



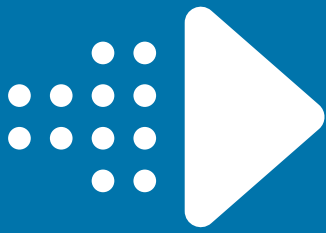
inspire  
& be inspired

Hrvatsko udruženje profesora engleskog jezika  
Croatian Association of Teachers of English

# NEWSLETTER

HUPE Newsletter No. 32 • Spring 2026





# NEXT CONFERENCE

## 34th Annual International HUPE Conference

*Teaching for Tomorrow:  
Multilingualism, Wellbeing and  
Sustainability in ELT Classrooms*

November 20–21, 2026

Zagreb, Croatia, at **Hotel Antunović**

# EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear colleagues,

Welcome to the new issue of our newsletter. We're delighted to offer you highlights from the HUPE activities from the past period. Thanks to the dedication of our members and partners, it has been a busy and inspiring time for our association.

In this issue, you'll find updates on recent activities as well as information about upcoming events, conferences, competitions, and meetings. We hope these opportunities will inspire you, spark new ideas, and encourage you to stay actively involved.

Thank you for being part of HUPE. We invite you to read on and join us in the exciting months ahead.

Warm regards,  
Ivana Kasunić,  
HUPE Newsletter editor

# 34TH ANNUAL NATIONAL HUPE CONFERENCE – CALL FOR PAPERS

Dear HUPE Friends and Future Conference Speakers,

We are excited to announce that preparations are underway for the 34th Annual National HUPE Conference, which will take place on November 20–21, 2026, in Zagreb, at Hotel Antunović.

If you are eager to share your expertise and insights, now is the perfect time to submit your proposal for a talk or workshop. We warmly invite teachers, researchers, and practitioners to contribute to this year's conference and be part of an inspiring professional community.

## The conference will focus on the theme:

Teaching for Tomorrow: Multilingualism, Wellbeing and Sustainability in ELT Classrooms

## Call for Papers is now open

We warmly invite teachers, researchers, and practitioners to share their knowledge, experience, and ideas through talks and workshops.

## Submission period:

April 1 – May 10, 2026

Submit your proposal via the official form at HUPE web page

## What can you submit?

- Workshops (interactive sessions with active audience participation)
- Talks (research-based or practice-oriented presentations)
- Submission guidelines

## Your proposal should include:

- session title
- abstract (short version for the programme and a detailed version for reviewers)
- short biography (written in the third person)
- session type
- target age group / level
- duration (30 or 45 minutes)
- equipment / room requirements

## Join us in Zagreb

Don't miss the opportunity to be part of one of the most important professional events for English language teachers in Croatia. We look forward to your inspiring contributions and to shaping the future of ELT together.



# VOICES THAT MATTER: HIGHLIGHTS FROM THE 31ST IATEFL SLOVENIA CONFERENCE

## Introduction

The 31<sup>st</sup> International IATEFL Slovenia Conference – R(A) ISING VOICES took place from March 12<sup>th</sup> to 15<sup>th</sup>, 2026, at Terme Vivat in Moravske Toplice, Slovenia. The event brought together educators from a range of countries to exchange insights, experiences, and innovative approaches to teaching English. The programme included six plenary lectures and more than sixty workshops and presentations, providing participants with a rich variety of ideas and practical strategies for use both in and beyond the classroom.

The conference theme was not merely a catchy phrase—it captured the very essence of this teacher training event. It highlighted the importance of educators' voices and choices at both local and global levels, encouraging participants to speak up and listen, to connect through curiosity and generosity, and to thrive through dialogue.

Marija Grah and Ana Ristić Matizović represented HUPE through engaging workshops, contributing valuable insights and practical ideas. The conference was also attended by HUPE president Sanja Paić and Karlovac Branch president Tomislav Mravunac. In addition, HUPE secretary Ljerka Vukić and Ksenija Kahlina contributed with two insightful and well-received sessions. Several more active HUPE members actively participated in the conference: Xena Elizabeth RT, Sanja Rašković, Ivana Burić Kurtović and Eva Bogdanović, further highlighting the organisation's active role and professional expertise.

