

Hrvatsko udruženje profesora engleskog jezika Croatian Association of Teachers of English

HUPE Newsletter No. 30 • September 2025





NEXT CONFERENCE

33rd Annual International HUPE Conference
October 24–26, 2025

Valamar Poreč, Croatia



EDITOR'S NOTE

Dear Colleagues,

We are delighted to welcome you to the latest edition of our newsletter, and especially to extend a warm greeting as we prepare for the upcoming **HUPE Conference**. This annual gathering is always a highlight of our year—a chance to share ideas, reconnect with familiar faces, and welcome new voices into our community. We look forward to the inspiration and collaboration that the conference will bring.

Alongside the conference, we are pleased to announce our **new branch presidents**, who will play a key role in strengthening our network and supporting teachers. Their leadership and commitment will help us grow and innovate together.

We also invite you to take a look back at the **teacher training trips held this summer in Bath and New York**. Both events were filled with engaging workshops, lively discussions, sightseeing, culture exploration, and a spirit of collaboration and connection that continues to strengthen our practice as educators. A heartfelt thank you goes to all who participated and contributed to their success.

We appreciate your dedication, and we look forward to seeing many of you at the conference and to continuing our journey of learning together.

With warm regards, Ivana Kasunić Editor

33RD HUPE CONFERENCE | 24-26 OCTOBER 2025

Dear colleagues, educators, and English teaching experts,

We are delighted to announce the 33rd HUPE Conference, which will be held at the beautiful Valamar Hotel in Poreč from 24–26 October 2025. This inspiring event will once again bring us together to exchange ideas, share best practices, and explore innovative approaches to English language teaching. Join us for three days of professional growth, collaboration, and community in a stimulating and supportive atmosphere.

Accomodation

Valamar Diamant Hotel & Residence

Valamar Diamant is a modern seaside hotel, surrounded by pine forests and located just about a 10-minute walk from the historic centre in Poreč, and only 200-300 m from the sea. Therefore, the rooms in the hotel have many views over either the forest or th Adriatic. Guests can enjoy indoor pools, wellness and spa centre with sauna and beauty treatments, as well as excellent sports, fitness, and dining options. For our conference, the Valamar Diamant has several fully equipped meeting rooms, reliable Wi-Fi, and welcoming bar and lounge areas — everything we need to create a comfortable and inspiring setting for learning, networking, and relaxing together.







Jeremy Harmer

Plenary talk:

When we sing together: doing things with other people



We are more connected to each other than ever before. Yet, it can sometimes feel as if we are more alone than ever before as social media invades our individual lives, stoking anger, negativity, and alienation. When people do things

together, on the contrary, the results can be shared experience and positivity. Take the example of choirs or music groups, for example. The benefits for participants can extend far beyond the notes they produce.

This talk uses music as a metaphor for having students work together to achieve positive and successful learning goals. There will be singing.

Workshop:

Look after your voice! It's the teacher's best aid

Noisy classes, zoom after zoom after zoom, "teacher voice". It's easy to take our voices for granted, but without vocal health, we are sunk. In this workshop, we'll discuss the issue, do some vocal health exercises and maybe, who knows, do some more singing!

About the speaker:

Jeremy Harmer, teacher, trainer, consultant, is also a writer of texts for teaching English and especially books for teachers about how to do it. With many years of experience as a presenter, workshop leader, and plenary speaker, he has talked to teachers all around the world. Jeremy's company Betterlate Publishing will soon be publishing its new up-to-date methodology guides. So watch this space. Jeremy is also a practicing musician and singer-songwriter.

Rob Howard

Plenary speakers

Owner of the Online Language Center & Business Language Training Institute Teacher, Trainer, ELT Author & International Speaker



Plenary talk:

The 'Y' in HYPE: AI vs. A-why

In an age where Artificial Intelligence is rapidly redefining the educational landscape, language teachers are left navigating both promise and pressure. Is AI the future of EFL, or just the latest buzz?

Join Rob Howard as he explores the transformative potential – and the real limitations – of AI in the EFL classroom. This thought-provoking session will help you ask the right questions, not just about how to use AI, but why.

Discover when AI can truly support learning,

Engage with real-world examples and practical applications,

P Gain clarity amidst the hype – and walk away with tools, not just trends.

