Participants:

Chris Jolly (Jolly Learning); chris@jollylearning.co.uk
Maire Tänna (Koolibri Publishers); maire@koolibri.ee
Daniel Žderić (Profil International); Daniel.zderic@profil.hr
Jelena Bevandić (Profil International); jelana.bevandic@profil.hr
Vanja Šikić (Profil International); vanja.sikic@profil.hr
Kina Andreeva (Prosveta Publishers); kina.andreeva@prosveta.bg
Petar Bojinov (Prosveta Publishers); petar.bojinov@prosveta.bg
Natalia Kopyeva (Prosvehcheniye Publishers); NKopieva@prosv.ru
Maria Zhuchkova (Prosvehcheniye Publishers); MVZhuchkova@prosv.ru
Matic Karlovšek (Rokus-Klett Publishing); matic.karlovsek@rokus-klett.si
Sintija Buhanovska (Zvaigzne Publishers); Sintija.buhanovska@zvaigzne.lv
Kristīne Kokina (Zvaigzne Publishers); Kristine.kokina@zvaigzne.lv
Eduard Pérez-Mañanet (Vicens Vives); mkt@vicensvives.es
Dejan Begović (Kreativni Centar); dejan.begovic@kreativnicentar.rs
Ljiljana Marinković (Kreativni Centar); ljilja@kreativnicentar.rs
Slavica Marković (Kreativni Centar); slavica.markovic@kreativnicentar.rs
Natalija Panić (Kreativni Centar); natalija.panic@kreativnicentar.rs
Preben Späth (EEPG); eepg@adr.dk

Minutes of the meeting

Wednesday 11 May: Arrival in Belgrade and welcome dinner
Thursday 12 May:

Morning session:

**Lobbying strategies for textbook publishers at local and national level**

Chris Jolly gave a presentation on how their products for teaching and learning to read are marketed. Two ways to learn to read is via memorization. His company has been using Phonics for this approach. Strategy for the lobbying began with research based on the work of psychologists. After work for three years and evaluation of their work the company. He mentions the academic researchers as well as the schools and districts that he has approached, the main work was at local level not so much at national level (Click to see the presentation).

Matic Karlovšek explained how the 5 biggest textbook publishers in Slovenia in order to be able to communicate with the Ministry of Education. They also used press conferences, formulated textbook funding proposals and other PR approaches. In the end they started with the people, the parents to find out their attitude to the quality and prices of textbooks. Now they are planning a series of press conferences to reach the attention of the Ministry. Listing the goals in the presentation  !!! The long term plan for Rokus and other e. Publishers in Slovenia is to have a textbook market working like the model being used in Austria where the state buys and pays all the textbooks. (Click to see the presentation)

Then followed a long discussion about free textbooks market vs. State influence on the textbook market, and it was mentioned that politicians normally only work for shorter terms, they do not care what happens in 10 years.

Jelena Bevandić talked about that they try to establish interconnections between important players in the market, e.g. politician, parents, teachers and pupils, and education institutions, school boards, and NGOs (e.g. For talented children and so on), and experts and stakeholders. International cooperation for
basis for lobbying towards politicians. We try to show parents and teachers that we actually care, and we are constantly looking for new lobbying channels. *(Click to see the presentation)*

Kina Andreeva presented the lobbying strategies in the framework of the approval system in Bulgaria. There are fixed prices for a set of textbooks in each grade. The main problem for marketing is that the textbooks situation changes very rapidly in terms of decisions by the Ministry of Education e.g. one year books were sent out for external evaluation in the schools, but then in October the Ministry suddenly decided that external evaluation should not take place anyway. Our lobbying strategies are based on our strong belief that better education provides better quality of life. Main messages are: (1) We care about the quality of education; we organise seminars for experts in different subjects (PISA based approach). Recently they have launched a web site “Words” where teachers and students can publish their written products of any kind. (2) we care about the qualification of the teachers. They participate in the qualification activities of schools, and train the teachers to use new technologies. (3) we care about the necessities of every school; here they publish a school management magazine, they work at local level closely with the municipalities (donations, prizes, book-stalls at local events, promotion of new products. Very important are the personal contacts with teachers, maintained by the local representatives. *(Presentation 4)*

Following this presentation Kina Andreeva gave an overview of the textbook production and the approval system in Bulgaria *(Click to see the presentation)*

As for the use of interactive whiteboards, Chris Jolly suggested to find those teachers who are best and comfortable at using these products in schools and then champion them by putting their names and email addresses on the publisher’s web site so potential customers can contact them for giving courses to ‘local’ teachers on how the use the whiteboards.

Natalia Kopyeva presented the different ways and channels in which Prosveshcheniye carries out lobbying activities, e.g. through participation in projects of the Ministry of Education and Science of the Russian Federation and other federal and regional authorities as well as active work with teachers and methodology experts: preparation of tutors; seminars, conferences, etc. She
also explained the different approaches used at national, regional and local level (Click to see the presentation).

