



EFOS

European Federation of Older Students in Universities
Europäische Vereinigung älterer Studierender an den Universitäten
Fédération Européenne des Etudiants Âgés aux Universités



NGO with Consultative Status at the U.N.

EFOS NEWS

1

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English edition

European Federation of Older Students

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From the editor:

In this issue of EFOS News, we will honestly remember our EFOS members who passed away this year. They gave us friendship. They helped us with the organisation and translation work - every one of them in his special way. But together, we were a good team for many years. We will miss them.

Peter, in all the years we have known each other, you have been an excellent friend, of fine feeling, optimistic, and prepared to lend us a helping hand in every situation we needed, whether in the private or professional sphere.

Stanley – a master of words, which were beautiful to read but in his high English sometimes difficult to understand. But his ability to convey important points clearly and succinctly was also admirable.

We loved his typical English humour, which Stanley could serve with an elegant demeanour and serious expression.

Thank you, Peter Hug, and thank you, Stanley Miller.

In our EFOS DECLARATION, we can read about educated people who are better prepared for daily life, they can be fighting against violence, abuse and neglect of the elderly people.

Paula Doncel Recas reports about the first seniors' mobilities for seniors about 50's at the Permanent University of the University of Alicante.

Know Yourself in the Feminine Circle of Power
"To be a Woman is to be all Women", *Eliza Wiśniewska, M.A.*

Prof Ana Majuric from the POU Zagreb give us information about the Benefits of the Erasmus+ program for adult education institutions.

Gallery of deserved EFOS members – Björn Odin",
Gallery of deserved EFOS members – Peter Hug",
Gallery of deserved EFOS members – Stanley Miller"

We thank all authors for their contributions and for allowing us to share their experiences.

September 2024

Katarina Grunwald

EFOS News

Publication of the
European Federation of Older
Students in Universities

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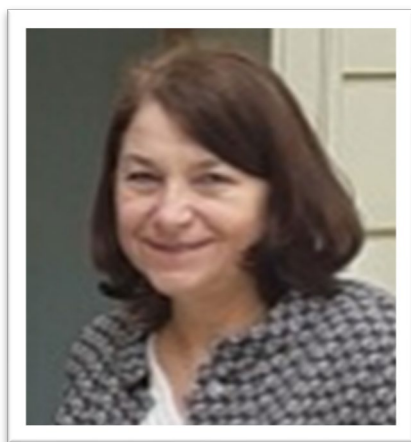
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President's report for the year 2023

PhDr. Nadežda Hrapková, PhD., EFOS president



The year 2023 has significantly affected the activities of EFOS with several effects.

In March, we submitted a new Erasmus+ project with a completely new direction and goals for senior citizens' activities in our organisations. In the call for the new period, the project priorities focused alongside other interests on developing *competencies and skills in the fields, such as combating climate change, clean energy, etc.* Erasmus+ projects should be designed in an eco-friendly manner and should incorporate green practices in all facets. Organisations and participants involved should have an environment-friendly approach when designing their projects, which will encourage them to discuss and learn about environmental issues (Call for 2024).

In Spring 2023 in the new project Erasmus+, we focused on ecological education, surveys of opinions and attitudes of seniors in the environmental field, innovation of the programmes and methodology of learning in environmental topics. The evaluation of the submitted application was high enough, but in the strong competition of projects in Slovakia it ranked lower and did not receive a grant for the implementation of our project called GENEDU in ENVIRO. Eight EFOS institutional members were involved in the project application. However, the topics of the project appealed to us very strongly, and therefore we started to focus on the ecological area and decided to submit the project again in the next year - in 2024.

Another strong and unexpected blow for us was the serious illness of our colleague, member of the EFOS GB, former president, vice-president, editor of EFOS News, project coordinator and webmaster Peter Hug from the Netherlands. Over the past 20 years, he has been a very active and important member who has done a great deal for all of us, not only professionally, but also with his personal attitude and character. This year in 2023, was Peter engaged in online activities as much as his illness allowed. Unfortunately, in January 2024, we said goodbye to him for the last time. We will miss him very much.

In our EFOS initiatives we need further development of the traditional activities in our organization and that is why we adopted the EFOS Action Plan for 2023-2030 during the meeting in Brno in March 2023. The direction given to us by our goals will be fulfilled by supporting education of seniors, project-based education, development of digital skills and combating discrimination and preserving the rights of seniors towards promoting active ageing and their self-fulfilment. Exchange of experiences, presentations of good practices and opinion surveys will be aimed at satisfying the needs of seniors and society in various areas of their lives.

In 2023, we held two regular meetings of EFOS GB and EFOS members associated with educational seminars and professional excursions. The meeting at the VUT in Brno (March 2023) allowed us, in addition to the usual agenda, to visit the Mendel Museum, the underground of the city of Brno and participate in a seminar on the development of digital skills.

In October 2023, the second meeting of EFOS was held on the premises of Comenius University in Bratislava, Slovakia. The meeting could be called a Kick-off meeting for our environmental project with the pilot activities. In Bratislava the topics of the educational seminar focused on a healthy way of life for seniors, as well as on the impacts of climate change and the need to save resources, contributed to the new direction and future activities of EFOS. The professional excursion to the Gabčíkovo-Nagymaros dam and the Danubiana Gallery developed the professional and intercultural view of EFOS members. We positively evaluate the involvement of seniors from Zagreb in the meeting, who were able to participate in the education of seniors in Bratislava within the framework of Erasmus accreditation, as well as the professional program of the EFOS meeting.