## Digital vs. Human

Artificial Intelligence, as a highly relevant topic, was widely explored throughout the conference, with participants gaining guidance on how to use it effectively. Several sessions addressed this theme. Polona Nastran (Slovenia) shared practical ideas for integrating AI into assessment in her engaging workshop ChatGPT as Tools to Assess ESL Writing. The charismatic Piotr Steinbrich (Poland) raised important pedagogical, ethical, and practical questions in *Domesticating AI: The Classroom Perspective*, while Katja Kropce (Slovenia) examined the contrast between human and AI "voices" through hands-on classroom activities in *AI and the English Voice: Teaching Expression in the Age of Automation*.

Despite the strong presence of AI-related topics, they did not dominate the overall tone of the conference. On the contrary, many sessions shifted the focus back to human connection and the importance of maintaining a personal touch in teaching. The inspiring plenary *Turning to One Another in the Age of AI: Fostering Social Skills Through ELT*, led by Uwe Pohl and Margit Szestay (Hungary), emphasized the development of social skills such as critical thinking and creativity, while also presenting practical ways to encourage learners to reconnect and build essential communication micro-skills.

Language classrooms were highlighted as spaces where meaningful interaction naturally develops—environments that foster authentic conversation and discussion. As a result, considerable attention was given to finding the right balance between human and artificial, traditional and modern, and screen-free and digital approaches. Nataša Meh (Slovenia), in her workshop *Pens and Platforms: Finding Balance in English Training*, reinforced the idea that effective English teaching should integrate traditional literacy practices with digital tools to create engaging, structured, and impactful learning experiences.

Many sessions revisited time-honoured teaching tools—games, stories, songs, flashcards, and TPR—adapted to the 21st-century classroom. They reminded participants that, regardless of the era, both teachers and students benefit from learning in an energised and supportive environment.

## Teacher Well-being

R(A)ISING VOICES proved to be an inspiring event not only because of the wide range of high-quality sessions, but also due to its strong emphasis on teacher well-being and burnout prevention. Mindfulness, self-care, and emotional regulation were recurring themes throughout the programme.

Several sessions focused on relaxation techniques and reconnecting with oneself through breathing exercises, stretching, and meditation. A particularly memorable experience was the Laughter yoga session led by Danny Singh (Italy), which demonstrated that laughter is not

only beneficial but also healing; when practiced in a guided group setting, it becomes both an insightful and bonding experience.

Participants also enjoyed a variety of social events, including the International Evening, game night, a pool scavenger hunt, and informal networking through spontaneous socialising. The hotel's wellness and spa facilities further contributed to the relaxed and welcoming atmosphere, which defined the conference experience.

### HUPE's Voices at the Conference

In her reflective workshop *The Quest for Authenticity*, Marija Grah guided participants on a journey of self-discovery and personal growth, both within and beyond the classroom. She raised the thought-provoking question of what authenticity in our profession truly means, sparking discussion and encouraging participants to trust and value their inner voices. The session inspired meaningful sharing and reflection that extended well beyond the workshop itself. It was a powerful and memorable exploration of being true to oneself.

In *From A to Z – Unlocking the Magic of the ABCs*, Ana Ristić Matizović focused on practical approaches to teaching young learners as they begin acquiring the English alphabet and basic speaking skills. She presented a range of play-based, communication-oriented activities that nurture children's natural curiosity and capacity for learning. The activities were simple, engaging, and screen-free—yet highly effective and enjoyable in

primary classrooms. The session clearly demonstrated the importance of structured play in meaningful early language learning.

