

**PROF. DR. PRIMOŽ OVEN – PREJEMNIK ZLATE PLAKETE UNIVERZE V LJUBLJANI**  
**PROF. DR. PRIMOŽ OVEN – RECIPIENT OF THE GOLDEN PLAQUE OF THE**  
**UNIVERSITY OF LJUBLJANA**

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*Izvleček / Abstract*

**Izvleček:** Na Univerzi v Ljubljani (UL) je med 28. novembrom in 2. decembrom 2022 potekal Teden univerze in tudi letos, ob 103. rojstnem dnevu univerze, so bili predstavljeni najodličnejši raziskovalni dosežki, podeljeni častni nazivi, plakete, nagrade in priznanja vsem, ki so pripomogli, da je Univerza v Ljubljani iz leta v leto boljša. Na Oddelku za lesarstvo Biotehniške fakultete UL smo zelo ponosni, da je na slavnostni seji Senata Univerze v Ljubljani 29. 11. 2022 Zlato plaketo prejel tudi naš sodelavec, prof. dr. Primož Oven, vodja Katedre za kemijo lesa in druge lignocelulozne materiale. Prof. Oven je mednarodno uveljavljen raziskovalec in pedagog na področju proučevanja zvez med funkcijami, strukturami, kemizmom in lastnostmi lesa, biorafinacije ter valorizacije lesne biomase s poudarkom na pridobivanju in uporabi nanoceluloze in lesnih ekstraktivov. V akademskem in gospodarskem okolju promovira trajnostno izrabo lesa v krožnem biogospodarstvu in skrbi za ugled UL doma in v tujini.

**Ključne besede:** Univerza v Ljubljani, Zlata plaketa Univerze, kemija lesa

**Abstract:** From November 28 to December 2, 2022, the University Week was held at the University of Ljubljana (UL). As in previous years, and on this, the occasion of the 103<sup>rd</sup> anniversary of the University, the most outstanding research achievements were presented, and honorary degrees, plaques, awards and recognitions were given to all those who have contributed to make the University of Ljubljana better year after year. At the Department of Wood Science and Technology of the Biotechnical Faculty of the University of Ljubljana, we are very proud that at the ceremonial meeting of the Senate of the University of Ljubljana on November 29, 2022, our colleague, the Head of the Chair of Wood Chemistry and Other Lignocellulosic Materials, Prof. Dr. Primož Oven, was also awarded the Golden Plaque. Prof. Oven is an internationally recognised researcher and lecturer in the field of research on the relationships between functions, structures, chemistry and properties of wood, biorefineries and valorisation of woody biomass, with a focus on the extraction and use of nanocellulose and wood extracts. In the academic and business environment, he promotes the sustainable use of wood in the circular bioeconomy and takes care of UL's reputation at home and abroad.

**Keywords:** University of Ljubljana, Golden Plaque, wood chemistry

Prof. dr. Primož Oven, univ. dipl. inž. les., na Univerzi v Ljubljani deluje vse od leta 1990, ko se je po diplomu (1989) kot mladi raziskovalec zaposlil na Oddelku za lesarstvo Biotehniške fakultete UL. Magistriral je leta 1993 in doktoriral leta 1997. Do leta 2008 je izjemno uspešno kot pedagog in raziskovalec deloval na Katedri za tehnologijo lesa, kjer je bil od leta 2004 do 2008 tudi vodja raziskovalne skupine "Tehnologija lesa". Leta 2008 pa se je dr. Oven pogumno odločil za zamenjavo svojega ož-

jega raziskovalnega področja, na katerem je že bil mednarodno uveljavljen znanstvenik. Intenzivno se je začel ukvarjati s kemijo lesa in leta 2008 prešel na Katedro za kemijo lesa in drugih lignoceluloznih materialov, ki jo še vedno vodi.

Kemija lesa je na Oddelku za lesarstvo pedagoška in raziskovalna dejavnost z dolgoletno tradicijo. Prof. Ovnu je na tem temelju z dobro pretehtanimi odločitvami in zavzetim delom uspelo okrog sebe zbrati odlično pedagoško in raziskovalno ekipo, za

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področje je navdušil mlajše sodelavce in študente, laboratorije je opremil z najsodobnejšo raziskovalno opremo ter vzpostavil tesne stike z gospodarstvom. S tem je osnoval moderen in mednarodno konkurenčen laboratorij za širše znanstveno področje kemije lesa (Oven, 2022a). Posebno pozornost posveča tudi prenosu in uporabi znanj v prakso, saj je svojo skupino povezal s številnimi raziskovalnimi skupinami na Biotehniški fakulteti, na Kemijskem inštitutu, na Inštitutu za celulozo in papir itd. Povezuje se z gospodarstvom in industrijo, s katerimi prijavlja skupne projekte, kot tudi z različnimi državnimi službami. Tako je pod njegovim vodstvom Oddelek za lesarstvo utrdil svoj status mednarodno uveljavljene in priznane institucije tudi na področju kemije lesa in lignoceluloznih materialov.