About the Speaker:

Rob Howard is a prominent figure in ELT. He is the current President of IATEFL Poland, founder of EFLtalks and Independent Authors & Publishers, and past Joint Coordinator of IATEFL BESIG. As a speaker, author, trainer, and online education innovator, he has delivered sessions worldwide for institutions such as Macmillan Publishers, ELI Publishing, Gallery Teachers, IATEFL LTSIG, and more.

With deep knowledge in Business English, Teacher Development, Marketing, and Technology in Education, Rob brings not only expertise but also practical wisdom that resonates with educators everywhere.

Join us for a plenary that will challenge, inspire, and energize your teaching journey.

George Kokolas

Plenary Talk:

Crafting Character Through Language Learning

In this engaging session, George Kokolas will examine the increasingly important role of character development within language education. Grounded in the Seligman and Peterson framework, the talk will present practical approaches to helping students build resilience and unlock their potential through the recognition and nurturing of their character strengths. The plenary will

also emphasize the importance of educator self-reflection and the intentional creation of a positive, empowering classroom culture—reminding us that true educational change begins with inspired teachers.

About the Speaker:

George Kokolas brings over two decades of expertise as Academic Director and Teacher Trainer at Express Publishing. He is a certified Level 7 TEFL teacher, a licensed Level 5 Positive Education Practitioner, and an ADVANCED Neurolanguage



Coach®. He also holds a BA in English Literature and a Level 5 Diploma in Positive Psychology. Since 2017, he has co-produced the Teachers' Coffee podcast, offering professional development insights to educators around the globe. Recognised in 2022 as one of Greece's most influential ELT professionals, George has delivered more than 1,000 talks at international events. His contributions to TESOL Greece—as Vice Chair and founding member of IPEN Greece—further reflect his dedication to the ELT community.

Danijela Ille

We are delighted to announce our third plenary speaker at the HUPE Conference 2025 – **Danijela Ille**, Senior Advisor for English as a Foreign Language at the Education and Teacher Training Agency in Zagreb.



With her extensive experience in TEFL policies, curriculum development, teacher training, and quality assurance, Ms Ille brings a wealth of expertise to our community.

Her plenary talk, "Cross-Disciplinary Collaboration in Education," will highlight how collaboration across fields enriches both teaching and learning. From integrated curricula and modular classes to Erasmus+ projects, Ms Ille will explore how diverse perspectives and skills can spark innovation, adaptability, and creativity in the classroom.

Fiona Mauchline

Plenary Title: Switch It Up to Switch It On

About the plenary: Today's young learners are unlike any generation before them—shaped by pandemic schooling, digital immersion, and shifting social dynamics. How can we, as language educators, adapt? Fiona will take us through neuroscience- and researchinformed approaches that respond to these changes, helping us engage, motivate, and truly connect with our students.



About Fiona:

Currently a lecturer, teacher, and author at the University of Oxford, Fiona brings nearly three decades of teaching experience in Spain, alongside extensive teacher training work with SOL and Macmillan Education. She is the author of well-known resources including *Motivate, Dive In!, ETpedia Vocabulary, Teaching Teenagers,* and *The Human Connection*. She also co-founded the ELTon-awarded **EVE** initiative and created **#SpillTheELT**.

Beyond ELT, Fiona is a creative spirit—writing screenplays and short fiction, painting, hiking, and capturing the world through her photography.

SPECIAL GUEST: PAUL BRADBURY

We are more than proud to announce a very special guest at the HUPE 2025 Conference — Paul Bradbury!

Title of his talk: "A Foreigner's Tale: 23 Years of Discovering Croatia's Hidden Charms"

Here's how he presents himself:

"I am also the oldest (and definitely the fattest) TikToker and YouTuber in Croatia, enjoying life while not taking myself too seriously, as you can see from my latest books — Around the World in 80 Disasters, Croatia, a Survival Kit for Foreigners, and Lebanese Nuns Don't Ski."

Born in rainy Manchester, Paul made his way to Croatia's sunniest island — Hvar — via Somaliland. As the founder and CEO of **Total Croatia News**, the largest English-language news portal about Croatia, Paul has spent over two decades uncovering the country's lesser-known treasures.



WHO ARE HUPE BRANCH PRESIDENTS?