Ljerka Vukić's session *One Classroom, Many Learners: Teaching for All?* addressed the challenges of mixed-ability classrooms, combining research-based insights with practical strategies for supporting diverse learners, including fast finishers. In *Skills that Stick*, Ksenija Kahlina explored ways of designing mini-projects that encourage students to actively apply vocabulary and grammar in real-world contexts.

### Conclusion

The conference was an enriching and motivating experience that fostered both personal and professional growth. It created valuable opportunities to connect with like-minded educators, exchange ideas, and gain fresh perspectives. The sessions were engaging and inspiring, leaving participants feeling refreshed, energised, and ready to apply new insights in both their teaching practice and personal lives.

After four days at R(A)ISING VOICES, participants could truly relate to the message shared by Ivan Mandeljc, president of IATEFL Slovenia, in his opening remarks: "When voices meet, ideas grow; when ideas grow, classrooms change."

Ana Ristić Matizović, English language teacher  
Osnovna škola Ante Kovačića Zagreb

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# PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT THROUGH CROSS-CULTURAL BAKE-ALONG COLLABORATION SERIES BY LANGUAGES UNITED AND HUPE

The sweet and delicious Bake Along meetings hosted by Jayne Bowra and Suzana Tolić continue! We have changed the baking days into a mix of Saturdays and Sundays at different times of the day to allow colleagues from different time zones to attend, but the venues stay the same – your kitchens, so preheat your ovens and join us because the **Bake-Along Season 2 is Officially Rolling!**

All of you are invited to join us – the last season regulars as well as the "first-time bakers, long-time teachers," because our sessions are more than just a recipe; they offer a chance to share our cultures, our languages, and our passion for teaching in the most delicious way possible.

We kicked off our new season on Saturday 28th February at 09:00 UK time/10:00 Croatian time/18:00

Japan time live from Bath with our wonderful Jayne Bowra, who took us into the heart of British tradition while teaching us how to make traditional British scones! It was a perfect morning of kneading dough and "kneading" some quality time with colleagues from across the globe. We shared stories and enjoyed delicious scones with jam and cream with colleagues from Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ukraine, England and Croatia.

The heat is rising, as we are preparing for our next session which promises to be a showstopper. We are moving from the British countryside to a decadent Mediterranean fusion that will leave your kitchen smelling like heaven.

Our host for the second session is our very own Huppette Suzana Tolić, who will be guiding us through a recipe that is a unique blend of crunchy, honey-soaked layers and creamy goodness: Baklava Cheesecake. We think this is reason enough to see you on Saturday, March 28 at 16:00 UK time/17:00 Croatian time/11:00 Colombia time.

As always, before the session, keep an eye on your inbox. We will send out the invitation along with the presentation containing the list of ingredients and equipment required.

"The best lessons aren't always found in textbooks—sometimes they are found in the kitchen, shared with friends."

### Hope to see you on March 28th!

After the journey into the world of Baklava Cheesecake in March, the HUPE & Languages United Bake-Along is heading to the sunny coast of Croatia!

We are delighted to announce that for our April session (April 26th, Sunday!), we will be diving into the traditions of Dalmatia. Our host, Andreja Sutlović, will guide us through the art of making Kroštule—the irresistibly crunchy, golden, and powder-sugar-dusted pastry knots that are the heart of every Dalmatian celebration.

Join us for this opportunity to share culture and language through baking.

"Baking Bridges: Connecting Cultures One Slice at a Time."

Written by Suzana Tolić

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# REPORT ON HUPE DAY 2026 ONLINE EVENT

**HUPE Day 2026** online event took place on **21st March 2026** via Zoom, bringing together educators for a full day of professional development. The theme of the event, *"Renew, Refresh, Reconnect: Past Insights, Future Directions,"* focused on reflecting on past teaching practices while exploring new ideas for the future.

The first presentation was delivered by **Beatrix Price**, who discussed the role of Artificial Intelligence (AI) in professional development. Her talk emphasized how AI is already shaping education and highlighted the importance of teachers adapting to technological changes while maintaining their well-being. She also demonstrated some digital tools that can be used in teaching to make lessons more interesting and effective.

