and the Improvement of Learning Outcomes

Advertisement for print media

Such a combination of traditional and digital channels ensured a comprehensive approach to information and promotion, making the campaign visible, recognisable and effectively directed towards all target groups.



Clip from a video advertisement for outdoor advertising spaces

As the jubilee 20th Lifelong Learning Week is approaching, the Agency continues to build a communication strategy that invites, encourages participation and emphasises the importance of learning at every stage of life.

All news and information about the campaign, as well as free events published by adult education institutions throughout Croatia, are available on the campaign website www.cjelozivotno—ucenje.hr and on the campaign's official profiles:

Facebook: <https://www.facebook.com/TjedanCjelozivotnogUcenja/>

Instagram: [tjedan_cjelozivotnog_ucenja](https://www.instagram.com/tjedan_cjelozivotnog_ucenja)

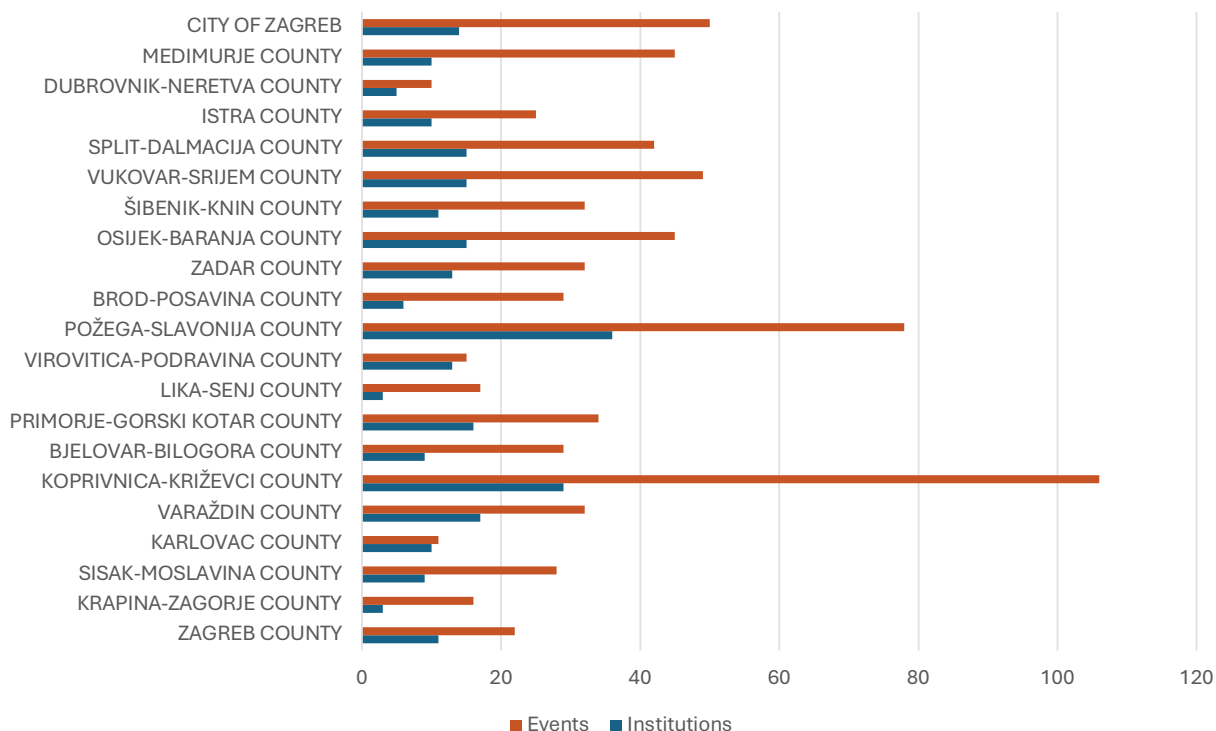
YouTube channel: <https://www.youtube.com/@tjedancjelozivotnogucenja3582>.

STATISTICS BY COUNTIES AND COUNTY COORDINATORS

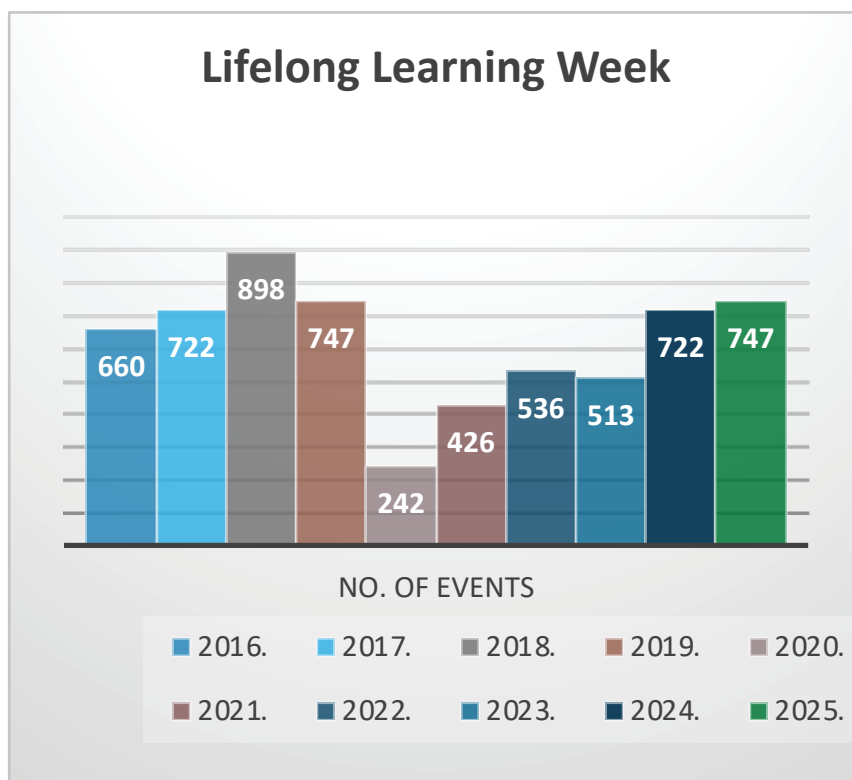
1. Zagreb County – Public Open University Vrbovec – 11 institutions, 22 events
2. Krapina-Zagorje County – Pyramid of Knowledge College, Zabok – 3 institutions, 16 events
3. Sisak-Moslavina County – Public Open University Novska – 9 institutions, 28 events
4. Karlovac County – Public Open University Pouka, Karlovac – 10 institutions, 11 events
5. Varaždin County – Public Open University Varaždin – 17 institutions, 32 events
6. Koprivnica-Križevci County – Public Open University Koprivnica – 29 institutions, 106 events
7. Bjelovar-Bilogora County – Centre for Lifelong Learning Bjelovar – 9 institutions, 29 events
8. Primorje-Gorski Kotar County – People's Open University – 16 institutions, 34 events
9. Lika-Senj County – Vocational School Gospić – 3 institutions, 17 events
10. Virovitica-Podravina County – Stjepan Sulimanec High School, Pitomača – 13 institutions, 15 events
11. Požega-Slavonija County – Public Open University OBRIS, Požega – 36 institutions, 78 events
12. Brod-Posavina County – Public Open University Libar, Slavonski Brod – 6 institutions, 29 events
13. Zadar County – Finis College, Zadar – 13 institutions, 32 events
14. Osijek-Baranja County – Studium College, Osijek – 15 institutions, 45 events
15. Šibenik-Knin County – Public Open University Šibenik – 11 institutions, 32 events
16. Vukovar-Srijem County – Public Open University Vinkovci – 15 institutions, 49 events
17. Split-Dalmacija County – Centre for Culture and Lifelong education Zlatna vrata, Split – 15 institutions, 42 events
18. Istra County – Open University Diopter, Pula – 10 institutions, 25 events
19. Dubrovnik-Neretva County – Career Centre, Dubrovnik – 5 institutions, 10 events
20. Međimurje County – Public Open University Čakovec – 10 institutions, 45 events
21. City of Zagreb – Vocational College, Zagreb – 14 institutions, 50 events.

This year's Lifelong Learning Week once again confirms the importance of education at all stages of life, promoting learning as the key to personal development, professional advancement and social inclusion; therefore, thank you for contributing once again this year to another successful campaign promoting lifelong learning!