Osnovno poslanstvo prof. dr. Primoža Ovna v vlogi rednega profesorja je seveda pedagoška dejavnost. Na Oddelku za lesarstvo UL BF za kemijo lesa navdušuje študente na vseh stopnjah in smereh študija lesarstva v okviru predmetov kot so na primer Kemija lesa, Kemična zgradba lesa, Kemična predelava lesne biomase, Nanofibrilirana celuloza iz lesnih vlaken in še nekaterih drugih predmetov. Predavatelj pa je tudi na Oddelku za gozdarstvo in obnovljive vire BF UL ter na Akademiji za likovno umetnost in oblikovanje UL. Poleg tega je bil od leta 2009 do 2022 koordinator znanstvenega področja Les in biokompoziti na interdisciplinarnem doktorskem študiju Bioznanosti ter vodja Komisije za doktorski študij na Biotehniški fakulteti UL in je član komisije za doktorski študij Univerze v Ljubljani. Kot gostujoči profesor in raziskovalec je v letu 2010/11 deloval na Universität für Bodenkultur (BOKU) na Dunaju. O njegovem pedagoškem ugledu priča dejstvo, da je mentoriral štiri mlade raziskovalce oziroma doktorande in somentoriral dve doktorandki, od katerih je ena prejela nagrado za najboljši doktorat na področju papirništva. Trenutno pa pod njegovim mentorskim vodstvom študij zaključujejo trije doktorandi, pri eni doktorandki, ki je v zadnjem letniku doktorskega študija, pa je somentor. Samo po sebi je umevno, da je bil mentor tudi pri številnih diplomskih delih, od katerih sta bili dve nagrajeni s fakultetno, eno pa z univerzitetno Prešernovo nagrado. V vlogi somentorja je bil pri eni magistrski nalogi, ki je bila nagrajena s fakultetno Prešernovo nagrado.

Seveda tako kvalitetno pedagoško delo v univerzitetnem okolju ne bi bilo možno brez izvrstnega raziskovalnega dela z odličnimi rezultati. Znanstveno težišče raziskav prof. Ovna, ki je rezultiralo v skoraj 100 objavljenih delih, od tega preko 60 v uglednih recenziranih revijah (Bibliografija Primož Oven, 2022), je proučevanje zvez med funkcijami, strukturami in kemizmom ter lastnostmi lesa kot inženirskega materiala in tkiva živih dreves. Proučeval je možnosti uporabe magnetno resonančnega slikanja na širšem področju znanosti o lesu, kar je med drugim omogočilo iznajdbo nove, v soavtorstvu patentirane metode za določanje lesne vlažnosti. V zadnjem obdobju pa je raziskovalno delo usmeril na področje biorafinacije in valorizacije lesne biomase s poudarkom na pridobivanju in razvoju aplikacij ekstraktivov lesa in skorje ter nanofibrilirane celuloze. S svojimi raziskavami in aktivnim vključevanjem v strategije razvoja na področju lignoceluloznih materialov tako na UL kot tudi v družbenem in gospodarskem okolju dr. Oven posega na dandanes izjemno aktualen prehod v krožno gospodarstvo, ki ga s svojimi pedagoškimi in raziskovalnimi izkušnjami in delom aktivno sooblikuje.

V tem kratkem prispevku je nemogoče opisati vse številne aktivnosti prejemnika Zlate plakete Univerze v Ljubljani, prof. dr. Primoža Ovna. Zato naj omenimo le še, da je bil glavni in odgovorni urednik Zbornika za gozdarstvo in lesarstvo v letu 2006 in je tudi član uredniškega odbora te revije, sedaj *Acta Silvae at Ligni*. V letih 2021 in 2022 je gostujoči urednik posebne izdaje *Chemistry and Applications of Lignocellulosic Materials* pri reviji *Forests*, kot nacionalni predstavnik in ekspert je aktivno deloval v komiteju in akcijah COST Evropske unije ter bil vodja različnih raziskovalnih projektov doma in v tujini.

Veseli smo, da imamo na Oddelku za lesarstvo Biotehniške fakultete UL tako odličnega sodelavca, kolega in prijatelja. Iskrene čestitke, Primož!



Slika 1. Rektor Univerze v Ljubljani prof. dr. Gregor Majdič izroča zlato plaketo (Foto: Viljem Vek).  
Figure 1. The rector of the University of Ljubljana presents the Golden Plaque (Photo: Viljem Vek).