This was followed by **Mark Andrews**, who spoke about the importance of preserving valuable aspects of traditional teaching in a rapidly digital world. His session encouraged educators to balance modern tools with meaningful, real-life learning experiences.

Later in the programme, the annual general meeting (AGM) took place. What followed was the announcement

of the winners in the HUPE in Storyland competition. After a short coffee break, the event continued with interactive workshops and presentations.

**Ngan Phan Le Ha** led a workshop on rethinking classroom engagement, introducing innovative teaching strategies and encouraging active participation. **Teuta Dauti** explored how AI can support English teachers in creating materials and saving time, while still preserving the teacher's essential role.

The final session, led by **Daniel Xerri**, addressed the issue of declining interest in the teaching profession. He examined challenges such as workload and societal pressures and proposed leadership strategies to improve teacher retention and satisfaction.

Again this year, HUPE Day 2026 provided valuable insights into modern education, combining technology, innovation, and reflection on traditional practices. It successfully encouraged teachers to adapt, grow, and stay connected in an evolving educational context.



**4 days of Teacher training in Devon, UK**  
**September 10-13, 2026 / 50 places available**  
(Departure: Wednesday 8.00, Arrival: Monday 01.00)

# The Devon Flavour

**Workshops and Treasure Hunt in cooperation with**  
**SOL Barnstaple and Arriva**  
**Visit to Windsor and Salisbury, possibly a school**



**Applications through the HUPE webpage from**  
**Thursday March 26<sup>th</sup> from 15.00h until Sunday March 29<sup>th</sup> 23.59.**  
**Let's learn and have fun together!**



# 4 DAYS OF TEACHER TRAINING IN DEVON

Dear members,

Applications for the professional development program in Devon will be open from **Thursday, 26 March 2026 at 15:00** until **Sunday, 29 March 2026 at 23:59**. Registration will be available on the HUPE website (below the text).

Please note that there are currently **50 spots available**, reserved exclusively for active members. Once the list is finalized, you will receive an email with confirmation and further details regarding the training.

- **Estimated Cost:** Approx. €1,500 (The final price will be announced after interest is confirmed; all applicants will then receive an email to finalize their participation).
- **Departure:** Wednesday, 9 September 2026 (early morning).
- **Return:** Overnight between Sunday and Monday (approx. 1:00 AM), 14 September 2026.

## Preliminary Program

### Wednesday

- Visit to Windsor: Castle tour (optional), lunch break, The Long Walk, Queen Charlotte Street.
- Evening arrival in Barnstaple; hotel check-in.

### Thursday

- **Morning:** Teacher training workshops at our partner organization, **SOL (Sharing One Language)**.
- **Afternoon:** Visit to the towns of Lynton and Lynmouth; field lesson (technical vocabulary, Valley of the Rocks).

### Friday

- **Full-day field lessons:** \* Torquay (Agatha Christie-themed treasure hunt).
- Paignton (Field lesson: The 80s).
- **Evening:** Visit to the Palace Theatre for *The Mix Tape*.
- *(Note: A school visit is currently being negotiated).*

### Saturday

- **Morning:** Teacher training workshops at **SOL (Sharing One Language)**.
- **Afternoon:** Free time (choice of field lessons: Exeter, Ilfracombe, etc.).

### Sunday

- Departure for the airport after breakfast.
- Stop in Salisbury: Visit to the Cathedral (optional).
- Arrival at the airport around 18:00.
- Departure at approximately 21:00; arrival in Zagreb around 01:00.

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# THE SECOND HUPE OSIJEK BRANCH MEETING IN THE SCHOOL YEAR 2025-2026



The second HUPE Osijek branch meeting in the school year 2025-2026 was held on Saturday, 21 February 2026 at the Faculty of Education in Osijek. Seventeen HUPE members attended the meeting, which lasted for almost four hours.