STATISTICS BY COUNTIES



Statistics by counties and county coordinators in 2025



Number of events at the Lifelong Learning Week over the years

ZAGREB COUNTY

The county coordinator, **Public Open University Vrbovec**, in cooperation with **10 institutions**, held **22 events**.

Lifelong Learning Fair in Vrbovec

Citizens had the opportunity to learn more about different types of education, including education through vouchers for adults.

The following participated in the fair: **Krunoslav Kuten Primary School, Marija Jurić Zagorka Primary School, Vrbovec Secondary School, Vrbovec Public Library, HKUD "Petar Zrinski", Stančić Rehabilitation Centre, Vrbovec Red Cross City Society and Public Open Universities from Velika Gorica, Dugo Selo, Zaprešić and Vrbovec**. The event was also supported by the **Croatian Employment Service – Vrbovec Branch Office**.

During the fair, in addition to presenting formal and informal education programmes, picture books, required reading editions and toys were collected. The donated materials, in cooperation with the Vrbovec Red Cross City Society, were handed over to families with five or more children and to the **Stančić Centre**.



Lifelong Learning Fair in Vrbovec

Healthy gut, healthy us

At the workshop, participants had the opportunity to learn more about the importance of gut health—the place where immune cells are formed and components important for mental health are produced. The workshop leader, **Marija Baček**, pointed out that the modern lifestyle, marked by stress, irregular diet and a lack of physical activity, disrupts the gut microbiome and mucosa. As a result, inflammatory processes develop in the intestines, which affect the rest of the body and can lead to various diseases.

In the practical part of the workshop, participants made herbal teas to relieve intestinal discomfort and an oil applied locally to the abdominal area for intestinal pain.



Healthy gut, healthy us

Little School of the Vrbovec “pera”

A workshop titled **Little School of the Vrbovec “pera”** was held at the **Vrbovec Art Gallery** under the guidance of **Hrvoje Bartol**. Cheerful children from the **Vrbovec Kindergarten** took part in the workshop.

The workshop gave participants the opportunity to learn how to prepare a traditional cake from Vrbovec, known for its unique taste and method of preparation. Through hands-on work, the children discovered the secrets of making this specialty — from selecting ingredients, through properly shaping the dough, to baking. This workshop was ideal for anyone who wants to revive old recipes and learn how to prepare one of the symbols of Vrbovec gastronomy.

Before making the “pera” itself, the children played a game and showed how much they know about Vrbovec’s best-known specialty. Later, following the instructor’s directions, they kneaded the dough, rolled it out and added the filling. After the “pera” were baked, they enjoyed the tasty bites prepared by their own hands.

The workshop took place in a pleasant and cheerful atmosphere, with lots of fun, singing and dancing.



Cheerful children of the Vrbovec Kindergarten

Truth goggles: How does a driver see under the influence of addictive substances and fatigue?

Truth goggles are an educational tool often used in prevention programmes focused on road safety. Their purpose is to show how perception and driving ability change when a driver is under the influence of alcohol, drugs or fatigue.

Interested participants in the yard of the **Public Open University Vrbovec** had the opportunity to see for themselves that a person under the influence of these factors does not perceive the world as it really is, but in a distorted and slowed manner, which greatly increases the risk of a traffic accident.



Truth goggles: How does a driver see under the influence of addictive substances and fatigue?

How to communicate with children and parents of the new age

The workshop held at the **Vrbovec Art Gallery** was intended for everyone who wanted to improve their communication skills in their relationships with today's children and parents. Through practical examples and guided exercises, participants learned how to build a relationship based on understanding, trust and respect, how to recognise the needs of children and parents and how to avoid the most common communication pitfalls. The focus of the workshop was on developing empathetic and mindful communication that supports personal growth, harmonious relationships and the shared creation of a positive environment.



Workshop at the Vrbovec Art Gallery

Sport is cool!

The importance of sport was highlighted by children who, under the guidance of Prof. **Bruno Čukulin**, happily and skilfully completed a sports training session at **Vrbovec Secondary School**.

In addition to physical benefits, sport also develops social skills such as teamwork and communication, as well as emotional intelligence through coping with wins and losses. It also encourages the development of motor skills, mental sharpness, self-confidence and discipline—all of which contribute to a child's overall development and better coping in life.



Sports training session at Vrbovec Secondary School

KRAPINA-ZAGORJE COUNTY

The county coordinator, **Pyramid of Knowledge College from Zabok**, in cooperation with **3 institutions**, held **16 events**.

Lifelong Learning Fair in Krapina

The fair brought together adult education institutions from this county. The event was organised and held in the premises of the Public Open University Krapina, where visitors could obtain direct information on opportunities for education and professional development.

The following institutions participated in the fair: **Pyramid of Knowledge College from Zabok, Public Open University Donja Stubica, Public Open University Krapina, Public Open University Zabok, Bedekovčina Secondary School, Krapina Secondary School, Oroslavje Secondary School, School of Arts, Design, Graphics and Clothing Zabok and the Croatian Employment Service.**



Those present were welcomed by the Deputy Governor of Krapina-Zagorje County, **Jasna Petek**, after which the programmes of the educational institutions were presented, as well as the voucher system and opportunities for employed and unemployed persons, presented by the **Croatian Employment Service, Krapina Regional Office.**

Lifelong Learning Fair in Krapina

This year again, the fair attracted great public interest and confirmed the importance of lifelong learning for individuals' personal and professional development.

Panel on creative industries and lifelong learning

The panel held at **Regeneracija Zabok** brought together entrepreneurs and creatives from various sectors — today successful craftspeople and entrepreneurs in the field of creative industries: **Domagoj Ulamec, Jana Đurđević, Kruno Vlahović and Luka Smuk.**

The panellists shared their professional experiences with the audience and emphasised that continuous learning and professional development are key to success, both in business and in personal growth. The discussion was extremely well attended; the audience actively participated by asking numerous questions and the conversation naturally developed towards practical examples, motivational messages and useful advice.

A key message was highlighted: that knowledge and creativity go hand in hand and that education does not end with formal schooling, but lasts a lifetime.



Panel on creative industries and lifelong learning

Cocktail show

A creative cocktail-making workshop was held and organised by **Atelje – a craft business for artistic creation and the Pyramid of Knowledge College**. Participants had the opportunity to learn basic mixology techniques, try different ingredients and create their own cocktails with professional guidance. The pleasant atmosphere and hands-on approach made the workshop an interesting and inspiring experience for all participants.



Cocktail show

VR workshop

Participants had the opportunity to immerse themselves in interactive VR content, try modern technology and explore its possibilities for learning, creativity and entertainment. The workshop offered a unique experience that delighted all participants.



VR workshop

Workshop on first aid, cardiopulmonary resuscitation and the use of an AED device

A first aid workshop was held at **A. G. Matoš High School in Zabok**, with a special focus on performing cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) and the correct use of an automated external defibrillator (AED). With expert guidance, participants acquired key skills for dealing with emergency situations and through practical exercises, they gained confidence in responding when help is most needed. The workshop was extremely useful and educational, raising awareness of the importance of timely and correct intervention in saving lives.



First aid workshop

SISAK-MOSLAVINA COUNTY

The county coordinator, **Public Open University Novska**, in cooperation with **9 institutions**, held **28 events**.

Lifelong Learning Fair in Novska

A Lifelong Learning Fair was held at the **Public Open University Novska**, where visitors had the opportunity to learn more about opportunities for education, professional development and career development. The following presented their programmes: **POU Novska, Croatian Employment Service, Novska Secondary School, Novska Red Cross, NORA – Development Agency of the City of Novska, Novska Youth Association, SI-MO-RA, RK-SMŽ and the PISMO Business Incubator**.

The fair attracted numerous visitors of all age groups and contributed to marking the 19th Lifelong Learning Week, emphasising the importance of accessible and continuous education for all.



Lifelong Learning Fair in Novska

Conservation workshop

The conservation workshop showed students of **Novska Secondary School** what working with museum objects behind the scenes looks like. Through a practical demonstration, they became familiar with the procedures for preserving wooden objects, as well as the chemicals and tools used in the process. Professor **Danijela Pauković** and Željko Sajko provided expert guidance and delivered an inspiring presentation that brought students closer to the importance of conservation work and preserving cultural heritage.