Prof. Dr. Primož Oven, Univ. B. Sc. Wood Eng. has been working at the University of Ljubljana since 1990, when, after graduation (1989), he was employed as a young researcher at the Department of Wood Science and Technology of the Biotechnical Faculty of the University of Ljubljana. He obtained his master's degree in 1993 and his PhD in 1997. Until 2008, he worked extremely successfully as a lecturer and researcher at the Department of Wood Technology, where he was also the head of the "Wood Technology" research group from 2004 to 2008. In 2008, Dr. Oven courageously decided to change his narrow field of research, in which he was already an internationally recognised scientist. He began to work intensively on wood chemistry and in 2008 moved to the Chair of Chemistry of Wood and Other Lignocellulosic Materials, which he still heads.

Wood chemistry is a pedagogical and research activity with a long tradition at the Department of Wood Science and Technology. On this basis, with well-considered decisions and dedicated work, Dr. Oven has succeeded in gathering around him an excellent teaching and research team, inspiring younger colleagues and students to take up the subject, equipping the laboratories with state-of-the-art research equipment, and establishing close contacts with industry. As a result, he has created a modern and internationally competitive laboratory for the wider scientific field of wood chemistry (Oven, 2022b). He also pays special attention to the transfer and application of knowledge in practice, as he has linked his group with many research groups at the Biotechnical Faculty, the National Institute of Chemistry, the Institute of Pulp and Paper, and others. He is in contact with business and industry, with which he applies for joint projects, as



Slika 2. Prejemnik Zlate plakete Univerze v Ljubljani, prof. dr. Primož Oven (Foto: Katja Kodba in Nebojša Tejić (STA)).

Figure 2. Recipient of the Golden Plaque of the University of Ljubljana, Prof. Dr. Primož Oven (Photo: Katja Kodba and Nebojša Tejić (STA)).

well as with various government agencies. Under his leadership, the Department of Wood Science and Technology has consolidated its status as an internationally established and recognised institution also in the field of wood chemistry and lignocellulosic materials.

The main task of Prof. Dr. Primož Oven as a full professor is, of course, teaching. At the Department of Wood Science and Technology of UL BF he inspires students at all levels and in all programmes of the study of wood science and technology on topics such as wood chemistry, the chemical structure of wood, chemical processing of woody biomass, nanofibrillated cellulose from wood fibres and some other topics. He is also a lecturer at the Department of Forestry and Renewable Resources BF UL and at the Academy of Fine Arts and Design UL. In addition, from 2009 to 2022 he was the coordinator of the scientific area of wood and biocomposites in the interdisciplinary PhD programme in

Biosciences and the head of the Commission for Doctoral Studies at the Biotechnical Faculty of UL, and is a member of the Commission for Doctoral Studies of the University of Ljubljana. In 2010/11 he worked as a visiting professor and researcher at the University of Natural Resources and Applied Life Sciences (BOKU) in Vienna. His pedagogical reputation is evidenced by the fact that he has supervised four young researchers or PhD students and co-supervised two female PhD students, one of whom received an award for the best PhD thesis in pulp and paper science. Three doctoral students are currently completing their studies under his supervision, and he is the co-mentor of one doctoral student who is also in the final year of her doctoral studies. It goes without saying that he has also supervised many diploma theses, two of which were awarded the Faculty's and one the University's Prešeren Prize. In the role of co-mentor, he was

also involved in a master's thesis that was awarded with the Faculty's Prešeren Prize.

Of course, such high-quality educational work in an academic environment would not be possible without excellent research work with outstanding results. Prof. Oven's scientific research focus, which has resulted in nearly 100 published papers, including more than 60 in prestigious journals (Bibliografija Primož Oven, 2022), is the study of the relationships among the functions, structures, chemistry and properties of wood as an engineering material and the tissues of living trees. He explored the possibilities of using magnetic resonance imaging in the broader field of wood science, which led, among other things, to the invention of a new method for determining wood moisture content, which he helped to develop and patent. In recent years he has focused his research on the field of biorefining and valorisation of woody biomass with emphasis on the extraction and development of the application of wood and bark extracts and nanofibrillated cellulose. Through his research and active involvement in lignocellulosic material development strategies, both at UL and in the broader social and economic spheres, Dr. Oven is involved in today's highly relevant transition to a circular economy, which he is actively shaping through his experience and work in teaching and research.

In this short presentation, it is impossible to describe all the many and varied activities of the recipient of the Golden Plaque of the University of Ljubljana, Prof. Dr. Primož Oven. Therefore, it will only be mentioned that he was the Editor-in-Chief of the *Proceedings of Forestry and Woodworking* in 2006 and is also a member of the Editorial Board of this journal, which is now called *Acta Silvae at Ligni*. In 2021 and 2022, he was the guest editor of the special issue of the *Forest* journal focusing on the chemistry and applications of lignocellulosic materials. As a national representative and expert, he actively participated in the COST committee and COST actions of European Union, and was the leader of several research projects at home and abroad.

We are pleased to have such an excellent co-worker, colleague, and friend at the Department of Wood Science and Technology of University of Ljubljana's Biotechnical Faculty. Sincere congratulations, Primož!

## VIRI

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