In 2023, we accepted new universities and individuals as EFOS member. The following were admitted as new institutional members in Brno: Technical University Liberec, Czech Republic; Public Open University in Zagreb, Croatia and Campus of Experience for Seniors in Barcelona, Spain. At the meeting in Bratislava in October 2023, we approved the applications of new members from Centro Intergenerational Francisco Santisteban de la Universidad de Córdoba, Spain; Aula Sénior, University in Murcia, Spain and as an individual member Dr. Pavel Škorpil from Prague. All new members immediately actively participated in EFOS activities through their presentations and active participation in the meeting.

As an important action of EFOS is the presentation of EFOS activities at international meetings, projects and conferences as well as participation in educational events. Bilateral exchange of information within international contacts EFOS is provided to members from events of the international world association AIUTA, the European network DANET and the German association BAGWiWA.

EFOS membership in the UNO Committee on Ageing - CoA is actively represented by Dr. Grunwald, EFOS Secretary General and Dr. Hrapková, President of EFOS. Regularly provided information and involvement in the tasks gives EFOS space to express opinions and proposals on the topics of Human Rights, women's rights and the fight against violence and abuse of the elderly. We actively participate in the negotiations and events of the UNO Committee by providing presentations and supporting proposals, as well as for 2024 by preparing the meeting

in Bratislava at Comenius University. In February 2024, Katarína Grunwald, Secretary General of EFOS, became UNO Secretary, reinforcing EFOS involvement.

In 2023, we compiled EFOS News, where Katarína Grunwald was the editor for the first time, which she handled very well. It is not easy to involve new members in the tasks of our organization and therefore I believe that we will be able to revive the work on the website, which is currently provided by Dr. Michal Vojkuvka in addition to his full-time job at VUT Brno. Some tasks can be divided to more persons.

I believe that we can stabilize the situation and successfully continue to work together in our organization. I wish all of us a lot of success and enthusiasm for this. Thank you to everyone for working together in 2023 and 2024.

Your president

PhDr. Nadezda Hrapkova, PhD.

3. April 2024



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Liberec, April 12th, 2024

EFOS Declaration.

EFOS, the European Federation of Older Students in universities represents the voice of older people learning at universities and academies, Europe's most diverse educational institutions in Europe. Lifelong learning in old age benefits all generations, fostering active ageing and supporting seniors' permanent involvement in society. Besides, an educated person is always better prepared for daily life's unexpected changes and hazards.

Education equips individuals with the resilience to navigate unforeseen challenges and adversities, which is extremely important nowadays when emerging and existing forms of criminal acts, violence, neglect, and abuse target older individuals.

Amidst global calls urging governments to initiate the drafting of a UN Convention on the rights of older people, EFOS members and friends have convened to emphasise the urgent necessity for such a convention. Consequently, we, the undersigned, have unanimously agreed to support and join this significant initiative.

Hereby, we affirm our commitment to the principles outlined in this document.



EFOS

European Federation
of Older Students
in Universities

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ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME - ADULT MOBILITY
FIRST SENIORS' MOBILITIES AT THE PERMANENT UNIVERSITY OF THE
UNIVERSITY OF ALICANTE

Paula Doncel Recas
Project Manager - UPUA

The international mobility of senior students in the European Union, one of the historical demands in the field of adult education, is now a reality thanks to the Erasmus+ Programme 2021-27.

In 2021, the EU awarded the Erasmus Charter for Higher Education (ECHE) to 527 adult education organisations. Spain was the country with the highest number of accredited institutions, 90, but only two offered specific programmes for people aged 50+. The lack of previous examples in this educational area discouraged accredited organisations from proposing international activities for their learners. In 2023, the Permanent University of the University of Alicante (UPUA) designed the first mobility programmes for students over 50; this paper aims to share our experience with other centres and encourage them to offer their students the benefits of this European initiative.

The ECHE is the tool that accredits organisations to receive stable funding until 2027 to reinforce the European dimension of teaching and learning. The KA120 Action is the reference framework for submitting the Erasmus Plan, which should contain the proposal of the activities needed to improve the quality of education and development of the institutions and, in case of approval, to obtain the accreditation.

When institutions are part of higher education organisations (e.g. U3As attached to universities with an ECHE in higher education), it is necessary to apply also for accreditation in the field of adult education KA120-ADU, for which the submission deadline this year is 1st October 2024 at 12:00 noon Brussels time.

Centres wishing to apply for this action should prepare an Erasmus Plan with realistic objectives that respond to those set out in the Programme Guide (<https://erasmus-plus.ec.europa.eu/es/erasmus-programme-guide>, available in 24 languages) and serve to improve the quality of their education. In our experience, it is preferable to be practical and to propose few but feasible objectives. The UPUA considered only four, believing that they would contribute to the creation of the European Education Area and the development of key competencies to turn students into independent and engaged citizens.

As mentioned above, obtaining accreditation guarantees the funding of mobility projects, but to obtain the funds, the institution must submit annually the KA121-ADU application with a proposal of outgoing and incoming activities leading to the achievement of its objectives; the corresponding National Agency (NA) will allocate a financial endowment based on this forecast. As the budget allocated to each country is shared among all accredited organisations, the money received may be insufficient to carry out all the proposed activities, so adjustments will have to be made to adapt them to current availability. In addition, centres should note that they will only receive 80% of the allocated amount at the beginning of the activity and the remaining 20% once the final report has been submitted and approved.