## The agenda included:

- 1) Ana Katruša: Put Your Creative Thinking Hats On: Inspiring Creativity in the English Classroom
- 2) Tatjana Kristek: Teaching Beyond Borders: Professional Development in New York City
- 3) Tihana Mudrovčić: Oh! Who can ever be tired of Bath?
- 4) HUPE news



The first workshop, titled Put Your Creative Thinking Hats On: Inspiring Creativity in the English Classroom, was held by Ana Katruša from Kralja Tomislava Primary School in Našice. Ana presented key ideas from her Erasmus+ course on boosting creative thinking and problem solving, focusing on strategies that encourage student engagement, creativity, empathy, and motivation. She also introduced gamification as a student-centered approach to fostering creativity and collaboration, providing participants with practical, ready-to-use ideas for their classrooms.

The second talk, titled Teaching Beyond Borders: Professional Development in New York City, was delivered by Tatjana Kristek from Vladimira Becića Primary School in Osijek. Tatjana presented the teacher



training course organized by HUPE and held in New York City in July 2025, with day trips to Washington, D.C., and Philadelphia. She gave a detailed overview of the 10-day programme, presenting the many attractions, activities, and institutional visits, such as Columbia University, the U.S. Capitol, and the Croatian Embassy in Washington, D.C., as well as insights into American history, culture, and the U.S. education system.



The third talk, titled Oh! Who can ever be tired of Bath? was delivered by Tihana Mudrovčić from Ruđer Bošković Technical School in Vinkovci. In her presentation, Tihana reported on the HUPE teacher training course held in Bath in September 2025, organised with the Languages United to celebrate the 250th anniversary of Jane Austen's birth. Tihana presented a day-by-day overview of the 4-day programme, which included visits to the Roman Baths, Royal Crescent, Jane Austen Center, a





Regency Festival parade in Bath, a day trip to Wells and Stratford-upon-Avon, as well as a scavenger hunt and a theatre visit to an adaptation of *Emma*.

The participants were also informed about the latest news in HUPE, including the HUPE Board member changes, HUPE Instagram account, HUPE in Storyland National Writing Competition, Multilingual musical competition, teacher training course in Devon planned for September in collaboration with our partners from Sharing One Language (SOL), HUPE Day and AGM on 21 March 2026 via Zoom, Languages United and HUPE cultural bake-alongs, and future professional development events and conferences by our partner associations.



Members were also encouraged to contribute to HUPEzine and the Osijek branch by writing ELT-related articles, as well as applying as speakers to hold workshops or deliver talks at one of the future branch meetings.



HUPE Osijek is sincerely thankful to the speakers and all the members who were able to attend the meeting and create a pleasant and relaxing atmosphere. Hopefully, we will see you at our next meeting in May.