Natalija Panić described lobbying strategies at national and local level applied by Serbian Association of Textbook Publishers. Serbian experience shows that lobbying is more effective if it is carried out through association of publishers – from the aspect of credibility, representativeness and possibility of influence on public decisions. (Click to see the presentation).

Afternoon session:

**How to market a new textbook on a market where you know the competition is hard**

Matic Karlovšek mentioned the role of the design (giving a historic view of the recent changes), he also explained how presentations of new materials directly to teachers at the schools are good tools for marketing. Furthermore Rokus often invites teachers to try out and evaluate the materials. Another marketing tool is the web seminars for teachers who cannot attend the ‘real’ workshops. Finally Matic presented a long list of additional materials used as marketing tools. (Click to see the presentation)

Jelena Bevandić presented the marketing campaign for a learning package for English for young learners where the leading idea was ‘let us make things differently’. The approach included promotional materials, teacher workshop, conferences, close cooperation with the organisations of English teachers, special materials offered for Teacher’s day, holidays etc. These various approaches were could be characterised as an octopus strategy. (Click to see the presentation)

Maire Tänna (no presentation), politicians in EE want to take popular decisions. They often do not think about the future of the educational system (long term at least). Maire talked about the old days when the approval system was still working, and when a book was not approved there was often the stupid reply:
“This (minor) point could be better” - without any precise criticism, indicating what was wrong. Estonia only has 550 schools in total, so it is a small market, but this on the other hand makes it easier to act by sending emails to all teachers of a given subject in the country. It is easy to send dedicated material to exactly those teachers who are the immediate target group. Materials are also produced and sold to kindergarten teachers (Click to see the presentation).

In stead of sending one copy of each textbook to the schools (which is rather expensive) they take out the first sheet (16 pages) plus the cover and this is sent to the schools. Matic told that in Slovenia all teachers receive one copy of each new title in their subject – this is the cheapest marketing material of all.

Sintija Buhanovska presented the marketing campaign behind the English series ‘Challenge 1’ for grades 10 to 12, following the books for grades 3 to 9. She described the tough market situation in Latvia with Pearson and Oxford as competitors in the ‘English’ market. Special marketing activities included song performance by well known young singer, radio and TV adds, competitions in the English language week, all with the result of no reaction at all (Click to see the presentation).

Kina told about this year’s campaign. Offering new technologies to increase the quality of teaching, also they send interactive calendars with tasks indicated for each day of the month. At the end of the month the reactions/replies to the tasks are written down and sent to Prosvehta. In addition special materials to promote concentration are sent to schools. Another approach is the development of electronic interactive materials – for teachers who use our printed version. These electronic textbooks are very well welcomed by the teacher. They can be used on whiteboards, but the teacher can also show it on the blackboard just using his laptop. Screen dumps from the electronic version of the series ‘English for you’ (grades 8-10) are shown in the presentation. The whole brand is called Prosveta Libri Magici. (Click to see the presentation).

Dejan Begović first explained the general features of the textbook market in Serbia; with the growing number of licensed educational publishers the
competition has indeed become very hard, especially for the market for primary school textbooks. In recent years the Ministry of Education has decided to buy the textbooks directly from the publishers and giving them to the pupils in grades 1 to 3. (Click to see the presentation)

Chris Jolly gave an overview of the most relevant caveats when marketing in a market where competition is hard, namely content, branding, pricing and patience! He explained this approach using the marketing of the company’s ‘Jolly Phonics Activity Book’ (Click to see the presentation)

Friday 13 May

Morning session:
Social networks on the internet as a marketing tool (among other tools) in text book publishing

(Presentations and general discussion)

Dejan Begović showed the results of a study called Online Social Networks, that was conducted in 27 countries on 28,944 persons. He explained the main outcomes by quoting the kinds of activities people carry out on the net, and also mentioned the 3 overwhelming social networks Twitter, Facebook and YouTube. The number of users of these three networks is growing immensely in Serbia. Precise graphics show the exact number of users in different regions and languages. He went on to show what kind of content the company puts on their web site, including video presentations. (Click to see the presentation)

Eduard Pérez-Mañanaet first presented the so called 3D Sales strategy of Vicens Vives and went on the explain the product promo materials they distribute to all teachers in Spain. Special approaches include teacher workshops, extra digital resources for teachers and learners, video demos, social media (Facebook and Twitter). (Click to see the presentation)
Kristīne Kokina first showed the homepage of Zvaigzne and then focussed on the special teacher section, furthermore the Facebook and Twitter accounts of the company were presented. She also mentioned a special competition called the ‘Star Class’, showing a map of Latvia where all the numerous classes participating are shown. Each stage of the competition consists of a series of theoretical questions (including questions from supporters of the campaign-sponsors) plus a creative work in the form of a self made video of max 2 minutes. (Click to see the presentation)