Once the funds are available, the centre will launch a public call for applications, including places, destinations, and the scale for selecting candidates. At this point, perhaps the most significant difficulty lies in finding centres to receive students since the EU has a financial allocation for the sending organisation but not for the host organisation, which must carry out additional management work: integrating the visitors into its academic offer, designing the programme, adapting activities to the needs of the students, tutoring, etc.

The internationalisation of UPUA students would not have been possible without the enormous generosity of U3A Reykjavík and Uniwersytet Trzeciego Wieku of Wrocław, who not only opened the doors of their centres unselfishly but also welcomed them with great warmth and hospitality and offered them programmes perfectly adapted to their interests.

Two groups of 7 and 4 students took part in these mobilities. They were between 63 and 72 years old, and enrolled during the academic year in subjects of various thematic blocks: Experimental Sciences; Humanities; Computer Science, Image and Sound; Health and Social Action; and Social and Legal Sciences of the Diploma Senior Programme of the Permanent University of the University of Alicante.



Students at the Campus of the University of Alicante © El País

The mobility programmes had a workload of about 50 hours spread over 7 teaching days. Compared to the courses regularly offered by the UPUA, generally of 40 hours and a duration of between two and three months, we understand that developing such an extensive programme in just one week meant a very high dedication from the hosts, to whom we are deeply grateful. However, as the NAs are the ones who finally approve the programmes in their territory, our recommendation is to check the teaching load of the proposals with them to ensure that they meet the standards.

In terms of learning needs, Spanish students developed competencies in multilingualism, science, technology and engineering, digitalisation, society, citizenship and culture, all of which are key to lifelong learning.

As Icelandic and Polish are not commonly studied languages in Alicante, students were required to have a minimum level of English B2 to be able to hold conversations and understand and write texts. Spanish was also occasionally used as a vehicular language in both destinations. The “Spanish Lovers’ Club” in Wrocław was the ideal forum for our students to present Spanish culture to their Polish classmates, who, in turn, surprised them with their vast knowledge of Spanish literature and history. In Iceland, the welcome of the rector of Bifröst University in perfect Spanish was proof of the benefits of the internationalisation of education and the interest in Spanish culture in Europe.



UPUA student - Presentation about Spain

STEM skills were present in both mobilities to foster critical thinking and logical reasoning. In Iceland, activities offered by geothermal or genetic decoding companies, as well as visits to geothermal springs and parks, showed that **Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics** are the disciplines that allow us to enjoy a good standard of living but also do so in a sustainable way. During the visit to the Federation of Scientific and Technical Associations, the students had the opportunity to learn first-hand about the state of science in Poland.



Iceland - Visit to deCODE genetics

Participation in civic and social life was another important focus of the programme. The Uniwersytet Trzeciego Wieku of Wrocław made the integration of our students a reality and gave them the privilege of taking part in one of the most solemn events of the institution: the closing of the academic year. As for Iceland, the lecture by former parliamentarian Jon Steindor Valdimarsson, the visit to the Parliament and the meeting with the Prime Minister, Katrín Jakobsdóttir, provided significant information to understand the functioning of Iceland's democracy, commitment to peace, respect for individual privacy, and the social progress that make this country one of the most advanced in Europe.



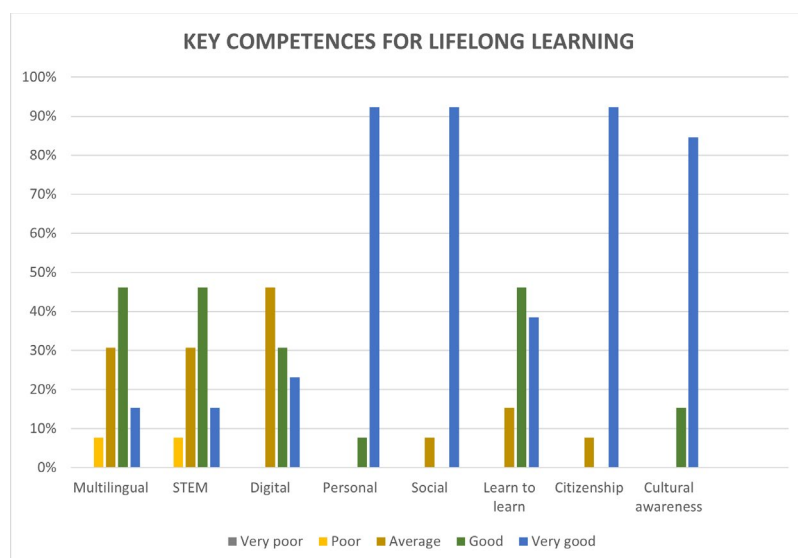
Iceland's Prime Minister Katrín Jakobsdóttir with students from U3A Reykjavík and UPUA.

Digital skills were not only a key competence but also one of the objectives of the UPUA Erasmus+ Plan. In this sense, U3A Reykjavík proposed activities for students to use geolocation applications with their mobile phones, to take history lessons out of the classroom and to work on active ageing, all building on the results of the Erasmus+ “HeiM - Heritage in motion”, realised in partnership with the UPUA. Digital technology was essential for developing personal and “learn to learn” competencies because members of both groups used it to manage and work constructively both their individual needs (booking, use of translators, information search...) and their everyday learning (presentation of lectures, editing of images). Finally, technology was also used as a tool for dissemination, to create videos and blogs in which the participants of both mobilities collected their daily experiences and shared them with their UPUA colleagues and the interested public.