We're excited to welcome our new HUPE Branch presidents to the HUPE family! Each of them brings unique energy and ideas to support our association and their fellow teachers. Together, they'll help create opportunities to connect, share, and grow as educators. We can't wait to see the projects, events, and collaborations that will come to life under their leadership.

HUPE DUBROVNIK



I am a teacher mentor with nearly twenty years of experience in teaching English language and Art History at Srednja škola Vela Luka. I am also the Head of the County Expert Council of English language teachers for high schools in Dubrovnik-Neretva County. I have built a career that combines teaching, mentorship, and project leadership, fostering creativity, intercultural exchange, and innovative teaching practices. My digital proficiency and organisational skills support my work in modernising classrooms and engaging students. Passionate about lifelong learning, I continually seek opportunities to inspire young people, promote cultural awareness, and advance excellence in education.

Silvija Pećanac Bačić

HUPE ISTRA

Short Biography (Karla Golja Milevoj)



Since this school year I have taken on the role of representative of the HUPE branch in Istria. I have been teaching English at Srednja škola Mate Blažine Labin since 2003, where I became Head of the Department of Foreign and Classical Languages in 2010. In recognition of my professional

achievements, I was awarded the title of Teacher Counsellor in 2022. Since 2019, I have been the Chair of the County Council for Teachers of English in Secondary Schools in Istria. I have also been a member of the school council since 2021 and its deputy chairwoman since 2022.

In addition to teaching, I actively promote the language and culture through extracurricular programmes, public events in cooperation with the local community and study courses in the UK. Since 2014, I have represented the non-profit organisation ASSIST in Croatia, mentoring students who receive one-year scholarships at American private high schools. My involvement in Erasmus+ projects started in 2017, and in 2023 I became the Erasmus+ coordinator at my school. I also coordinate several international competitions at the school.

For my commitment and contributions to education, I have been recognised three times by the Ministry of Education as one of the best teachers in Croatia.

HUPE KARLOVAC



When I received my MA in Translation Studies from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences in Zagreb in 2010, I never thought that I would find a career in the education system. However, the year 2025 marks my ten years

of teaching English at the primary school level. This year I was also elected as the president of the Karlovac branch

of HUPE for a third term. I consider HUPE a great platform for sharing experiences and offering opportunities for professional development. I have held lectures, mainly on the topic of integrating Moodle into my lessons, at the county level and, in part thanks to HUPE, at the international level. Outside work, I enjoy being active in my local community – I'm involved in several non-profit organizations and am proud to be a regular blood donor.

Tomislav Mravunac HUPE Karlovac branch president

HUPE OSIJEK



Adrijana Roždijevac has been an active member of HUPE ever since she started teaching English in 2010. She studied English language and philosophy at the University of Zadar. She lives in Vinkovci and works at Josip Kozarac

Primary School in Soljani, where she teaches English to the students from grades 1 to 8.

Her love of travelling and exploring different countries and cultures has taken her to Vietnam, where she has spent two years teaching English as a foreign language in private and public schools to students of all ages and levels.

With her students, Adrijana actively participates in eTwinning projects, which foster creativity in English through the use of digital tools and allow her students to connect with peers across Europe.

Adrijana Roždijevac HUPE Osijek branch president hupe.osijek@gmail.com

HUPE RIJEKA



After graduating
English and German
Language and
Literature at the
University of Rijeka,
I have been working
for 7 years as a
German and English
teacher. I started my

teaching career at Helen Doron English school in Rijeka and continued working in elementary and high schools in

Rijeka and Istra. In the recent years, I have been teaching English at Gimnazija Eugena Kumičića in Opatija. I also teach online German courses and since 2023 I have been performing the duty of HUPE Rijeka branch president, which provided me an opportunity to connect with English teachers from the region and to contribute to the work of the association. I would describe myself as an openminded and friendly person who likes communication and working with people. I love reading, learning new languages, travelling, dancing and trying out new recipes.

HUPE SLAVONSKI BROD

Ivana Borozni has been teaching English and German for 20 years at Primary School "Dragutin Tadijanović" in Slavonski Brod. She has been an active member of HUPE for many years and has the privilege of serving as president of the HUPE Slavonski Brod branch for three years. She is passionate about exploring new ideas to improve the teaching process and enhance her students' overall learning experience, and she greatly values collaborating with fellow teachers. In her free time, Ivana enjoys reading and running.