Conservation workshop

Calligraphy workshop

At the calligraphy workshop, participants became familiar with basic writing techniques, proper handling of pens and brushes and different styles of calligraphic script. Through practical exercises, they developed precision, a sense of rhythm and harmony in letter formation. The workshop was open to everyone — from beginners to those who want to refine their skills and enjoy creative expression.



Calligraphy workshop at the Public Open University Novska

Colours and identity

The workshop held at the **Public Open University Novska** guided participants in exploring the connection between colours and personal experience and the expression of identity. Through playing with colours, combinations and artistic creation, participants discovered how colours influence emotions, mood and self-presentation, developing creativity and gaining a better understanding of their inner world.



Colours and identity

Surfing through digital history

In an educational lecture, **Nikola Pažin**, MA in Art History, curator of the **City of Novska Local Heritage Museum Collection**, guided participants through the history of computers, game consoles and video games. Participants became familiar with the development of computing from the time of **Alan Turing** and had the opportunity to see and try out old consoles and rudimentary computers.



Surfing through digital history

Menopause – not a pause!

The lecture was delivered by **Matea Sedlaček**, PhD, and participants learned why life does not have to stop with menopause and how to eat and exercise properly during that stage of life.



Menopause – not a pause! at the “Ante Jagar” City Library and Reading Room

How trauma and stress change the body

In the same library, lecturer **Milkica Ivezić Lalić**, MSc in Physiotherapy, introduced participants to how trauma and stress affect the brain, the heart and the entire body and why the body remembers traumatic experiences. Participants learned about the consequences of long-term stress, recognising bodily signals and practical ways to mitigate its effects, with the aim of preserving balance and health.



Workshop on the consequences of long-term stress

KARLOVAC COUNTY

The county coordinator, Public Open University Pouka from Karlovac, in cooperation with **10 institutions**, held **11 events**.

Lifelong Learning Fair in Karlovac

Adult education institutions, the **Karlovac University of Applied Sciences** and secondary schools presented themselves at the fair and visitors were able to learn everything about education and lifelong learning opportunities in one place. The programme included a rich offer of educational programmes for children, young people and adults, information on continuing education, retraining and further training, as well as an opportunity for direct discussion with representatives of educational institutions.

The fair brought together young people preparing to continue their education, adults who want to improve their knowledge or start a new career, as well as all curious individuals who believe that learning is a lifelong process.



Lifelong Learning Fair in Karlovac

Natural cosmetics for beauty and health

A workshop dedicated to making natural cosmetics was held at the **Medical School Karlovac**. In a world full of artificial ingredients, the workshop offered participants an insight into simple and effective solutions that nature provides for caring for the body, face and spirit. Participants became familiar with the basic ingredients of natural cosmetics and made simple but useful preparations tailored to their own needs. With practical tips and tricks for a daily beauty routine, they learned how to care for their skin naturally, enjoy natural scents and textures and find a balance between health and beauty. The workshop attracted everyone who wants to acquire knowledge about natural care and develop healthier, sustainable habits in everyday life.



Natural cosmetics for beauty and health

Digital skills for everyday life and work

A lecture dedicated to the practical use of digital technologies in learning, work and everyday life was held at the **Regional Centre of Competence – Technical School Karlovac**.

Through concrete examples, participants learned how to use the internet and social media safely, organise data in the cloud and apply digital tools to solve technical tasks. The lecture also highlighted the development of digital competencies, which are among the most in-demand in the labour market, providing participants with useful knowledge for further personal and professional development.



Digital skills for everyday life and work

Education vouchers

A workshop dedicated to education vouchers for adults was held at **CISOK – the Career Information and Counselling Centre in Karlovac**, organised by the **Public Open University POUKA and the Croatian Employment Service**.

Participants had the opportunity to learn how vouchers are obtained, who they are intended for and what opportunities they open up for acquiring new knowledge and developing careers. The workshop brought many closer to the way vouchers can become a ticket to a new professional opportunity or a useful upgrade of existing skills.



Education vouchers

Wine and fairy tale

A workshop was held at the **Katarina Zrinska Public Open University in Ozalj**, combining artistic creation and relaxed socialising over a glass of wine. Inspired by the life and work of Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić, participants were encouraged to create acrylic works on canvas enriched with gilding, exploring how a classic painting can gain new brilliance through shimmering details.



Wine and fairy tale

Workshop on making the best strudel in Croatia

A special workshop on making a traditional strudel — one of the most beloved desserts of Croatian culinary heritage — was held at the **Public Open University Ogulin**. The workshop was filled with the warm aromas of baked pastry and the cheerful buzz of participants learning how to choose the best ingredients, stretch thin dough, shape the strudel and bake it to perfection.

The workshop was given special value by the leaders — **Nada Brozović, Ankica Majetić and Marijanka Marković**, members of the **Ogulin Women's Association** and proud winners of the award for the best strudel in Croatia in 2023. Their passion, experience and warmth turned the workshop into an unforgettable culinary experience.



Workshop on making the best strudel in Croatia

The aroma of colour

The Public Open University Duga Resa held a unique art workshop that offered participants an unusual painting experience — instead of classic paints, brewed coffee was used, whose aroma and warmth created a particularly creative atmosphere.

On watercolour paper the participants explored the delicate tones and rich shades that coffee can produce, while the thematic starting point was the human hand — a symbol of touch, work, creation and emotion. By experimenting with coffee, participants discovered how scent and colour can come together in a personal artistic expression.



The aroma of colour

VARAŽDIN COUNTY

The county coordinator, **Public Open University Varaždin**, in cooperation with **17 institutions**, held **32 events**.

Lifelong Learning Fair in Varaždin

The fair was held in cooperation with partners and the **Varaždin City Market**. At the market, filled with autumn colours and a lively atmosphere, the programmes and activities of our institution were presented, along with socialising with visitors and exchanging experiences with other exhibitors.

Many partners took part in the event, including the **Association of the Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons of the City of Varaždin and Varaždin County**, **Vinica Kindergarten**, the **Croatian Employment Service Varaždin**, **Bedem ljubavi** and **Udomiteljice**, further enriching the content and diversity of the fair.



Lifelong Learning Fair in Varaždin

Click in your pocket

A smartphone photography workshop was held for primary and secondary school students, where participants explored the possibilities of mobile photography and developed their creative skills.

Through practical examples, participants learned how to frame and compose a photo properly, how to use natural and artificial light and how to make use of basic settings and tricks on a smartphone. The workshop also included a series of quick tips for creating original and imaginative photographs.

In a relaxed atmosphere and with plenty of hands-on practice, participants improved their photography skills and discovered how their mobile phone can become a real little camera.



Click in your pocket at the Public Open University Varaždin

Creative me

A creative charcoal drawing workshop was held in the premises of the **Public Open University Varaždin**, where participants had the opportunity to explore the possibilities of this classic art medium. The workshop included an introduction to basic charcoal techniques and a practical part in which participants created their own drawings.

The atmosphere was encouraging and creative and the workshop provided an opportunity to develop artistic expression and exchange ideas among participants.



Creative me

Fashion start – a small artistic quarter

A clothing design workshop was held for young creatives who wanted to design and make their own piece of clothing. Through hands-on work, participants learned the basic steps of designing, decorating and personalising clothing and developed their fashion expression.

Participants brought white T-shirts, which they turned into unique fashion pieces using various techniques and materials. The workshop took place in a creative and motivating atmosphere, encouraging independence, creativity and exploration of personal style expression.



Fashion start – a small artistic quarter

Beauty zone

A workshop on making massage bars with pumpkin seed oil is intended for all lovers of natural and handmade products. Participants had the opportunity to learn about the benefits of pumpkin seed oil and to learn how to make massage bars that nourish the skin and provide a relaxing effect in everyday use.

Through hands-on work, participants mastered the basic steps of production, selected natural ingredients and shaped their own bars. The workshop took place in a pleasant and relaxing atmosphere, encouraging creativity and care for natural body care.



Beauty zone

Brain teaser

A workshop dedicated to developing effective learning strategies is intended for participants of all age groups and different life circumstances. Participants explored their own learning styles and became familiar with practical methods that facilitate the acquisition of knowledge, encourage motivation and make the learning process more relaxed and meaningful.

