A much appreciated weekend on Waldorf education in Sarajevo

by Leila Kostic (Waldorf early childhood educator in Sarajevo)

More than ten years ago we founded the Waldorf kindergarten in Sarajevo. One could think that therefore Waldorf education would no longer be unknown in our society. However we experience that at the beginning there was little interest expressed in it. Parents brought their children to the kindergarten and took them home again in the afternoon. They knew that their children were well cared for, but no one expressed interest or raised questions about our approach.

In recent years this situation has slowly begun to change: more and more people are becoming interested in Waldorf education. Thus our teaching faculty decided to do more public outreach work and offer introductory events and courses.

Early childhood educators from the Sarajevo Waldorf Kindergarten, together with the speakers.

In April, our second public weekend took place, organized by colleagues and parents of the Waldorf kindergarten. David Brierley from Ljubljana und Johannes Wolter from Kassel were the keynote speakers. There were 120 participants from all of Bosnia Herzegovina – educators, students and parents. For us, this was a great success.

It was a special joy for us that this time participants were there from all the ethnic groups that had once been enemies. And the minister of education, culture and youth also came and gave a short speech.

Words of welcome from the Minister of Education

The location of the event was theAcademy for Theater and Art, which for one day looked just like a Waldorf kindergarten. Everywhere one could see wool pictures, main lesson books, colored cloths, and books on Waldorf education in Croatian. For almost all of the participants, this was the first time that they had seen or experienced eurythmy. For most it was a new experience to model embryonic forms in clay. The felting workshop with colored wool offered by the kindergarten teachers from the Sarajevo Waldorf Kindergarten was very popular. And one outcome of the conference was that we have now been invited to come to the Pedagogical University to offer a workshop!

Participants felting

Thanks to the parents from the kindergarten we were able to use the facilities of the Academy at no cost. They also made sure that there was a good media presence. We were able to have interviews broadcast through several television stations.The daily and weekly newspapers also had extensive reports on the course and on Waldorf education. And the domestic internet portals also published information on our course.

We would like to express our heartfelt thanks to all the participants and helpers. The organization and carrying out of this course brough us much joy.