<https://blogs.ua.es/upuapolonia/>

<https://blogs.ua.es/upuaislandia/>

To assess the impact of internationalisation, the UPUA carried out validated surveys on the objectives set out in the Erasmus Plan before and after the mobilities. Regarding key competencies, multilingual and STEM skills improved for only 10% of participants, but 90% considered their progress was above average. Also above average were the results for digital and “learn to learn” competencies and personal, social, citizenship and cultural skills, which were considered excellent by more than 80% after the experience.



Regarding the participants' personal assessment, only two people reported difficulties with the language. On the other hand, all of them agreed that the experience was highly positive, and they especially highlighted the personal relationship and the hosts' warm welcome.

The Erasmus motto is "Enriching lives, opening minds", and we wanted to know how our students' lives had changed after mobility. To illustrate it, nothing better than to say it in their own words:

- "It has been a great personal growth".
- "I am more aware of my abilities and feel younger".
- "The more you travel and meet people, the more you feel like a universal citizen and the less you understand exclusionary attitudes".
- "It made me feel more confident and eager to learn about other cultures".

At the institutional level, the solidarity of our network members has proven to be indispensable for cooperation. With their support, the motivation of our students has increased and, consequently, so has the quality of our educational offer. Proof of this is the increase in enrollment this academic year, the extension of collaborative teaching in English language or the creation of a Discussion Club on Iceland, both proposals from Erasmus students so that all their classmates can benefit from the advantages of mobility.

UPUA now must correspond with the same solidarity. For months, we have been offering our support, individually and collectively, to other adult education organisations in Spain and abroad to apply for European funds from the Erasmus programme, and we are willing to continue to do so because we are convinced that only through collaboration can we achieve educational excellence.

The interest shown by most of the institutions that have contacted us is due to the wide media coverage of dozens of press articles, radio and television programmes, and comments on social networks that have appeared before, during and after the mobilities. The media coverage reached such an impact that Margaritis Schinas, Vice-President of the European Commission and coordinator of the European Education Area, invited the Spanish students in Alicante to listen to their impressions of this adventure and to congratulate them, especially for their contribution to the dissemination of European values and commitments.



Reception by Margaritis Schinas, VP of the European Commission

The way is already open, and we hope that this year, many more senior students will join us in enjoying the benefits of internationalisation.

As I recall.
(Article from Uppsala/Sweden)

We had left Sweden at the beginning of November, newly engaged, we were going to fly around the world. Our parents drove us to Arlanda, and now the world lay ahead of us!

So many adventures before us!



Anna och Sören on Kuta Beach, Bali.

We started the trip in India with a tour of Tamil Nadu. From India to Singapore, Indonesia, Australia, New Caledonia, Tahiti, USA and finally London.

The world was open and welcoming, we weren't the only ones who grasped the opportunity. We met lots of other young people from all over the world. You could easily earn the money to pay for plane tickets and travel funds. Everyone skimped, the book we all read was called "South-East-Asia on a shoestring" and that was how we lived.

We came from a protected Sweden that had taught us that everyone had the same values, we trusted strangers and knew that everyone had the same opportunities, those who did not have all their own abilities they were worth all assistance. If you could help, you should – and you did, everyone had a place at the table.

We were hit hard by the state of the world, all the poverty, all the injustices, but above all the fact that there were actually many, if not all, who didn't care about us at all, but only saw us as a moneybag that they wanted to get a piece of. We were surprised by Americans who seemed to see beggars as a colourful feature on the pavements and had no thought of helping them.

We sent letters and gifts to friends and family in Sweden informing them about which post office the recipients' answers could be sent to. News could only be obtained through conversation with others or if we came across a newspaper.

We were constantly hungry, partly because we were so stingy and partly because we thought all food was strange. Noodles was a big question mark, is it spaghetti, but you're not supposed to boil it, just dip it in hot water? Craving what we thought was real food, on my 25th birthday in Bali we found a British cafe that served cinnamon buns and English press – complete bliss!

In the US, we first drove the entire west coast and then across the country. We used a free service where you drove rich Americans' cars to the place they wanted. We slept in the cars and were afraid of the dark, we longed to go home and were overjoyed by the snow and cold of Niagara Falls, even though it meant we didn't see anything of the falls.

Once in London, we just wanted to go home, home to safety. We shortened the trip by a few days and landed the last days of February, we didn't have access to our apartment that we had sublet yet, so we stayed with my parents for a night.

Mom arranged a welcome home dinner! So cozy and how we longed for eating and not having to worry, just stay safe at home.

After the meal we had coffee, then the radio's evening music is interrupted by an important message - the prime minister has been murdered in the street.



Know Yourself in the Feminine Circle of Power

"To be a Woman is to be all Women"

Eliza Wiśniewska, M.A.

choreotherapy practitioner, art therapist and well-being educator.