The workshop covered concrete techniques for organisation, better concentration and long-term memory, with an emphasis on the approach “Study smarter, not harder.” Through examples and guided activities, participants discovered ways to create sustainable learning habits that contribute to personal and professional development.



Brain teaser

Miniature architecture

A miniature architecture workshop was intended for young creatives who wanted to design and build their own dream house and jointly create an entire small town. Through imaginative and practical activities, participants made their houses, connected them into small neighbourhoods and added details that gave their models a special character.

The workshop was filled with creativity, teamwork and an exchange of ideas and the result was a unique small town they built together, combining their visions and imagination into a single piece.



Miniature architecture

Koprivnica-Križevci County

The county coordinator, **Public Open University Koprivnica**, in cooperation with **29 institutions**, held as many as **106 events**.

Lifelong Learning Fair

At the fair in the yard of “**Domoljub**” in **Koprivnica**, numerous educational institutions and associations from this county presented themselves: **Koprivnica Secondary School, Koprivnica Trade School, Križevci University of Applied Sciences, The Institution of Crafts Instruction, Križevci Instructional Centre, the Croatian Employment Service and the Career Information and Counselling Centre, the Association of People with Intellectual Disabilities “Mali princ”, the Kamengrad Scouts and the Public Open University Koprivnica.**

During the fair, a collection of donated toys was also organised for the “**Paviljon sv. Marka Križevčanina**” **Children’s Home**, emphasising that helping others and social responsibility are also an important part of lifelong learning. Participants gathered information, exchanged experiences and were inspired for further educational and creative activities.



Lifelong Learning Fair in Koprivnica



Delivery of toys collected at the Lifelong Learning Fair to the children's home in Križevci

Self-massage tricks

Through practical exercises and simple physiotherapy techniques, participants learned how to cope with painful conditions, tension and accumulated stress quickly and effectively, using minimal equipment. The workshop was led by **Ana Prentašić** and the atmosphere was relaxed and encouraging.



Self-massage tricks at the Public Open University Koprivnica

Needle, bag, button

The workshop was intended for participants who wanted to learn basic sewing skills, from hand sewing to working on a sewing machine, with lots of laughter and creativity, under the guidance of **Ana Bebek**. The result of the workshop was new knowledge and handmade items and participants went home satisfied and inspired for further creative projects.



Needle, bag, button

Children's frustration and setting boundaries – an opportunity to build closeness

The workshop was interactive and practical and through exercises and simulations the participants had the opportunity to view situations from the perspective of a frustrated child, under the guidance of Ana-Marija Hajak, MSc in Pedagogy.



Children's frustration and setting boundaries – an opportunity to build closeness

Small bites of energy

Through hands-on work, participants learned how to prepare nutritious energy bars made from rolled oats, dried fruit and natural sweeteners, with expert support from the workshop leader **Željka Gabaj**, BEng in Food Technology.



Small bites of energy

DAR – drama-and-music recital and round-table discussion

On the occasion of World Mental Health Day, students of **Koprivnica Secondary School** (course medicine) and **“Fran Galović” High School Koprivnica** took part in the drama-and-music recital **DAR**, produced by the **Artistic organisation Soba2**. Through music, personal testimonies and a round-table discussion, artist **Nera Stipičević** encouraged the young audience to reflect on their own gifts, values and inner voice.



DAR – drama-and-music recital and round-table discussion

Self-defence workshop

At the self-defence workshop, led by **Dragan Behin**, a Krav Maga instructor, participants learned basic hand strikes, evasion techniques and how to break free from a front choke, through interactive exercises, all in a safe and supportive environment.



Self-defence workshop

BJELOVAR-BILOGORA COUNTY

The county coordinator, the **Centre for Lifelong Learning and Culture Bjelovar**, in cooperation with **9 institutions**, held **29 events**.

Lifelong Learning Fair in Bjelovar

The Lifelong Learning Fair, held in the central city park in Bjelovar, enabled visitors to explore various opportunities for learning and personal development. Fair participants presented educational programmes, demonstrated skills and encouraged everyone to turn learning into a habit and an opportunity for progress in life and career.



Lifelong Learning Fair in Bjelovar

Grab life by the horns and step on the gas!

Through her workshop, **Dinka Juričić** inspired participants not to be afraid of change, to bring emotion and humour into everyday life and to learn with joy. She highlighted the importance of sharing knowledge, because knowledge that is shared grows.



Grab life by the horns and step on the gas!

Relax with us

An event dedicated to health and vitality. An educational group of massage therapists demonstrated simple exercises and offered short massage treatments. Visitors could relax, try a massage and learn about its benefits.



Relax with us

Ceramics workshop

The workshop for adults gave participants the opportunity to learn the basics of shaping clay, different modelling and decorating techniques and making unique items. Through hands-on work, creativity and an eye for detail were developed.



Ceramics workshop at the Centre for Lifelong Learning and Culture Bjelovar

Little sewing school

The workshop was intended for everyone who wanted to learn the basics of using a sewing machine and make their own practical items. Through simple steps, participants learned cutting, sewing and finishing techniques, with an emphasis on creativity and everyday application.



Little sewing school

PRIMORJE-GORSKI KOTAR COUNTY

The county coordinator, **Public Open University – institution for education and culture** in Rijeka, in cooperation with **16 institutions**, held **34 events**.

Lifelong Learning Fair in Rijeka

A variety of educational programmes were presented at the fair and there were plenty of opportunities for personal and professional development. The fair was a perfect opportunity for everyone who wants to invest in personal and professional growth, along with socialising and learning.



Lifelong Learning Fair in Rijeka

Workshop on making the goddess Venus

The School of Commerce and Fashion Design Rijeka

held an interesting workshop. Participants made prehistoric Venuses (Paleolithic figurines depicting a woman) and fibulae (metal safety pins used to fasten and connect parts of clothing).



Workshop on making the goddess Venus

Creating digital fashion content

The School of Commerce and Fashion Design Rijeka held a workshop on creating digital fashion content using artificial intelligence. The students designed T-shirts with positive messages, first they drew the motifs by hand and then digitalised them and created realistic renderings on virtual models.



Creating digital fashion content

Sweet-and-savoury culinary workshop – pumpkin

The Public Open University – institution for education and culture organised a workshop dedicated to one of the most beloved autumn ingredients—pumpkin. Participants discovered how versatile pumpkin is and together prepared delicious sweet and savoury bites that surprised even the most demanding palates.



Sweet-and-savoury culinary workshop

Sweet culinary workshop – making macarons

At the **macaron**-making workshop, participants became familiar with the entire process of preparing these famous French pastries — step by step, with practical tips. They learned how to properly prepare and separate egg whites, make *meringue*, fold the mixture to the right texture, pipe circles using a template, dry and bake the macarons to achieve the characteristic “foot” and prepare the filling and assemble the shells into finished macarons.



Making macarons

Basics of EU funds and projects

In this workshop, participants became familiar with the basic functioning of EU funds and the fundamental steps of project preparation. They learned what types of EU funds and funding programmes are available, basic concepts and rules (who can apply and what is funded), the steps in preparing a project application, examples of successful projects and the most common mistakes. They also learned how to shape their own idea into a high-quality project proposal.

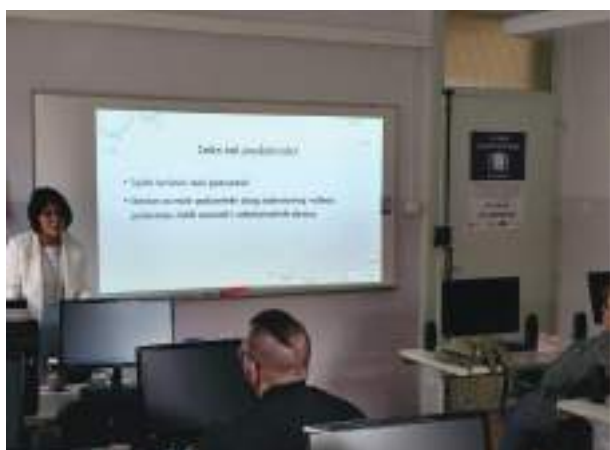




Basics of EU funds and projects

Flat-rate craft business without stress: from starting to book keeping

Participants learned how to start a craft business, what obligations they have towards the state and how to properly keep accounts and tax records. Through practical examples and advice, they learned how to avoid the most common mistakes and gained a clear understanding of the rights and limitations of flat-rate craftspeople. The workshop was intended for everyone considering starting their own business or wanting to better understand operating under the flat-rate model.



