

Opening and president report, Dresden 8. April 2011

Dear guests, EFOS members, participants of the EFOS meeting, ladies and gentlemen,

At the beginning of our meeting allow me to warmly welcome you at our EFOS meeting. Six months elapsed already since our last meeting in Bratislava and the celebration of the 20th anniversary of the EFOS establishment in Bressanone (Italy) in 1990. At the conference in Bratislava, which was held under the auspices of the rector of the Comenius University, participated 15 foreign guests from 10 European universities. We were very pleased by the attendance of the chairwoman of the UN Committee on Aging in Vienna Dipl. Ing. Monika Anna Klenovec. Thirteen Universities of the Third Age from Slovakia were represented by 230 senior students, teachers and U3A organizers.

I would again like to thank you all for your help with our publication issued with the title "Aufgabe und Initiativen der EFOS". I am glad that we took the opportunity to publish your articles, project and research findings which we carried out together.

The year 2010, in which we participated in three conferences related to the education for senior citizens (Hamburg, Warsaw and Bratislava) was completed by the interesting Congress of International Association of U3As AIUTA in Costa Rica. At this congress two EFOS members presented the results of our common activities and specific findings of the VECU project in a workshop and a poster presentation.

Recently, we jointly prepared the articles for a new issue of the EFOS News magazine in two languages, which was traditionally compiled by Peter Hug. Selection of the results of the recently completed Grundtvig project "VECU" were the basis for this new addition next to the recensions of our book about the EFOS history and a presentation of your president. In addition to the collection of the articles it is also the translation of the texts for the magazine that we have to acknowledge.

Based on the tasks that we decided upon in our meeting in October, some of us (Rosemarie and me) contacted some senior universities to attract them for the membership in EFOS. Our invitations were honoured by applications from the University of Alicante (Spain), Klagenfurt (Austria), Lublin (Poland). We also received a message of interest for the individual membership from the former president AIUTA Stanley Miller from England. We look forward to expanding cooperation to other cities in Europe and the cooperation with our new colleagues, whom we welcome warmly now.

From the year 2010, we transferred to the next period the discussion on the topic of the Role of Emerity, the creation of the basic short version of the Manifesto and the discussion about the preparation of a new Grundtvig project. Also, in the autumn this year, we are going to hold an EFOS General Assembly and will elect a new EFOS board for a further 3 years.

Dear colleagues,

I am pleased that yesterday we had the opportunity to participate in another vocational EFOS event, which was hosted by the Senior Academy Dresden. I believe that together we expressed our views and experiences on the theme of the workshop: The role of the education in the democracy of an aging society and would like to thank the organizers and participants for the opportunity to comment and participate in this interesting event.

Dear friends,

At the end of my speech let me wish our meeting a successful proceeding and many constructive contributions.