HUPE SPLIT

I teach English and Italian in Primary School don Mihovil Pavlinović in Podgora, Croatia. I have been coordinating



Comenius/Erasmus projects since 2009. Currently, I am managing Erasmus accreditation activities including teachers' and students' mobilities.. Furthermore, I am coordinating another Erasmus KA210 project called Blue Sea: Our Cultural Heritage, Our Environmental Responsibility.

In addition, I am responsible for the organization of training (3 times a year) for 56 English teachers from my area of responsibility within Split-Dalmatia County (ŽSV). As the President of HUPE Split branch, I organize training activities for HUPE members alongside other HUPE Board tasks.

My interests are different. They include, but are not limited to educational digital technologies, innovative teaching methods and project-based teaching.

HUPE VARAŽDIN



My name is Željka Novak Božić. As an English teacher at the primary school in Donja Dubrava, I have had the opportunity to teach students of all classes and work on exciting projects such as eTwinning and Erasmus. I am motivated, hard-working, and always willing to lend a helping hand wherever necessary. With my increased experience and knowledge, I am confident that I can make a positive impact and inspire others to strive for greatness.

I like to work in a team to achieve common goals and make a difference in the education community!

HUPE ZADAR

Ana Džaja is a Croatian professional with a strong background in English language teaching and translation. She has been working in primary education at OŠ Šime Budinića in Zadar, where she teaches English to both lower and higher primary levels. Ana is dedicated to creating engaging and supportive learning environments that encourage students to develop both linguistic competence and cultural awareness.



In addition to her Master's degree in English language and literature, she also holds an MA in English translation, which has further enriched her teaching and professional profile. Ana frequently participates in various professional

development opportunities, including Erasmus+ projects and workshops, and she often hosts colleagues from abroad during job shadowing visits at her school. These experiences have greatly contributed to her innovative approach in the classroom and her ability to integrate intercultural learning into her lessons.

As a branch president within HUPE, Ana actively supports fellow teachers by fostering collaboration, sharing resources, and organizing events that strengthen the professional community. Her academic and personal interests extend beyond language teaching, as she is deeply interested in history, politics, and literature. These fields of interest not only inspire her personally but also provide valuable perspectives that she brings into her teaching and professional engagements.

HUPE ZAGORJE

BARBARA HANJILEC



Nastavnica engleskog jezika u Školi za umjetnost, dizajn, grafiku i odjeću Zabok u kojoj, uz redovnu nastavu vodi aktiv svih opće-obrazovnih predmeta te koordinira Erasmus+ i eTwinning projekte. Aktivna je članica HUPE-a već nekoliko godina te se u rad udruge uključivala i radionicama i predavanjima na sastancima podružnica Zagreb i Zagorje kao i na godišnjim konferencijama. Ove godine preuzela je ulogu voditeljice podružnice HUPE Zagorje čime se nada dodatno doprinijeti radu i razvoju udruge.

Živi u Zagrebu sa suprugom i dvoje djece, a ono malo slobodnog vremena voli provoditi uz dobru knjigu, vani na svježem zraku ili na putovanju.

HUPE ZAGREB

HUPE Zagreb - Petra Blajić

Rođena sam u Splitu, živim u Zagrebu, a radim u Krapini tako da na neki način 'živim' na tri adrese. Fakultet sam završila u Zagrebu gdje sam diplomirala na katedri anglistike i talijanistike. Već 15 godina radim u SŠ Krapina, a surađujem i s raznim privatnim tvrtkama vezano za pripreme za državnu maturu i neke druge projekte. Uglavnom predajem engleski jezik u gimnazijskim programima, ali imam i jedan razred tehničara za računalstvo. U školi sam također zadužena za koordiniranje procesa samovrednovanja škole i vođenja Erasmus+ akreditacije.



TEACHER TRAINING IN THE UK: STRATFORD UPON AVON, WELLS AND BATH

We began our teacher training in Stratford-upon-Avon, walking in the footsteps of William Shakespeare himself. Fifty-five participants explored his birthplace, learning more about the world that shaped the greatest playwright of all time. The charming streets, Tudor-style houses, and atmosphere of history gave everyone a real sense of connection with literature and culture.