Flat-rate craft business without stress: from starting to book keeping

LIKA-SENJ COUNTY

The county coordinator, **Vocational School Gospić**, in cooperation with **3 institutions**, held **17 events**.

Lifelong Learning Fair in Gospić

The fair was held at the **Vocational School Gospić** and participants included final-year students of the **Vocational School Gospić, Gospić High School and Otočac Secondary School**.

The fair was also an ideal opportunity to promote the services and activities of the **Croatian Employment Service and the Career Information and Counselling Centre**, especially since a large number of students will soon be entering the labour market. Students had the opportunity to enquire about options for continuing education after secondary school and to receive information directly from advisers from these two institutions.



Lifelong Learning Fair in Gospić

Information on the services of the Croatian Employment Service and the Career Information and Counselling Centre

The Career Information and Counselling Centre held a workshop at which participants received information about the services the Service offers to unemployed and employed persons. Participants were informed about the rights of unemployed persons, employment support measures, the Labour

Exchange portal and career development. The Centre's services available to all citizens were also presented, as well as training courses and workshops that people can take part in. All of the Centre's services were free of charge for users.



Information on the services of the Croatian Employment Service and the Career Information and Counselling Centre

Steps towards development

The workshop was intended for everyone considering starting their own business and its aim was to familiarise participants with the basic legal forms of business entities in Croatia. Through practical examples, participants discovered the differences between individual legal forms, the basic steps in registering a company and the opportunities and incentives available when launching an entrepreneurial venture.



Steps towards development

Enjoying “dangubica”

A workshop dedicated to learning how to play the “dangubica” — a distinctive symbol of Lika — was held in the hall of the **Public Open University “Dr. Ante Starčević” Gospić**, led by **Krešimir Varga**. Participants discovered that, what was once “wasting time”, was the most beautiful way of making music and through hands-on experience they connected with the cultural heritage of Lika. The workshop was open to all ages and did not require prior knowledge.



Enjoying “dangubica”

Forest feast

An interpretive walk and a forest pedagogy workshop were held in **Kolakovac Park in Gospić**, led by **Irena Peša**. Through games and tasks, participants learned about the flora, fauna and history of the Jasikovac forest, as well as the cultural and natural heritage of Gospić. The workshop was an interactive adventure that included a search for historical “riddles,” distinguishing tree species, activities of connecting with nature such as the “Mirror Game,” learning about edible plants and building nests as part of the “Story of Birds.”



Forest feast

From breath to sound

A workshop was held in the hall of the **Public Open University “Dr. Ante Starčević” in Gospić**, led by **Nikola Kroppek**, MA in Music. Through hands-on work, participants learned how breath is transformed into sound and sound into music, while exploring wind instruments and percussion instruments. Younger members of the City of Gospić Wind Orchestra demonstrated the sound of the instruments and the workshop leader played well-known melodies on the trombone while participants guessed which pieces they were.



From breath to sound

VIROVITICA-PODRAVINA COUNTY

The county coordinator, **Stjepan Sulimanec High School from Pitomača**, in cooperation with **13 institutions**, held **15 events**.

Lifelong Learning Fair in Pitomača

Three secondary schools, adult education institutions, the **Croatian Employment Service** and the **University of Applied Sciences in Virovitica** took part in the event.

Marko Marić, the Headmaster of **Stjepan Sulimanec High School**, emphasised that the aim of the fair is to promote accessible educational opportunities in the county, especially those that can be attended free of charge through vouchers. Visitors could obtain information about education programmes, additional training and retraining and the importance of learning throughout all stages of life was also highlighted.

As part of the fair, a panel discussion on entrepreneurship was also held, at which local entrepreneurs shared their experiences and advice.



Lifelong Learning Fair in Pitomača

Houseplants in the service of health

The event was organised by the **Industrial-Crafts School Virovitica** and the **Virovitica City Library and Reading Room** hosted a lecture on how houseplants can improve our health and the quality of life. Participants learned more about their role in purifying the air, reducing stress, strengthening concentration and creating a more pleasant home and work environment.

Kristina Horvat Vargović, MSc in Agricultural Engineering, presented which plants are most suitable for the home or office and how to care for them properly so that they contribute to physical and mental health.



Houseplants in the service of health

Entrepreneurial game

An educational simulation of an entrepreneurial venture was held at the **Virovitica Vocational School**, giving participants practical insight into running a small business. Through teamwork in producing hats, with clearly set rules and goals, participants went through the key phases of the business cycle.

During the activity, they learned about making business decisions, managing cash flow, the basics of simple accounting and identifying risks, all with an element of fun that further encouraged participation.



Entrepreneurial game

First a dream – then a plan

A panel discussion dedicated to entrepreneurship was held at **Stjepan Sulimanec High School in Pitomača**, where local entrepreneurs shared their real experiences, challenges and lessons they

encountered on their business journeys. They spoke about adapting to the market, finding what makes you distinctive and maintaining motivation in demanding situations.

The discussion was further enriched by a representative of a company that provides advisory support to future and existing entrepreneurs. They presented participants with useful tools, advice and opportunities for launching business ideas.

The event was intended for everyone considering their own entrepreneurial path, especially pupils, students and unemployed persons who are looking for inspiration and encouragement to start their own business.



First a dream – then a plan

POŽEGA-SLAVONIJA COUNTY

The county coordinator, **Open University OBRIS from Požega**, in cooperation with **36 institutions**, held as many as **78 events**.

Lifelong Learning Fair in Požega

The fair was held at the **Požega City Library** and brought together numerous educational institutions and organisations. Visitors were presented with a variety of programmes, opportunities for further education and forms of vocational training. The fair was open to everyone — from pupils and students to unemployed persons and citizens interested in personal and professional development. Participants could also learn more about free education programmes and opportunities to engage in lifelong learning.



The Sword of Peace

The event was held in cooperation with **Požega High School** for third-year students, with a special guest — the long-time storyteller and artist **Margareta Peršić**. The meeting took place in an encouraging and positive atmosphere and the students took part in the storytelling with great interest and active engagement.



The Sword of Peace

Support with food and fluid intake and with meeting the hygiene needs of persons with disabilities

The lecture was delivered by **Božica Lovrić**, PhD, and it was intended for everyone who provides assistance to persons with disabilities in their everyday activities.



Support with food and fluid intake and with meeting the hygiene needs of persons with disabilities

I love being healthy

A workshop was held at **Antun Kanižlić Primary School in Požega**, organised by the **Open University Obris**. The workshop was led by **Božica Lovrić**, PhD, and it was intended for third-year and fourth-year pupils. Through interesting and educational activities, the pupils had the opportunity to learn more about healthy habits, the importance of taking care of their bodies and ways to protect their health every day. The workshop took place in a cheerful atmosphere with the active participation of everyone present.



I love being healthy

I call you with a story

Independent artist **Margareta Peršić** gave a storytelling and stage performance for third-grade pupils of **Julijs Kempf Primary School in Požega**. Although this performance can be staged for different age groups, this time the artist adapted it specifically for third-grade pupils, creating an encouraging and imaginative atmosphere.



I call you with a story

BROD-POSAVINA COUNTY

The county coordinator, **Public Open University Libar from Slavonski Brod**, in cooperation with **6 institutions**, held **29 events**.

Lifelong Learning Fair in Slavonski Brod

In one place — specifically at the **Industrial and Trade School Slavonski Brod** — numerous educational institutions and organisations gathered and presented their programmes and learning opportunities to visitors. The aim of the event was to familiarize the participants and citizens with the importance of lifelong education, professional development and acquiring new skills.



Lifelong Learning Fair in Slavonski Brod

The truth about energy drinks

A workshop was held at the **MEDskills Secondary Medical School in Slavonski Brod**, where participants, through an interactive approach, were educated about the ingredients of energy drinks, their effects on the body and the possible consequences of excessive consumption, with a particular emphasis on children and young people. The workshop encouraged critical thinking and the promotion of healthier lifestyle habits.