"To be a Woman is to be all Women"... I once heard this sentence at the "Creative Women's Circle" workshop led by my teacher and mentor Regina Wolska. Regina introduced me to the world of women's circles several years ago, she allowed me to discover myself and my needs in intuitive dance, movement improvisation and circle dances, in expressed emotions and women's conversations on topics that are important to us. It was thanks to her that I discovered the power of dance and art therapy in my life. I experienced their power and beneficial effects on BODY - MIND - SOUL. I opened myself up to the inner and outer world, to the flow of emotions through my body, and I allowed myself to feel them. As it turned out later, the most important thing for me was to discover my new career path: working with Women and for Women. I knew that it would give me a lot of satisfaction, the opportunity to meet many beautiful and interesting women and the privilege of accompanying them in discovering and getting to know themselves.

I have completed postgraduate studies in Art Therapy, Choreotherapy = Dance Therapy, Well-being workshops, in order to be able to conduct workshops consciously and safely. And that's how I took my first classes and steps with the Seniors in the "House on Ciepla". My mother, a reviewer of what I do, took part in these classes. Later, my mother, a participant of the University of the Third Age, came up with the idea to offer workshops for its students.

Since November, I have been conducting workshops for two groups of wonderful Women at the University of the Third Age at the University of Wrocław. Together, they meet on a unique journey through the world of emotions towards getting to know each other. They talk about joy, sadness, pain, gratitude, give and take, stress, about what is important to them. The topics flow from them, while I follow the needs of the participants. They are accompanied by dance, music, drawing and painting. This is Their time. They are here and now, attentive to themselves and to the other person. They get to know each other and create a safe space for each of them, where they can be themselves, they are not judged, they say what they see and what they feel, and they can see how similar they are in emotions and feelings. They support each other and that is the power of our Women's Circle.

Dance & Movement allows them to relieve tension, develop body awareness, improve eye-hand coordination, improve the body, increase the sense of rhythm, sensitize them to music, allow them to become aware of the space in which they are present and move, thanks to which they develop their motor orientation. Properly selected music is for them a trigger and catalyst for experiences and emotions. They combine all this with the visual arts (drawing, painting, collage) shaping manual dexterity, developing a sense of aesthetics and self-confidence. The mandala of life and the circle of life gave the participants the opportunity to see what stage they are at and what they would like to change in life, what suits them and how to continue to take care of them resources.

During the meetings, they consciously practice breathing, meditate and relax, and learn about improvement exercises in the work of the brain.

Props are an important element of the workshops - so that women can complete their message of body, mind and soul..... animation scarves, massage balls, rattles, ribbons, feathers, strings, Dixit cards - richly illustrated cards for inventing and finding associations, emotion cards, painting tools and materials, paper, crayons, loose materials, painter's foil, etc.

During the workshops, participants experience:

- liberation of free, unrestrained expression expressed in visual arts and dance,
- express yourself, your personality, emotions, problems and thoughts,
- voltage discharge,
- externalization of feelings,
- unblocking, releasing inhibitions,
- developing imagination,
- arousing spontaneity,
- getting to know each other,
- experiencing one's own body,
- release from negative emotions,
- sensitization to the sense of hearing,
- non-verbal expression,
- improvement of physical condition and motor coordination.

Each meeting in the Women's Circle of Power is unique and unrepeatable, which is confirmed by the participants of the workshops:

"I came across the Women's Circle of Power workshop completely by accident. I didn't really know what awaited me there, but after the first class, I was sure that it was a good choice. First of all, the host - Eliza Wiśniewska, young but experienced, attentive, empathetic, but not directive. He reacts sensitively, listens and understands. Thanks to her openness, she allowed the participants of the group to open up. We have gained trust in each other, we are not afraid to talk about our problems, even the intimate and very personal ones. Eliza is very organized and well prepared for each subsequent class. He puts in a lot of work to make them interesting and inspiring. It's flexible. Despite the clearly thought-out structure of the classes, she is always ready to follow the participants and prolong those activities in which we feel extremely involved. We dance, paint, talk, share our reflections. By giving us various materials and books, Eliza not only inspires us, but also actively encourages us to deepen our reflection. Thanks to her ability to work with a group, she made the group integrate quickly. The classes are truly unique. They bring us a lot of joy and contentment, as well as increase the positive energy that we take with us."

Danusia

"In the offer of workshops for students of the University of the Third Age, I was interested in the Women's Circle. I didn't really know what the classes were going to be about, but the password: Meeting with women They worked like a magnet on me. I remember women's meetings at my grandmother's, which took place from autumn to spring, when there was less work in the countryside and you could devote more time to talking together, sewing, needlework, tearing linden flowers from branches dried in the attic and preparing decorations for Christmas and later Easter. But what I remember the most were the wonderful stories, conversations, songs and passing on traditions. As a little girl, I felt honored to be in the company of women.

Our classes with Eliza also have magic, but it's more than women's circles. It's not just meetings, it's real therapy. We meet and we feel that we are not alone, that we have And we feel the same way. Our "artistic activities" are a way of expressing ourselves, and it doesn't matter if we are gifted in a particular field of art.

Every meeting has a theme and a guiding intention, but Eliza does not lead it from point to point, but flows with us in our feelings and experiences, adapting to our needs. The space created by Eliza allows us to feel safe. I feel close and trusting to my female colleagues.

I'm learning gratitude, acceptance, and letting go of control and trusting myself. I feel support from the women in the circle. They also inspire me. After class, for the next week, I ask myself: what do I need for today?, what is important to me? What does he want to focus on? What do I want to change? To sum up, I feel that I have entered a process of change, a journey into myself. I'm looking forward to seeing you again."