Adrijana Roždijevac  
HUPE Osijek branch president



# THE FIRST HUPE SLAVONSKI BROD MEETING IN THE SCHOOL YEAR 2025/2026

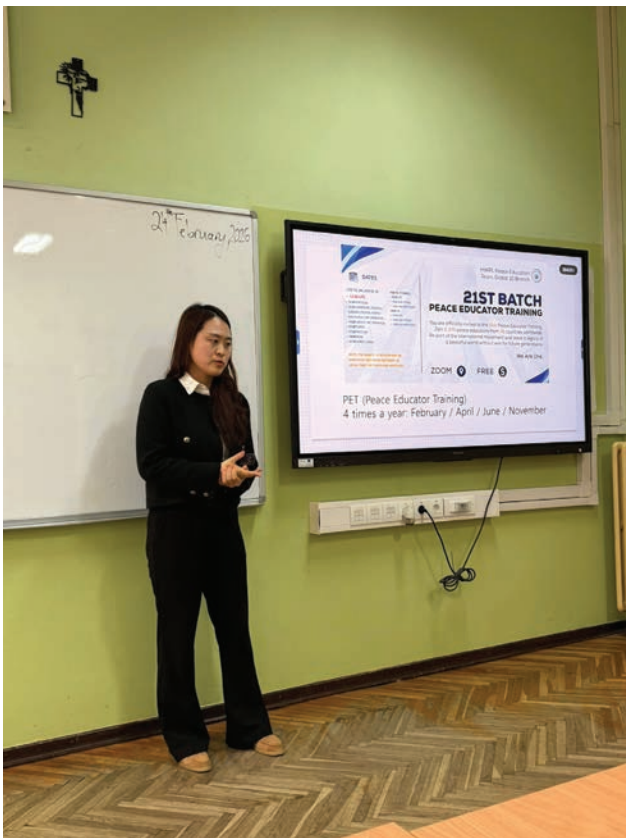
The first HUPE Slavonski Brod branch meeting in the school year 2025–2026 was held on Tuesday, 24 February 2026 at the Elementary School “Ivana Brlić-Mažuranić” in Slavonski Brod. The meeting lasted for three and a half hours and gathered 10 HUPE members and 2 guest speakers from South Korea for an inspiring afternoon of professional development, collaboration, and exchange of ideas.

The agenda included:

Rosie Kang, Brian Park: *HWPL Peace Project*  
Mirta Kos Kolobarić: *Thinker's Keys for Critical Minds*  
Marija Janković: *AI Tools for Teachers*  
HUPE news



initiatives can be integrated into the English classroom to foster intercultural understanding and meaningful communication. They also shared Peace textbooks that are an integral part of the peace project.



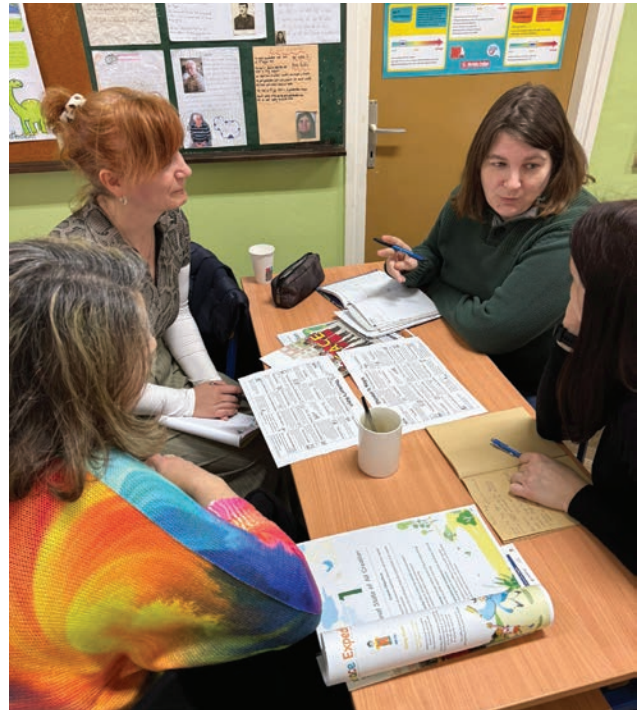
The first workshop, titled *HWPL Peace Project*, was delivered by Rosie Kang and Brian Park, our colleagues from South Korea. In their presentation, Rosie and Brian introduced a project that promotes dialogue, empathy, and shared responsibility in building a more peaceful world. Emphasising the importance of peace education in contemporary society, they highlighted how such