The truth about energy drinks

Seconds that save lives

A first aid workshop was held at the **MEDskills Secondary Medical School in Slavonski Brod**, designed to provide participants with basic and practical knowledge for responding in emergency situations before professional medical help arrives. Participants learned how to properly assess the situation and call for help, perform basic resuscitation procedures (CPR), manage bleeding, fractures and choking and place an injured person onto their side into the recovery position. The workshop was practical in nature, with exercises on mannequins and simulations of real-life situations, with the aim of developing participants' confidence and readiness.



Seconds that save lives

Pharmacy on the menu

A workshop was held exploring how food can affect the action and absorption of medicines. Through practical examples and interesting tasks, participants learned which foods can increase or reduce the effect of medicines, why the timing of taking therapy in relation to meals is important, and how, by properly combining food and medicines, we can maintain our health.



Pharmacy on the menu

Guided oral hygiene

A lecture and a guided oral hygiene workshop were held, focusing on the importance of proper, effective and acceptable technique for maintaining oral health. Through practical advice and demonstrations, participants became more aware of their dental care routine and gained knowledge that enables a more mindful approach to their own oral health.



Guided oral hygiene

ZADAR COUNTY

The county coordinator, **Finis College from Zadar**, in cooperation with **13 institutions**, held **32 events**.

Lifelong Learning Fair in Zadar

The fair brought together numerous educational institutions and organisations that presented their programmes and adult education opportunities to visitors.

The aim of the event was to motivate citizens to engage in lifelong learning, professional development and acquiring new skills, while also highlighting the importance of education in a rapidly changing society and labour market. Visitors had the opportunity to learn about various educational and cultural programmes and find out how they can take part in free of charge educational activities.

The fair took place in a positive and encouraging atmosphere and the organisers and exhibitors emphasised that such events play a key role in promoting personal and professional development.



Lifelong Learning Fair in Zadar

Everyday *make-up* – beauty basics

Make-up artist **Maja Lukić** showed participants, through practical tips and tricks, how to simply and quickly accentuate natural beauty and how to turn a daytime look into an evening glamour with only a few strokes. The workshop took place in a pleasant and creative atmosphere and the participants took an active part and enjoyed the new knowledge and techniques.





Everyday *make-up* – beauty basics

Occupational safety – employers' obligations

In cooperation with **FINIS College, Innovative Zadar and Alfa Atest Inspect d.o.o.**, a professional workshop was held for employers, occupational safety professionals and everyone involved in implementing protection measures.

Lecturers **Mijo Grgić** and **Katarina Dobrović** presented legal regulations and amendments, provided practical guidelines for their application and enabled interactive questions. Participants gained knowledge to increase employee safety and improve work systems in line with current laws.



Occupational safety – employers' obligations

Partner workout

A workshop combining fun and physical activity was held at the **Višnjik Sports Centre in Zadar**. Participants had the opportunity to exercise in pairs and those without a partner were paired up on the spot. The workshop was led by *fitness* trainer **Rok Erslan** and the event took place in a relaxed and motivating atmosphere.



Partner workout

OSIJEK-BARANJA COUNTY

The county coordinator, **Studium College from Osijek**, in cooperation with **15 institutions**, held **45 events**.

Lifelong Learning Fair in Osijek

After the **Ceremonial Opening of the 19th Lifelong Learning Week in Osijek**, the fair on the promenade in front of **Hotel Osijek** brought together numerous adult education institutions from this county that presented their educational programmes and lifelong learning opportunities to citizens.



Lifelong Learning Fair in Osijek

Autumn sky and star charts

At **Studium College**, through a lecture and hands-on work with charts and astronomical aids, participants learned to recognise the main stars and planets of the autumn night and to use star charts to orient themselves in the sky, encouraging interest in stargazing and understanding the universe.



Autumn sky and star charts

Raised gardens

A lecture on raised gardens was held, during which participants learned about their advantages, the importance of construction and their application worldwide. They were also introduced to ways of building and elevating such gardens, encouraging practical and sustainable gardening.



Raised gardens at Studium College

Daytime *make-up look* – skin care and exfoliation before applying make-up

Organised by **Studium College** and the **Make Up Bar studio**, a workshop was held in which make-up educator **Dunja Žderić** demonstrated daytime make-up, with an emphasis on proper skin preparation, exfoliation and care before applying make-up. The workshop provided participants with practical tips for achieving a fresh and neat look and adopting a proper skin care routine.



Daytime *make-up look*

Measuring blood sugar

A blood sugar measuring workshop was held, designed to teach participants how to use a glucometer properly, understand normal glucose values and recognise the symptoms of hypoglycaemia and hyperglycaemia. The workshop included practical exercises and education, providing participants with useful knowledge for everyday health monitoring.



Measuring blood sugar

ŠIBENIK-KNIN COUNTY

The county coordinator, **Public Open University Šibenik**, in cooperation with **11 institutions**, held **32 events**.

Lifelong Learning Fair in Šibenik

At the fair in front of the **Croatian National Theatre**, institutions that provide adult education in this county presented themselves. At information stands, the citizens could obtain all the necessary information about education programmes, enrolment conditions and opportunities as well as options for free education.



Lifelong Learning Fair in Šibenik

Glow & Go – the secrets of everyday *make-up*

With practical tips from the workshop leader, **Antonela Erceg**, participants learned how to achieve a neat and fresh look in 10 to 15 minutes, master basic techniques for enhancing their natural complexion and choose suitable products according to their skin type.



Glow & Go – the secrets of everyday *make-up*

Consumer protection in digital commerce

Lecturer **Antonela Erceg** introduced participants to the basic rights of consumers when shopping online, ways to recognise risky situations and fraud, secure payment methods and the correct procedure for complaints and product returns. The workshop also included tips on checking the credibility of online shops, recognising fake reviews and making use of tools and institutions for consumer protection, encouraging a critical approach to digital shopping.



Consumer protection in digital commerce

Understanding and supporting people with dementia

A workshop was held at the **Public Open University Šibenik**, dedicated to better understanding dementia and providing support to people living with it. The workshop leader, **Roka Mrša**, MSc in Nursing, explained in clearly structured topics what dementia is, how to communicate with a person affected by it and how to help them with everyday activities. Special emphasis was also placed on self-care for family members who take on the role of caregivers, as well as on useful support contacts.



Understanding and supporting people with dementia



Digital literacy

A workshop dedicated to using the e-Citizens system, which enables citizens to access public services easily and quickly. The workshop leader, **Ivona Mišura**, presented participants with the advantages of digital services such as e-Tax, e-Booking a doctor's appointment, e-Registry Books and e-Enrolment. Participants also learned about personal data protection, the safe use of credentials and the importance of digital identity. The workshop encouraged safer and more independent use of digital tools in everyday life.

Digital literacy

Writing a CV and a cover letter

A workshop dedicated to writing a CV and a cover letter, led by **Karla Knežević**. Participants learned the key elements of a high-quality CV and how to clearly and convincingly write a cover letter expressing the reasons, ideas and motivation for applying for a job, an educational programme, a scholarship or a project. The workshop provided practical tips for creating a more successful application and standing out among candidates.



Writing a CV and a cover letter

VUKOVAR-SRIJEM COUNTY

The county coordinator, **Public Open University Vinkovci**, in cooperation with **15 institutions**, held **49 events**.



Lifelong Learning Fair in Vinkovci

From pixels to canvas

The Croatian Photography Association and the Vinkovci Photo Club held a magical workshop that guided participants from the world of macro photography to printing on canvas. Under the guidance of **Suzana Bota**, participants explored nature's hidden details, discovered beauty in the smallest motifs and found their own "golden ratio".

After the photography part, with lots of colour and creativity, they made their own printing plates and created unique floral motifs, which ultimately found their place on canvas tote bags — practical and personal souvenirs filled with shared creativity and joy.



From pixels to canvas



Ceremonial award of Cambridge diplomas of the Linguapax Foreign Language School

Linguapax, one of the largest Croatian centres for Cambridge exam preparation, organised a ceremonial presentation of Cambridge certificates at the highest levels of English proficiency, with an accompanying programme featuring **Music Art Incubator Vinkovci** and the **Croatian Guitar Quartet**. This event marked the beginning of the celebration of 30 years of work of the **Linguapax** School, where over the decades many generations of children in our county have learned foreign languages. The festive atmosphere, musical programme and the pride of the awarded participants further highlighted the value of the language School's many years of dedicated work.