Iwona

"Seniors, pensioners - that's how we are called women 60 plus. Many people believe that nothing important or interesting can happen in our lives. Those who think so are very much mistaken. We, women of this age, can have a great adventure by going on a journey into ourselves. A journey that can make our lives more conscious, more interesting, happier, maybe for the first time more focused on ourselves. Many of us are supported on this journey by the workshop "Know yourself in the female circle of power" conducted with great commitment by Mrs. Eliza Wiśniewska. Ms. Eliza, with great sensitivity and tact, using various techniques, e.g. circle dance, graphic techniques, artistic techniques, free speech, conversations in a group based on the experiences, thoughts of the participants of the meetings, surveys, answers to questions, invites us to learn about our strengths and weaknesses, reflect, draw conclusions, accept and, if necessary, correct our own beliefs, habits, habits. Weekly meetings accompanied by soothing, motivating, and thought-provoking music make us more eager to find small everyday happinesses, joys and powers to face obstacles. Allow you to think positively despite.... So I urge you to get to know yourself in the feminine circle of power."

Anna

"Know Yourself in the Women's Circle of Power" led by Eliza Wiśniewska, M.A., awakens in a mature woman the joy of existence, the pleasure of establishing a friendly relationship and constant fun. I have the impression that in each of us women a beautiful flower of mature wisdom is blooming."

Krystyna

"This is the first time I've participated in a class: In the Women's Circle of Power. After a few classes, I think I made the right decision to take this class. Our meetings are led by Mrs. Eliza Wiśniewska, who conducts classes in a very creative and diverse way. Mrs. Eliza advises and explains to us how to deal with more difficult situations in life, how to separate important matters from more important ones. By participating in the classes, I look at myself and my body differently and I realized that I am important to myself. The atmosphere in the classes is very good, there is a lot of music, smiles, fun through dancing and mutual kindness between us"

Gabrysia

"I feel very good at the "In the Women's Circle" workshop. It's a safe place for me. Here I find support, understanding, good energy and joy of life. The tasks that trainer Eliza Wiśniewska prepares for us can be performed by each of us. We talk, dance, draw, paint. We listen to ourselves and others. We know what is important to us. We drew the circle of life and set our goals. Of course, the fact that the workshops are interesting is thanks to the trainer, who is always well prepared and open to our proposals. We are in full well-being. I am very satisfied with the trainer and the workshops. I hope that the contacts with the trainer and the girls from the women's circle will remain for a long time also after the end of the workshops."

Irena Terpiłowska

Reading the opinions of Danusia, Iwona, Anna, Krystyna, Gabrysia and Irenka, I know that I made a good decision about a new way of life together with wonderful women from the Women's Circle of Power. Without a doubt, their life experience, which they regaled me with, or rather allowed me to be in part of it, translated into new inspirations for the next workshops.

I invite you to a workshop in the Women's Circle of Power and Well-being in the academic year 2024/2025

Eliza Wiśniewska, M.A. – choreotherapy practitioner, art therapist and well-being educator.

BENEFITS OF ERASMUS+ PROGRAMME FOR ADULT EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS

Prof. Ana Majuric, Public Open University Zagreb

Erasmus+ is the largest program of the European Union for education, training, youth and sports. It includes programs and initiatives of the European Union in the field of education and training (education and general education, vocational education and training, higher education, adult education), youth and sports.

Erasmus+ is aimed at strengthening the knowledge and skills and employability of European citizens, as well as improving education, training and work in the field of youth and sports. It is also aimed at connecting education, training and the youth sector with the business sector, and is open to their joint projects. The program specifically focused on inclusiveness and reaching out to a greater number of people with fewer opportunities.

The Erasmus+ program in the field of adult education is intended for employees and adult participants of adult education institutions - public colleges, city libraries, museums, non-governmental organizations, companies, etc.

Acceptable activities within the programme are:

KA1 Mobility for learning purposes

KA2 Cooperation between organizations and institutions

KA3 Support for policy development and cooperation

For all those institutions for adult education that have not yet participated in the Erasmus+ program, the easiest way is to start implementing projects within Key action 1- Mobility for the purpose of learning for individuals. It is an excellent opportunity to send the institution's employees, associates, volunteers, students to mobility in a partner European organization abroad. There are several ways to achieve this type of mobility.

Job shadowing: participants can spend a certain period at a partner organisation in another country with the aim of learning new practices and gathering new ideas through observation and interaction with peers, experts or other practitioners in their daily work at the partner organisation.

Courses and training: participants can benefit from a structured course, or a similar kind of training provided by qualified professionals, based on a pre-defined learning programme and learning outcomes.

Teaching or training assignments: participants can spend a certain period in teaching or providing training to learners at a hosting organisation in another country, as a way to learn through completing their tasks and exchanging with peers.

Whichever form of mobility an institution chooses, mobility participants will certainly gain a wonderful international experience, acquire new knowledge and share good practices with others.

The People's Open University Zagreb has recognized the possibilities that this program provides, and we have been its users from the very beginning of Erasmus+ program - as coordinators or as partners of projects financed through Key Activity 1 or through Key Activity

Several steps should be considered when creating a project proposal - it is necessary to identify the needs of the organization and the key areas in which you want to improve and the goals you want to achieve. After that, it is necessary to choose the type of mobility and then prepare the mobility participants for everything that awaits them during and after the mobility. After returning from the mobility, you should disseminate the project and apply the knowledge and skills the participants acquired during the mobility to the work of the adult education institution.

