



EFOS

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



www.efos-europa.eu

17 February 2014

To the candidates for the election to the European Parliament

Demographic change in the coming years will give the 65+ age-group a much stronger numerical profile. This growth must therefore be taken account of not only in social and health policies but also in the field of education. The education of older people is rapidly growing in importance. Lifelong learning doesn't cease on retirement from working life but continues to be significant after that. Society can no longer allow the skills of older generations to go to waste.

An educational programme has to be devised which avoids the isolation of older people by keeping them in step with the changes in society, technology and science. Since the 1970s, the worldwide movement of Universities of the Third Age (U3A) has made an impressive contribution to this within the member states of the EU. Now, however, without adequate political and academic support it is coming to the limit of its capacity to cater for the growing number of senior students.

For this reason we would like to draw your attention to the attached Manifesto where the European Federation of Older Students in Universities (EFOS), as representative of the interests of older students in U3As and other universities, outlines its concerns for the further development of the education of older people.

In addition, we refer to Paragraphs 7 and 8 of the 'Ministerial Declaration' of the 2012 Vienna UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing where the participating countries (including inter alia the Member States of the European Union), recognise the importance of the education of older people, which they undertake to foster and support, as shown below:

*07. We also realize that while some Member States still have to develop more comprehensive policy responses to individual and societal needs of ageing populations others aim to **sustain for the future the existing access of older persons to adequate social protection and well-functioning systems of education, gender-specific health and social care, as well as opportunities to participate in society as equal partners.***

08. We acknowledge the significant progress made by many Member States in fulfilling the ten commitments of the UNECE RIS/MIPAA during the second five-year cycle. The notable achievements of the implementation process in the region include, amongst others, the following:

....
*(d): **increasing use of innovative approaches in providing educational, health, rehabilitation and social care services**, including technological and organizational innovations, as well as promoting stronger involvement and collaboration of public, private and non-profit sectors in developing such services;*

Yours respectfully,

Dipl. Ing. Peter Hug
President of EFOS

Attachment: EFOS Manifesto 2012