In the afternoon, we continued to Wells, England's smallest city but one of the most beautiful. The group admired the stunning Wells Cathedral with its magnificent Gothic architecture and the famous scissor arches, as well as the peaceful Bishops' Palace gardens and the magnificent Vicar's close.

We also had a chance to attend a talk with people engaged in Shakespeare-related research. We were thrilled to meet Tamara Harvey, Co-Artistic Director of the Royal Shakespeare Company, and to learn about her insights as a director of Shakespeare. Our first quiz winner is Tihana Svoren Kolarec! Thank you Sanja Ivoš and Školska Knjiga for the wonderful prize.

Day two started with the inspiring lectures in Sydney Gardens, playful treasure hunt through the historic streets, wonderful promenade...

On day three we explored the Roman Baths, strolled along the elegant Georgian promenade, and even had the chance to dress up in Regency fashion at the Jane Austen Centre – stepping straight into her world! Our walks through the city were like journeys through time – learning, laughing, and sharing ideas with colleagues from around the globe. The atmosphere was buzzing with creativity and enthusiasm, and Bath itself felt like an openair classroom.

We also attended a beautiful adaptation of Jane Austen's Emma in the Bath Theatre. And then we got to spend some time with the main actors!

Some even took a magical to Stonehenge – standing among the ancient stones was a truly humbling experience. Grateful for the learning, the classroom materials, the laughter, and the memories. We'll be back with many new ideas!

Thank you, ladies and gentlemen! Thank you AZOO and Languages United Ltd

It was a perfect mix of learning and cultural discovery for our merry ladies and gentlemen!

















TEACHER TRAINING: HUPE IN NEW YORK

(HUPE and AZOO)

Can 50 women function in a city of nearly 10 million? If you ask HUPE — of course they can. This teacher training in New York meant 10 days of learning, laughter, cultural discoveries, and a little bit of girl power magic.

The journey began with creativity and energy. Teachers learned how to use Padlet wisely for travel and education, got to know their own Teddy mascots, and dove into his book. One Teddy even enjoyed a flight in the cockpit — proof that HUPE bears live a life of luxury! Between re-reading The Great Gatsby and helping their Teddies, the group stayed busy in the air. Even before reaching New York, the first Quiz Mastermind title went to Nika Međimorec.



On day one, we enjoyed a beautiful cruise around Manhattan led by a knowledgeable guide. Teachers enjoyed Bryant Park and the New York Public Library, while others visited the Friends Experience. The evening ended in true HUPE style — with a lecture during a Manhattan bus tour.

The next morning was devoted to the 9/11 Memorial and Museum. Hours were spent exploring heartbreaking exhibits and listening to stories of the day that changed New York forever. The memorial is both dignified and moving — a tribute to those who lost their lives.

To reset spirits, the group stepped into the futuristic Oculus by Santiago Calatrava, designed to resemble a bird in flight. More than just a transport hub, it is an architectural marvel and symbol of renewal. Later, teachers explored the Financial District. Walking Wall Street, standing by the Charging Bull, and seeing the

New York Stock Exchange felt like stepping into a movie. The day ended with a walk across the Brooklyn Bridge at golden hour, enjoying unforgettable views. But it didn't stop there. Some teachers swam at Coney Island, others shopped at Macy's, while the adventurous tested their nerves at The Edge, the highest outdoor sky deck in the Western Hemisphere.

Day three was dedicated to pop culture, history, and glamour. The morning began with Carrie Bradshaw's iconic apartment, then shifted to Friends nostalgia. By lunchtime, the eternal question arose: pasta in Little Italy or dumplings in Chinatown? Luckily, both were possible. Afterward, teachers explored Little Island and discovered the Titanic–Carpathia connection with Rijeka. The High Line provided a unique stroll — wildflowers, contemporary art, and glimpses into Manhattan living rooms.

To top it all off, the group dressed up for The Great Gatsby: The Musical. The day ended with tired feet, full cameras, and sharper cultural references than ever. No trip to New York would be complete without the Empire State Building. After admiring it from street level, the



group zoomed 86 floors up to the observation deck for panoramic views. Next stop: Grand Central Terminal. More than a train station, its chandeliers, starry ceiling, and the Whispering Gallery impressed everyone.