Ceremonial award of Cambridge diplomas

Ordiniamo qualcosa!

An Italian language workshop practically showed participants how not to end up thirsty or hungry when they find themselves in Italy. With simple and useful phrases, participants mastered the basic communication needed to get by in restaurants, shops and everyday situations, with expert guidance from **Kristina Skoko**.



Italian language workshop

Photography and Video – Preparing Content for Social Media Platforms

The workshop was led by **Josipa Maksimović** and participants learned the basic principles of photographing and filming using smart devices, adapting the acquired knowledge to the needs and formats of social media.



Workshop on preparing content for social media platforms

Interesting workshops at the Crafts and Industrial School Županja

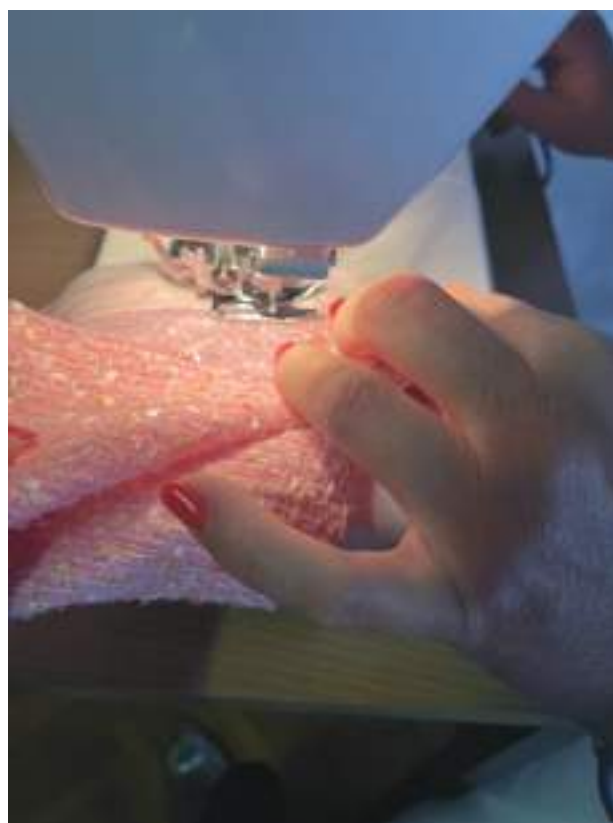
On the occasion of World Coffee Day, Professor **Slaven Majić** organised a workshop dedicated to different types of coffee, during which the school's students and staff tasted beverages and learned about ways of preparing them.

Professor **Ksenija Šestak Sertić**, together with her students, prepared a **Sweet Culinary Workshop** in which coffee-based cakes were made that those present could taste.

Professor **Vedrana Prkić** held a **workshop on recycling and sustainable development, A New Shine to Old Clothes**, as part of which volunteers from the **school volunteer club "Agape"** made cosmetic and jewellery pouches from old clothes and organised a school exhibition of the created items.



A brochure on the school's activities was also produced and presented to the public in the local community. Through these activities, the school actively contributed to promoting lifelong learning and sustainable development.



Workshops at the Crafts and Industrial School Županja

SPLIT-DALMACIJA COUNTY

The county coordinator, the **Centre for Culture and Lifelong Learning Zlatna vrata** from Split, in cooperation with **15 institutions**, held **42 events**.



Lifelong Learning Fair in Split

Open Days in Split and Omiš

The Open Days were held at the **Centre for Culture and Lifelong Learning Zlatna vrata**, **Studium College – adult education institution**, **Trstenik Adult Education Centre**, **Meštar College – adult education institution**, **Public Open University Libar** and **Public Open University Žižić** in Split and Omiš.

These events provided an opportunity for the public to become familiar with the programmes, activities and projects that the institutions carry out in the field of adult education and culture. Visitors could tour the premises, talk to staff and lecturers, obtain information about current courses, workshops and educational programmes and take part in open classes and presentations.

The aim of the Open Days was to bring the institution's work closer to the community, encourage lifelong learning and enable citizens to experience first-hand learning and participating in cultural and educational activities.



Open Days at the Centre for Culture and Lifelong Learning Zlatna vrata

Mental wellbeing of older adults

A lecture by **Toni Maglica, PhD**, addressed important issues of preserving mental health and the quality of life of older people, with an emphasis on the challenges of older age and ways to successfully overcome them. The aim was to raise awareness of the importance of psychological support and encouraging active, fulfilling and healthy aging.



Lecture by Toni Maglica, PhD

Protecting children's privacy online

The lecture, delivered by **Professor Marija Boban, PhD**, addressed the challenges and dangers children face in the digital environment. Special emphasis was placed on the risks of sharing personal data, the dangers of cyberbullying, inappropriate contacts and potential identity misuse.

Through concrete examples and practical advice, participants gained insight into ways of protecting children online and into the importance of education, prevention and responsible behaviour in the *online* environment. The lecture was intended for parents, teachers, professionals and the wider public who wanted to better understand the challenges of growing up in the digital age.



Lecture by Professor Marija Boban, PhD

Resuscitation – reanimation

The lecture was organised by the **Croatian Academy of Medical Sciences – Split Branch**, co-organised with the **Centre for Culture and Lifelong Learning Zlatna vrata** and the **Croatian Medical Chamber – Split Branch**. However, the focus of this lecture was not on basic resuscitation procedures, but on different modalities of advanced resuscitation measures and post-resuscitation treatment of patients with cardiac arrest, with a particular emphasis on ways to improve the procedures applied by medical staff.



Lecture on resuscitation

Encouraging creative thinking

The workshop focused on developing and applying methods that encourage creative thinking, problem-solving and the generation of new ideas among adult education participants. Through practical examples and collaborative work, participants explored ways to foster innovation in the classroom and develop a motivating and supportive learning environment. The workshop combined a short theoretical introduction with practical activities and group work, with an emphasis on applicability in everyday teaching practice.



Encouraging creative thinking

ISTRA COUNTY

The county coordinator, **Public Open University Diopter, Pula**, in cooperation with **10 institutions**, held **25 events**.

Lifelong Learning Fair in Pula

The fair was organised by the county coordinator in cooperation with the **Croatian Employment Service – Pula Branch Office**. The fair brought together representatives of eight colleges and adult education institutions from this county and around 70 final-year pupils from four secondary schools in Pula.

Career Counselling Day

The Career Information and Counselling Centre in Pula held a Career Counselling Day for everyone looking for a job, a career change or planning a future career, including final-year pupils and final-year university students.

Visitors were introduced to the Centre's services and educational institutions presented adult education programmes, with an emphasis on the possibility of using vouchers for lifelong learning. Pupils had the opportunity to obtain direct information about continuing their education and to receive advice from the Centre's advisers and representatives of the institutions – the Fair participants.



Career Counselling Day

Colour the world – philanthropic inspiration



Through creative activities and inspiring stories about philanthropy in Pula, participants explored how philanthropy and art can colour the world. Special thanks went to the **Istra Foundation – Fondazione**, **Izabela Vitasović** from the **Teraboto** winery and the mentor, painter **Anita Pilat**, who introduced participants to the world of painting and helped them relax during the workshop.



Colour the world – philanthropic inspiration

Sign language workshop

The workshop reminded participants that understanding knows no barriers. Participants learned that even a single sign can brighten someone's day. This inspiring and educational workshop was led by **Tatjana Vodnik** from the **Association of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons of Istra County**.



Workshop by Tatjana Vodnik from the Association of Deaf and Hard of Hearing Persons of Istra County

DUBROVNIK-NERETVA COUNTY

The county coordinator, the **Career Centre from Dubrovnik**, in cooperation with **5 institutions**, held **10 events**.

Lifelong Learning Fair in Dubrovnik

The fair brought together a number of institutions and organisations that presented their programmes and opportunities for personal and professional development to participants. Among the participants were: **Dubrovnik School of Tourism and Hospitality**, the **Dubrovnik Development Agency (DURA)**, **DEŠA Dubrovnik**, the **Dubrovnik Youth Career Centre**, **Erasmus Student Network Dubrovnik** and the **University of Dubrovnik – the Maritime Faculty**, the **Language Centre** and the **Faculty of Economics**, as well as the **Croatian Employment Service (Dubrovnik Regional Office)**.

