

In Memoriam: Associate Professor Ivan Kejžar, Ph. D.

We said goodbye to an honorable colleague, a friend, a pedagogue and a scientist on Monday, June 4th 2018, at the central cemetery in Kranj.

He was born in 1935 in France where his parents then lived and worked. Soon after they moved to the village of Sorica, the home of his parents and the impressionist painter Ivan Grohar. Later, Ivan Kejžar set up his home and started his family in Kranj, but he was always joyous to return to the beautiful milieu of Sorica as long as his health allowed him.

He graduated from the Faculty of Industrial Pedagogy in Rijeka, received a Master's Degree from the Faculty of Sociology, Political Sciences and Journalism in Ljubljana, and a PhD in social-humanistic sciences in the field of industrial pedagogy at the Pedagogical Faculty in Rijeka in 1988. There he was in 1989 elected to the title of assistant professor. In 1995, he was nominated as associate professor for human resources at the Faculty of Organizational Sciences, University of Maribor.

He left an important and indelible mark in the field of education, human resources and organization. He was an outstanding advocate of a direct link between theory and practice, as evidenced by his professional, research and educational projects. As part of the Republic Research Community, he was responsible for the research project Transformation and modernization of the Educational System in connection with the restructuring of the economy. The goal of the project was to correlate the education system with the needs of the economy, which is still an extremely topical issue these days. He felt the gap between theory and practice as a young expert employed at the then Kovinar factory in Kranj. It was his lifelong endeavour to bridge this gap.

He worked as a researcher at the Pedagogical Institute of the University of Ljubljana and at the Slovenian Center for Adult Education. He was recognized for his exceptional professionalism of linking theory with practice by the Society for Evaluation of Work, and was awarded a title of an expert for work motivation and systematization.

With his expertise and knowledge, he collaborated with many international institutions such as Verona and Boston Universities and the Paris Personnel Directors' Association.

He showed his professionalism and connection with the economy as Head of the Center for Functional Education

and Counseling within the then College of Labour Organization (CLO), the current Faculty of Organizational Sciences (FOS) in Kranj, University of Maribor. In 1977, he co-organized the first conference on organization and human resources in Opatija, where the then Higher School for Work Organization had one of its educational units in Yugoslavia. From this conference, the International Conference on the Development of Organizational Sciences was developed, which FOS regularly hosts in Portorož. This year it was the 37th in a row.

Professor Kejžar was recognized as a top expert in work systematization and education, and one of the contributors and co-authors of the professional book Blue Book of Salaries in Slovenia, published in 1995 by the Slovenian Society for the Evaluation of Labour. Together with professor Ivan Bertonec, they developed and established the nomenclature and profiles of professions along with the methods of programming education.

He received many domestic and international awards for his exceptional professional work: the Ivan Bertonec Prize, the Community Prize for Educational Centres of Slovenia for outstanding successes in education, and the silver plaque of the University of Maribor.

Professor Ivan Kežar is remembered, especially by younger colleagues, for introducing them into development, research and consulting work related to economy. As Head of the Centre for Education and Consulting, he used his many liaisons in companies, such as Iskra, Gorenje, Sava, Elan, Droga-Kolinska and others, to introduce his co-workers into solving concrete problems for direct clients. This way a wide network of colleagues at the faculty gathered experience in practice and transferred the knowledge into the educational process.

He can be set as an example to us, also as an upright man. He was known for his dedication to the things he believed in and was convinced that they were useful to the narrower or wider environment, even if this standpoint could have harmed him. He knew how to think and work for others without looking after his own interests.

Janez Zeni, MSc and Vladislav Rajkovič, Professor Emeritus