What benefits have the Public Open University Zagreb gained from participating in an Erasmus+ projects? First, Erasmus+ mobilities certainly brought new knowledge, improved professional and language competence of our staff and participants, as well as greater motivation and satisfaction of mobility participants. Furthermore, each of these experiences represented the possibility of introducing some change in our institution and the possibility of providing a better quality of service that we provide, and certainly brought us a better perception of the institution in the public. The experience was also great for international cooperation and network building for new projects.

However, the greatest benefit from implementing these projects is for our third age students. They acquire new experience, skills and knowledge, improve communication skills in a foreign language and above all, improve self-confidence and independence.

In recent period Public Open University Zagreb had two mobilities of our third age students- to our host partner organisations- the Comenius University in Bratislava, in October 2023 and to Ulm University in July 2024. Thanks to the effort of our hosts' representatives, Dr. Nadia Hrapková from the Comenius University in Bratislava and Dr. Markus Marquard from the Ulm University, both were very successful, and the students came back satisfied and enriched with new experience.

For the Public Open University Zagreb, Erasmus+ has been a truly positive, useful and enlightening experience.



Gallery of distinguished EFOS member

Dr. Björn ODIN – Uppsala, Sverige



Around the world in 85 years with Björn Odin

(written by Mr. Jordan)

- The most exciting thing I experienced in my international work was the rapid development from apartheid to full democracy in southern Africa and getting to work with peace-promoting issues in different parts of the world. That's what Björn Odin says, who last spring left the International Working Group at the Swedish Senior University (U3A) in Uppsala of which he had been a member since 2008. There, he has been an important cog in the work of developing and spreading international activities and contacts with other European senior universities.

- I was born when the Second World War broke out and I started primary school when the war ended, Björn continues. My interest in international affairs probably started when our teacher told us that there would come a new boy in the class. He was Jewish and his name was Amos and his parents had been killed during the war. We were some pupils who took care of Amos and understood at least a small part of what he had gone through. During his high school years, Björn hitchhiked through a rather Europe and experienced the differences between the poor and the rich. Later,

he went as a youth leader to the USA and Little Rock in Arkansas, just as the busing of black students took place to a white school in a society characterized by apartheid.

Active within EFOS and in many other projects

In recent years, Björn Odin has been very active within EFOS. For several years (2018-2024 two terms of office), he has been a highly valued vice-chairman of the EFOS board.

EFOS has worked to generally improve the situation for the elderly, among other things through its membership in the UN's advisory body "The Vienna NGO Committee on Ageing".

- What has been good and result-oriented about that work is that we have now finally been able to start work on a UN convention for the rights of the elderly, emphasizes Björn with great satisfaction.

Result-oriented work in many countries

For many years, Björn has been an active member of the Swedish Afghanistan Committee, which works for development and help for the most vulnerable groups in

Afghanistan - women, children and the disabled. For three years 1989 -1992 he was responsible for the committee's education program in Afghanistan with more than 450 schools, teacher training and curriculum development.

- As so often in poor countries, it's like skiing on slippery slopes - today, for example, because of the Taliban regime; 's brutal policy, Björn points out disappointedly.

However, this is not always the case. Björn's great involvement in Namibia is a good example of the opposite.

After a few years as an educational consultant in Ethiopia, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan and Zambia, he was asked to train teachers in the newly independent Namibia.

- The new minister of education in Namibia, Nahas Angula, had met my Swedish colleagues during the liberation struggle and understood that their work was in harmony with his view of how to shape a democratic school system and modern teacher training. So in 1993 I started this reform work together with my Swedish colleagues, says Björn.

A particularly interesting piece of work was at the Caprivi College of Education assisting its principal to establish a new teacher training college in the town of Katima Mulilo on the Zambesi River in north-eastern Namibia. It was now the first time that white and black teachers would work and be trained together and, after some scepticism from the white teachers, it worked very well.

- A really nice memory from this breaking time is when one of the white teachers came up to me and said: Björn, sometimes I forget that Choma is black! It moved me a lot, a big step had been taken from apartheid to democracy in a nutshell, emphasizes Björn.

Finally, some personal reflections from Björn Odin

- International cooperation is a slow process for long-term peace.
- Working together means increased understanding.
- It is important in all international work to listen and not come up with ready-made solutions.
- The good conversation: where we listen to each other with respect even when we don't agree.

Gallery of distinguished EFOS members

EFOS News 2019



**Dipl. Ing. Peter Hug
(1944 – 2024)**

Big thanks, Peter



I first met him in September 2001 in Namur, Belgium at the joint AIUTA EFOS meeting. On that occasion he took part in the EFOS GB meeting. Since then he has been a regular participant and has not missed any of the other EFOS meetings. Right from the start he has been a very active member which was confirmed by his election as EFOS vicepresident in 2004. As one of the most valuable members he took on responsibility for the EFOS website and as editor of the EFOS News, our international magazine. Our meetings became more frequent when he joined the AIUTA Governing Board in 2008. I was sorry that he decided to leave AIUTA board in 2012 although I understood the difficulties facing him. I am glad that he took on the position of EFOS president for 2011-14 and that he was able to represent EFOS at some important events. These include the UNECE Ministerial Conference 2012 in

Vienna, the conference on active ageing in ULM in 2012 and the annual meeting of BAGWiWA in Oldenburg in 2013. A very active person, he is friendly, punctual and accurate in his work and in keeping to deadlines. As a person he is very honest, ready to help and to offer support. He is both principled and reliable, truthful and modest. In my view EFOS could not have reached its current level without him and my presidency would not be as successful without his support.