Matic Karlovšek mentioned the many social networks that have grown around several products of Rokus, e.g. Pons Slovenija, National Geographic Junior, Rokus Klett Publishing, web sites for teachers in various subjects, including interactive versions of the textbooks. (Click to see the presentation)

Chris gave an overview of the many activities his company has been using on the internet in order to establish and participate in social networks. The main activities include the website (with demo videos, and page turning of main books), Facebook, YouTube (with a dedicated Jolly Learning channel), trainers (an online community with local contacts) and types of PR on the websites (Click to see the presentation)

Natalia Kopyeva mentioned among other things a newsletter (both printed and online) as part of the social networks (the online version is also linked to Facebook and Twitter). In addition to the live journal they also have established blogs where relevant information is discussed and distributed. In addition there are some professional social networks in Russia with teachers and school staff as the main target groups. More specifically Natalia mentioned the obstacles and problems in setting up and continuing a blog (Click to see the presentation)

Kina showed the social networks of Prosveta (company web site, emailing to teachers and school directors) monthly newsletter, presenting coming events; advertisements in influential sites like bg.mama, abv.bg (an email site) etc.
Prosveta also have a profile on Facebook as well as a channel on YouTube. (Click to see the presentation)

Afternoon session:

Marketing materials and strategies for kindergarten and pre-school children

Dejan Begović first mentioned the different types of institutions which offer pre-school learning. Kreativni Centar was one of the very first publishers in the Serbian pre-school market with materials for Math, nature, Drawing and Colouring since 1991. They have also been publishing a special journal for pre-school staff, called ‘Creative Education’. The company also organizes annual conferences aimed at pre-school teachers and psychologists. Finally the company supports a dedicated web site for this target group. (Click to see the presentation)

Eduard Pérez-Mañanet presented extra special materials for kindergarten and pre-school e.g. wall sheets, calendars, audio CDs, and digital offline books (Click to see the presentation)

Kristīne Kokina told that the Ministry of Education in Latvia is obviously not very interested in the kindergarten and pre-school market, no precise directions as to the learning processes are given. Yet the publishers try to meet the market directly by organising meetings with the teachers, by distributing every year new catalogues presenting materials for these target groups along with special brochures for separate subjects like ‘Jump with Johnny the Rabbit’. Marketing activities include direct emails to the teachers, adds in popular newspapers and participation in events concerning pre-school education. In the future Zvaigzne plans to organise professional courses for kindergarten teachers. (Click to see the presentation)

Jelena Bevandić told that Profil is entering the market of kindergarten and pre-school education these years, right now they have published three titles for children of age 5-7 years. The marketing activities include special materials for
parents as well as educators, advertising in radio and television and children’s magazines. Promotional materials include leaflets, brochures, posters and notebooks. (Click to see the presentation)

Maria Zhuchkova first presented the Russian system of pre-school education, then followed to a presentation of existing pre-school materials and finished by explaining the future plans for this market area. Although the potential market for this kind of materials is enormous (compared to other countries) the pre-schoolmarket books cover less than 1% of the company’s sales. The marketing activities are among others seminars, participation at regional conferences, distributing advance copies of the material, organising courses for pre-school institutions, and promotional actions in bookshops and theatrical actions in the kindergartens (Click to see the presentation)

Kina Andreeva presented Prosveta’s approach to materials for pre-school and kindergarten. She also mentioned the problem that many children from Roma and Turkish families enter school without any knowledge of Bulgarian. Prosveta have produced “Hand in Hand” system covering all areas of kindergarten/pre-school. (Click to see the presentation)

Chris pre-school learning obligatory in some countries, kindergarten is often use in the sense of 1 year of schooling, while pre-school means the last year before beginning the schooling.

In English speaking countries schooling starts at age of 4.5 years.

There two ways in which Jolly Learning sells products for pre-school and kindergarten, i.e. either retail or internet. (Click to see the presentation)

Evaluation of the meeting
The participants filled in the evaluation questionnaire and had the opportunity to suggest topics for coming meetings. Suggested were among others:

- Small budget campaigns
- More ideas for using the internet for marketing
- Development of e-learning materials
- Marketing strategies for segments and grades where parents buy the textbooks
- Marketing of interactive materials and how to approach the teachers
- How to create e-mail lists and how to email newsletters
- How to share materials between different countries (synergies)
- New ideas in marketing design
- Influence of European standards on equalising the conditions on textbook markets in different countries

On behalf of all participants Preben Späth thanked the organisers from Kreativni Centar for a very well organised network meeting.

18 May 2011,

Preben Späth