At Columbia University, a graduate student hosted the group, guiding them around campus. Sitting on the steps of Low Library, many fantasized about being guest teachers, debating over oversized coffees. The day ended in Harlem, at the legendary Apollo Theater, where Ella Fitzgerald, Aretha Franklin, and James Brown once began. In their free hours, teachers scattered: some explored the Bronx, others admired Van Gogh's Starry Night at MoMA, or wandered Frank Lloyd Wright's spirals at the Guggenheim.

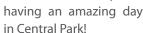
Washington, D.C. was a complete contrast to New York. Starting at the Lincoln Memorial, teachers continued along the Mall past war memorials, the Washington Monument, and the World War II Memorial. They explored the National Gallery of Art Sculpture Garden, several Smithsonian museums, and enjoyed a guided tour of the U.S. Capitol. Across the street, the Library of Congress amazed with its elaborate interior, Jefferson's original books, and exhibitions. The day closed with a special welcome reception at the Croatian Embassy, hosted by Mrs. Branka Pažin, Minister Plenipotentiary, Mr. Danijel Međan, Deputy Ambassador, and Mr. Pjer Šimunović, Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary. HUPE left with warm hearts and plans for future cooperation.

The teachers had an unforgettable time solving the Central Park Murder Mystery! They plunged into a world of suspense, riddles, and theatrical fun. Early on, a mysterious





message led them to The Mall and Literary Walk, at Bethesda Terrace teams staged dramatic witness reenactments, while a musical riddle near Strawberry Fields got them singing Beatles lyrics to unlock the next clue. They met "Alice" herself at the Alice in Wonderland statue. Nearby, Hans Christian Andersen sat by the lake, reading a coded fairytale that hinted at a hidden box. At the foot of Balto the sled dog, our smart teachers uncovered a clue that tested their knowledge of bravery and leadership. From the heights of Belvedere Castle to the quiet trails near the Dairy, each stop added drama and laughter. In the end, everyone was "guilty" of brilliant teamwork, creativity, and





Philadelphia greeted the group with open arms. Teachers climbed the Rocky Steps — cheesy but fun — and refueled with the city's signature cheesesteaks. Highlights included Independence Hall, the Liberty Bell, Reading Terminal Market, and City Hall. At Elfreth's Alley, Betsy Ross House, and Christ Church Burial Ground, history came alive. The

Cathedral Basilica, Logan Square, and the iconic LOVE sign wrapped up the tour, with Talking Benches adding a unique interactive twist.

On the final full day, the goal was simple: try something new and stop to smell the flowers. Teachers did just that — from Central Park runs to helicopter rides, from coffee at the Plaza to Roosevelt Island views. They revisited The Edge, explored Harlem and the Jewish Quarter, saw the Statue of Liberty, and even hosted a live radio show on Radio Croatia NY. The last lunch featured an awards ceremony, a quiz, and a few tears. It was the perfect ending to an unforgettable training.

This was not just an educational trip. It was a journey of connection, laughter, and inspiration. Teachers shared experiences, built friendships, and carried home sharper

cultural references, stronger teaching tools, and countless memories.

Even their teddy bear mascots got names and stories: Joey, Harry, Aussie, Tiptoe, Hupi, Medo, Honeybear, Coccolino, Ross, Fifi, Anita, Martin, Bećar, Yorkie, Teddy, Mrki, Winnie, Bronxie, Lunči, Paddy, Miki, and the bearest of them all — Bubi the Bear.

HUPE in New York proved once again: English teachers don't just teach language — they live it, breathe it, and carry it across the world.

HUPE rocks. Girl power forever. 💙

Ps. Hundreds of pages of educational materials ready to be used this year in our classrooms.





















CALL FOR PAPERS

Dear HUPE members,

We warmly invite you to participate in shaping HUPEzine into what it truly is – the leading professional magazine for English teachers in Croatia. We welcome your contributions on any ELT topic at hupe.newsletter@gmail.com.

Articles should be up to 1,500 words and may be accompanied by photos or illustrations (please send them as separate files). At the end of your text, kindly include your full name, profession, institution, and email address.

Looking forward to your contributions!

Warm regards, Ivana Kasunić HUPE Newsletter Editor