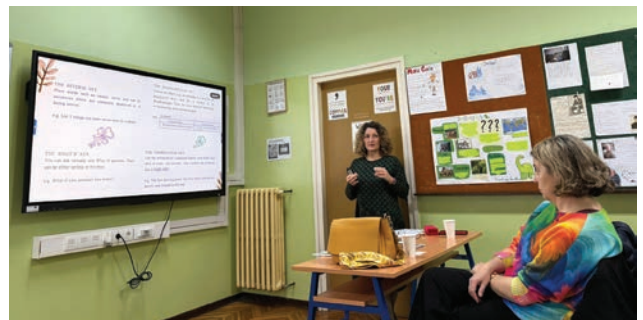


The second workshop, *Thinker's Keys for Critical Minds*, was held by Mirta Kos Kolobarić. Focusing on the development of critical thinking as a crucial 21<sup>st</sup>-century skill, Mirta addressed the growing challenges teachers face in keeping students intellectually engaged in the age of AI. She presented Tony Ryan's *Thinker's Keys* as a practical and adaptable tool that helps students analyse, question, and discuss everyday topics more deeply and critically. The workshop provided participants with concrete examples and ready-to-use ideas for encouraging thoughtful discussion and independent thinking in their classrooms. The participants also took part in a practical activity of using the Thinker's keys – it was a lot of fun!

The third workshop, titled *AI Tools for Teachers*, was delivered by Marija Janković. In her presentation, Marija showcased various AI tools that can support teachers in lesson planning, creating engaging teaching materials, and saving time on everyday administrative



and preparatory tasks. Participants gained insight into practical ways of integrating AI into their professional practice while maintaining pedagogical purpose and creativity. The workshop sparked interest and discussion about the balanced and responsible use of AI technology in education., while emphasizing the fact that teachers are irreplaceable.



Participants were also informed about the latest HUPE news, including upcoming professional development opportunities, HUPE Day, HUPE in Storyland writing competition, Languages United and HUPE cultural bake-alongs and conferences by our partner associations. Members were encouraged to actively contribute to HUPEzine by submitting ESL teaching-related articles and to apply as speakers at future branch meetings in order to share examples of good practice and innovative teaching ideas.

HUPE Slavonski Brod is sincerely thankful to all the speakers and members who attended the meeting and contributed to the encouraging working atmosphere. We look forward to seeing you at our next meeting.

Tihomir Matković  
HUPE Slavonski Brod Branch President

# HUPE IN STORYLAND

## 2026

### CONGRATULATIONS TO THE WINNERS AND THEIR MENTORS

#### 5th & 6th grade

1st place: *A smile that made a difference*

Author: Ante Takač  
Mentor: Iva Romić

and

*A small act of kindness that changed everything*

Author: Hana Leich  
Mentor: Dijana Oreški Vidović

2nd place: *One small act of kindness*

Author: Marta Zec  
Mentor: Pamela Grozdanić

3rd place: *The city with no voices*  
Author: Lukas Horvat  
Mentor: Kristina Legović

#### 7th & 8th grade

1st place: *Memoirs of a Teenager*

Author: Ema Kovalisko  
Mentor: Sandra Brcko

2nd place: *Maybe we aren't so different at all*

Author: Katarina Švić  
Mentor: Ana Radolović

3rd place: *A smile that changed everything*

Author: Ema Pejić  
Mentor: Sjetlana Subašić

#### Secondary school

1st place: *A Story About a Mother (The Day That Changed Everything)*

Author: Emma Tomašić  
Mentor: Marta Jambrović

2nd place: *The Redemption of Faulty Frank*

Author: Luka Ivanetić  
Mentor: Vedrana Dujnić Petrač

3rd place: *The Silence After the Bell (The day that changed everything)*

Author: Kristian Karlović  
Mentor: Dijana Šprem Erković

Alfa & Express Publishing

# ELT DAY

LEAD THE CHANGE

**25**  
**April**  
**2026**

Hotel  
Sheraton  
Zagreb

A **DAY**  
of **IDEAS**,  
**INSPIRATION**,  
and **CONVERSATIONS**  
that matter for  
today's classrooms.

## SPEAKERS

Dr Robert Stroud  
George Kokolas  
Martina Jeren  
Ivana Burić Kurtović  
& Eva Bogdanović  
Ana Huzjak  
Ivana Štiglec  
Ksenija Rumora



**CONNECT**



**MOTIVATE**



**THINK**



**INSPIRE**

**JOIN**  
**US IN**  
**ZAGREB!**

SCAN TO REGISTER



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