



EFOS

European Federation of Older Students at the Universities
Europäische Vereinigung älterer Studierender and den Universitäten
Fédération Européenne des Etudiants Agés aux Universités



EFOS NEWS

1

2006

European Federation of Older Students

Board

President of honour:

Dkfm. Horst Leonhard, Vienna, Austria

President:

Dr. Nadia Hrapková

Univerzita Komenského, Univerzita tretieho veku

Safarikovo nam. 6, 818 06 Bratislava, Slovakia

Tel. (00421)7/59 24 45 45, Fax (00421)2/59 24 42 02

e-mail hrapkova@rec.uniba.sk

Vicepresident:

Olaf Freymark

Otto-von-Guericke Universität Magdeburg

Lehrstuhl Erwachsenenbildung

Zschokkestr. 32, D-39016 Magdeburg, Germany

Tel. (0049)391/67 16 505 Fax (0049)391/67 16 581

e-mail Olaf.Freymark@gse-w.uni-magdeburg.de

Vicepresident:

Dipl. Ing. P.J. Hug

Prinses Irenestraat 8, 9401 HH Assen, Netherlands

Tel. (0031)592/33 04 64

e-mail s.p.hug@planet.nl

Honorary Secretary:

Mag. Herta Spitaler

Neulinggasse 15/17, 1030 Vienna, Austria

Tel.=Fax (0043)1/714 81 26

e-mail ws96612@onemail.at

Representative of AIUTA:

Prof. Dr. Paulin Duchesne, Universität des 3. Lebensalters Namur, Belgium

Treasurer a.i.:

Dkfm. Horst Leonhard, Vienna, Austria

Deputy Treasurer:

Ingrid Dummer, Kiel, Germany

Board Members:

Prof. Maj Aldskogius, University Uppsala

Dr. Jutta Arnold, Berliner Akademie für weiterbildende Studien

Dipl. Ing. Pavla Lutonská, University of the 3rd Age, Comenius University Bratislava

Dr. Daniel Meynen, Sulzburg (Germany)

Dr. Bruno Nerlich, Berliner Akademie für weiterbildende Studien

Mag. Bruno Pichler, University Vienna

Lenka Shromazdilova, Technical University Brno

Martin Šolc, Karls university Prag

Dr. Walentyna Wnuk, University of the 3rd Age Wroclaw

Members from:

Austria, Belgium, Czech Republic, France, Germany, Netherlands, Poland, Slovakia, Sweden

From the editor:

This edition of the EFOS News is mainly dedicated to the articles our members wrote for the 30 years jubilee of the University of the 3rd Age in Wroclaw (Poland). We were guests at their celebration and combined it with our half-yearly meeting.

The "Sommeruni" in Berlin too celebrated a jubilee. Dr. Jutta Arnold looks back on the 20 years of its existence.

The articles of Dr. Daniel Meynen and Prof. Alexander Andreeff should animate the readers to think about the future development of the education of older people. They formed the basis of a fruitful discussion we had at our November meeting in Vienna.

Last August EFOS started the EFOSEC (EFOS Enlargement and Co-operation) project with financial support from the Socrates Grundtvig 2 Programme of the European Commission.

This English edition of the EFOS News is a first trial to reach a wider public. We will continue to publish the German version as till now. But in addition we start with publishing translations and summaries of some articles in English. Hopefully we will receive an increasing number of articles in English. We might also find some people willing to make translations from and to English to widen the scope of both editions.

November 2006

Peter Hug

EFOS News

Publication of the
European Federation of Older
Students at Universities

Editor:

P. Hug
Prinses Irenestraat 8
9401 HH Assen
Niederlande
Tel. +31-592-330464
E-mail: s.p.hug@planet.nl

EFOS Website:

www.efos-europa.eu

Copyright:

Any use of the contents of this edition or parts of it is only allowed with written consent of the editor.

This project receives financial support from the Socrates programme of the European Commission. The responsibility for the content of this website lies exclusively with the author; in no way whatsoever does it represent views of the European Commission or its services. The European Commission is in no way liable for the use of the information on this website.

Contents

EFOSEC, Dipl. Ing. Peter Hug	5
The idea of development as a factor of the prophylaxis of old age, Dr. Walentyna Wnuk	6
Older people in a wider Europe, Dr. Nadia Hrapková	7
The Dutch UTA student, Dipl. Ing. Peter Hug	10
Prospects of universities of third age, Dr. Daniel Meynen	12

EFOSEC

Dipl.Ing. Peter Hug, Groningen, Netherlands



On 1st August 2006 EFOS started its project EFOSEC (EFOS Enlargement and Co-operation), with financial support from the Socrates Grundtvig 2 Programme of the European Union.