The **University of Dubrovnik** presented its lifelong learning programmes, the **Language Centre** its foreign language courses, the **Faculty of Economics** a tourist guide course, while the **Maritime Faculty** presented special training programmes for seafarers.

Representatives of the **Croatian Employment Service** presented participants in detail with the education voucher system, the My Voucher portal, the application procedure for using vouchers and the rights and obligations of users.



Lifelong Learning Fair in Dubrovnik

Inclusive practices

The lecture addressed how to recognise and support young people with fewer opportunities by using inclusive language, exploring good practices, designing inclusive events and encouraging digital inclusion. Participants received practical guidelines for creating an inclusive environment and supporting the diverse needs of young people.



Inclusive practices

Intersectoral cooperation

The lecture focused on intersectoral cooperation as a key to exchanging experiences, connecting different fields and creating sustainable solutions for the needs of the community.



Intersectoral cooperation

Climate change and waste

A lecture was held at **Ivan Gundulić Primary School in Dubrovnik** with the aim of introducing pupils to basic concepts of climate change and the importance of responsible waste management. Using examples from everyday life, pupils learned how their habits affect the environment and what each of us can do to preserve the planet.



Lecture on climate change and waste management

Become a Category B boat operator

The lecture held at the **Maritime Faculty of the University of Dubrovnik** focused on informing participants about the possibilities of obtaining a licence to operate boats. Through a presentation and discussion, participants learned more about enrolment requirements, the necessary knowledge and skills, the exam content and the course of the process for obtaining a Category B licence.

During the lecture, emphasis was placed on the importance of safety at sea, responsible behaviour while navigating and knowledge of basic maritime regulations.



Become a Category B boat operator

Virtual reality in education

At the lecture, participants discovered how VR technology enhances learning processes, increases motivation and enables experiential knowledge acquisition through innovative and interactive methods.



Virtual reality in education

Lecture on the training programme for caregivers

At the lecture, participants learned how a structured education programme provides practical knowledge and skills needed to deliver quality care for elderly and dependent persons, thereby opening the path to new employment opportunities and increasing social solidarity.



Lecture on the training programme for caregivers

MEĐIMURJE COUNTY

The county coordinator, **Public Open University Čakovec**, in cooperation with **10 institutions**, held **45 events**.

Lifelong Learning Fair in Čakovec

Visitors had the opportunity to speak directly with representatives of educational institutions and obtain information about retraining programmes, professional development and courses for acquiring new competencies. Great interest and a positive atmosphere confirmed the importance of such events, which connect education possibilities with the needs of individuals and the labour market. Numerous meetings and conversations encouraged many people to make important decisions about investing in themselves.



Lifelong Learning Fair – a step towards new knowledge and skills

Little school of sign language

In the educational workshops, pupils became familiar with the world of deafblind, deaf and hard of hearing people, their culture and different ways of communication, with a special emphasis on sign language.

The workshop focused on breaking down prejudices about deafblind, deaf and hard of hearing people, encouraging interest in their unique world and needs and promoting acceptance and appreciation of diversity.



Educational sign language workshop

Dog communication

The lecture provided insight into how dogs express their thoughts and feelings through body language, vocalisations and the context of the situation. With examples and practical advice, **Irena Petak** showed participants how to better understand dogs and build a trusting and harmonious relationship with them. The aim was for owners to learn to “read” canine signals and respond in a way that reduces tension and prevents misunderstandings.



Dog communication

Making toys for dogs

At a creative workshop on textile recycling, through an educational segment, participants learned about the impact of textile waste on the environment and about the solution offered by the **Humana Nova Social Cooperative**, which applies a circular model of textile waste management in its operations — collection, reuse, recycling and the creation of new products from old textiles. They also learned about the work of persons with disabilities, gained new sewing knowledge and skills and created their own recycled product.



Creative workshop on textile recycling

Paint 'n' sip

Under the expert guidance of fine and graphic artist **Rusa Trajkova** and vocational teacher of hospitality service **Goran Žižek**, participants mastered the basics of preparing the perfect cocktail, tried their hand at painting and showed that with good guidance, a good group and an excellent atmosphere — anything is possible.

No prior experience was required; all that was needed was good will and a desire to learn something new. Everyone left the workshop richer in new knowledge, pleasant memories and unique works they themselves created.



Painting and cocktail-making workshop

Make-up & champagne

At the workshop, participants learned how to apply make-up for a perfect evening look while enjoying a glass of sparkling wine. With expert advice from **Kristina Strniščak**, they discovered small secrets of professional make-up — from choosing suitable cosmetics to achieving a glamorous final glow. The atmosphere was relaxed, fun and full of positive energy, which made the evening even more special.



Make-up workshop with a glass of sparkling wine

Safe driving licence

The activity was carried out as part of the National Road Traffic Safety Plan, with the aim of educating young people about responsible behaviour in traffic, at the **Novak Public Open University**, which also organised the activity. The programme included a lecture, interactive workshops and simulations — such as the use of “drunk goggles” — through which participants developed traffic culture, critical thinking and a sense of responsibility in everyday life.



Safe driving licence

CITY OF ZAGREB

The county coordinator, the **Craft College from Zagreb**, in cooperation with **14 institutions**, held **50 events**.

Lifelong Learning Fair in Zagreb

A total of 14 institutions from the City of Zagreb presented their work at this year's fair, held at an attractive location — Cvjetni trg. Visitors had the opportunity to explore new opportunities, discover programmes that can help them develop skills and find inspiration for personal and professional growth.



Lifelong Learning Fair at Cvjetni trg

Producing functional objects with 3D printing – examples from practice



At a workshop held at the **Craft College**, led by **Vanja Husein** as part of the Erasmus+ project MC.VET, participants discovered how an idea becomes a real object with the help of modern technology and learned the basics of 3D modelling, how a 3D printer works and the possibilities of applying this technology in everyday life and work. The event focused on the practical application of 3D printing in creating functional objects, with an emphasis on developing specific examples — from concept to design, optimisation and preparation for printing. Through interactive work, previously created 3D models were analysed, their functionality discussed and participants' experiences exchanged, making the workshop ideal for everyone who wants to expand their knowledge and skills in the field of 3D printing and design.



Producing functional objects with 3D printing

Starting an entrepreneurial venture

A workshop for future master craftspeople was held at the **Craft College in Zagreb**, designed as an introductory step for everyone preparing to take the master craftsman exam and considering starting their own craft business.



Participants learned key information about the structure and course of the master craftsman exam, the application requirements and necessary documentation, as well as the opportunities the exam opens up — from starting their own craft business and training apprentices to increasing competitiveness on the market. The workshop also covered the basic steps for starting an entrepreneurial venture, including registering a craft business, choosing the line of work, financial and tax aspects and available support for self-employment.

The workshop gave participants the opportunity to take a proactive approach to their future, learn about all available options and gain a clearer picture of the path towards successful master craftsmanship and the craft sector.



Starting an entrepreneurial venture

Open Days at the Callegari School

The Open Days at the **Callegari** School were intended for everyone who wants to step into the world of interior design and explore opportunities for a creative career. Visitors could attend the lecture Design. Create. Inspire., where they viewed participants' work, learned about basic and advanced programmes and gained insight into the journey from the first idea to a creative career as an interior designer.



Open Days at the Callegari School in Zagreb

5, 6, 7, 8 – dance with us!

The workshop held at the **Zagreb Public Open University** took place in a highly dynamic and positive atmosphere, with plenty of laughter, good energy and mastering new dance steps. Participants showed great interest and engagement and the workshop served as an example of how learning can take place outside the traditional classroom, through creative and fun activities.



Dance workshop at the Zagreb Public Open University

Lifelong Learning Week at the Sesvete College

A variety of workshops and lectures dedicated to personal and professional development were held at the **Sesvete College**. The programme began with an Open Day, where visitors could learn about educational programmes, get information about vouchers for adult education and find out everything about enrolment options.

This was followed by **Ivana Čosić's** lecture Mental Health and Career, then a practical workshop Canva – the basics of creating visuals for your business independently, led by UX designer **Neda Pršo**. A lecture led by Professor **Daniela Cvitković**, PhD, was Self-help for children and adults with ADHD and the week concluded with a tour of the College and a presentation of the services of the **Career Centre**.



Programme of the Lifelong Learning Week at the Sesvete College