What else do I know about him? Born in Switzerland and, since 1976, a permanent resident in the Netherlands in Assen where he lives with Sigrid, his wife (a former teacher) and Kathrin, their daughter who is the same age as my eldest son, born in 1976. Peter graduated in 1968 from the ETH university in Zürich and as a Dipl. Engineer worked for almost the whole of his

professional life in land surveying with the Shell company in the Netherlands, Brunei and Japan.

As a young senior student, he was already active and a Board member of Vrienden Senioren Academie Groningen-FrieslandDrenthe from 1998 until 2016. In 2007 he entered the Senioren Academie as an enthusiastic senior student, actively involved in the education of older people. From 2006-2012 he was also honorary secretary of the Dutch association of UTAs, HOVO Nederland. During the 2008-2010 period he coordinated VECU (Virtual European Cultural Centre), a European Project of EFOS members.

He has EFOS News Nr. 1 2019 14 written many articles and made many presentations on the subject of senior learning.

It was an honour for me to work with him. A person who never said "no", he was always friendly and willing to help.

He was a person who professionally and enthusiastically approached every activity. Our work and friendship were very close, and we really didn't expect him to leave so soon. I would like to thank him for being with us, doing a lot for the benefit of the seniors, EFOS and all of us.

Nadia and Katja

We are all missing a very nice and generous man. Peter was such a good representative of EFOS and senior students - being curious, wanting to know more and always prepared to help and carry out his tasks in a

professional manner. For ten years he has been a fantastic "mentor" for me. Peter will always stay in our hearts.

Bjorn

Something which puzzles me is that he, born in Switzerland and living in The Netherlands, doesn't like cheese! But what he does like is dancing, swimming, sailing, skiing and hiking. I think Peter is a very valuable member of EFOS, not only for all the reasons mentioned above but also for his skills as an interpreter, digital expert and editor. It has been our good fortune over many years to have worked with Peter and to have benefitted from his contributions.

Dr. Nadežda Hrapková, EFOS president

I am saddened to hear the news of Peter - he was a very gentle and kind man. If ever I had questions or uncertainties, he explained patiently and was always ready to assist if I needed help with my German translations. We will remember his unselfish contributions with grateful thanks and affection.

Auriol



Gallery of distinguished EFOS member

EFOS News 2017



Stanley Miller
(1933 – 2024)

It is now time to recognise in this column the influence Stanley Miller has had on EFOS. His committed contributions to our discussions, often delivered with a touch of English humour which elicits a smile, are valued by the participants in our meetings.

The first contact with Stanley took place within AIUTA (International Association of Universities of the Third Age) after he had been elected as its Chairman in 2006. This contact developed to the extent that after he had completed his four years as Chairman he became a member of EFOS because he had formed the impression that EFOS enabled an open and lively exchange of ideas. The range of Stanley's experience in education and training is of great value to EFOS.

His career began at university where he studied French, German and later Latin and trained as a teacher. It was there that he met his wife, Eileen, whom we meet at EFOS meetings. After some years as a teacher of French in a middle school and then in three other secondary schools, he moved into school administration in Nottingham. He worked there as an inspector and adviser for modern languages. This provided him with a good insight into the running of schools

and aroused his special interest in school management. His ability did not go unnoticed. He was appointed Senior Adviser / Staff Inspector to Birmingham City Council and this involved him more intimately with all the ups and downs of politics.

At the age of 56 he took early retirement and together with an emeritus professor set up a consultancy which among other activities included research into the EU's Erasmus scheme. During this period he was also writing and organising many courses. In addition, for some time he was a modern language inspector within the newly instituted national schools inspection authority. In the unconventional schoolbooks which he wrote, he wanted to show that language learning can be made entertaining. This can be seen in his collection of stories in French which are richly illustrated but contain neither grammar nor vocabulary sections. It was in 1997 in Birmingham that Stanley first became involved with U3A. The idea of self directed groups of seniors working under the banner of "Those who teach also learn and those who learn also teach" enthused him. Thus in EFOS he sees himself continuing to be a messenger (or 'clarifier'

as he would prefer to say) of the U3A system. He found the continental form of third age learning to be too formally organised as in the French model and taking too little account of the way older people learn. For him there is a lack of discussion and exchange of ideas.

In the U3A Stanley's organisational and communicative abilities were equally recognised. He was chosen to be a regional representative of the Third Age Trust and was its Vice-chairman for three years. At this time he heard of AIUTA and took part in their Governing Body meetings, representing a colleague who was unwell. Stanley was amazed when in 2006 he was elected as Chairman of AIUTA.

He had to EFOS News Nr. 1 2017 22 cope with a difficult situation where there was rivalry between French speaking and English speaking camps. He himself describes his four year period as Chairman

as problematic. EFOS which he joined after that has a quite different feel for him. He enjoys the open discussions and has the impression that with his experience he can contribute something of value.

Stanley is highly appreciated not only for his contributions to discussion with their touches of English humour. He has also made valuable contributions in other ways. These include his many translations for EFOS News in which he always tries to catch the essential meaning of the text; his cooperation in the work on the original action-plan; his article in EFOS News on the British U3A system; the questionnaire for the survey among U3As and much more.

We hope that we can count on his continued work with us for a long time to come despite the problems of travel which recently have become more pronounced.