The project is planned to last three years and is described as follows:

The number of older students has grown during the recent years in nearly all European countries. The available empirical research predicts, based on the demographic changes and the rising level of education, a strong further increase in the demand of older people for education. That's why the lack of national and international fora for older students is felt to be an increasing barrier to let their voice be heard. With the present means the possibilities of EFOS are very limited. That's why we want, by the means of an Internet site, a forum, common conceptual meetings and exchanges of ideas, make our ideas accessible to others and create a European network for older students.

The European Federation of Older Students (EFOS) brings institutions for senior education and elderly students in Europe together. The members of EFOS have together agreed on the objectives of this project.

The members of EFOS are students, teachers and organizers with a big potential of knowledge and experience. There are many reasons to extend the EFOS membership to other European countries and invite other Universities of the Third Age to participate.

We aim at an optimisation of the co-operation between the partners and other local groups of elderly people using social dialogue to support the integration of the elderly in the learning society.

In the first project year we will create better conditions and possibilities to research teaching and learning needs with appropriate forms and methods for elderly students. A thematic seminar, mobility of elderly students and staff exchanges can show us possibilities for better learning policies and for the analysis of trends in andragogy and strengthen the position of U3As.

Approaches of methodical research and comparison of findings will form the basis for the didactical work.

In the second year we will promote senior education and training systems and disseminate information about educational possibilities through thematic networks and the EFOS homepage. An internet forum will facilitate contacts between elderly students. A thematic meeting will be held on the theme "Equal opportunities for an active life for seniors". Research and findings will be discussed during the meetings and put into practice at the partners' universities.

In the third year the research projects, the EFOS home page and the partners' homepages will be completed as a basis for the European network for older students. The forum and the EFOS News (an Internet magazine) will be used to disseminate the results of the common research. Another objective is the publication of the EFOS history and the research results on a CD, with a summary on paper.

The idea of development as a factor of the prophylaxis of old age

Dr. Walentyna Wnuk, Wrocław, Poland



Summary:

Care for elderly people must go together with education to extend the active period of life, stimulate the creativity and keep them in good health. The educational model for life at old age should be based on “Learning as a way to live”.



Older people in a wider Europe

*PhDr. Nadežda Hrapková, PhD., Bratislava, Slovakia
(President of EFOS)*



Today's Europe has in the widest sense become our homeland again. It offers various possibilities for an active life to each citizen of the 25 countries. Our society asks for active, initiative and well educated people who are mentally, physically and socially balanced personalities. Looking at the personal identity of older people, we see that there is often a bias towards one of the aspects of their personality. An older person is often unable to keep the three elements of the personality in balance anymore. He loses the strength that is so important for physical activities. It also happens that because of other obligations he forgets to keep his personality in an active state or that he neglects to keep the intellectual capacities active. There are also people amongst us who are not interested in social contacts and an appropriate active life. Therefore we have to tender comprehensive study programmes that offer many opportunities for our older students to further develop themselves in a balanced way or at least to keep all aspects of their personality at a certain level. Our carefully composed programmes allow more students to participate in our type of study and offer them adequate possibilities to improve their life and to have a meaningful older age.

What are the tasks of the European Federation of Older Students – EFOS in the European context?

The main task of EFOS is the support of the interests of the older students at the European universities, thereby strengthening the right of elderlies to have access to academic studies. The ideals of the federation are based on mutual co-operation between the universities and the students on a national and international level.

To achieve its goals EFOS facilitates an exchange of experiences in order to gain insight in the organisation and content of studies for older people. If possible we also offer consultations for students. All our regular meetings and symposia are about education for older people and how we can help to achieve its objectives. Our activities concentrate on:

1. support of new possibilities for studying and further education of older people at universities that offer an integrated study with young students or at special universities for seniors,
2. various projects and their interrelation with activities of older students in Europe,
3. further opportunities for a higher education after a professional career,
4. public support of the education for older people in the society in general.
5. improvement of the quality of life and the social revaluation of older people by a study,
6. support of autonomous national organisations with similar aims,
7. making the talents and knowledge of older students beneficial to the society,
8. co-operation with other European organisations that are dealing with older people,
9. supporting EFOS members in realizing their wish to study and to improve the study conditions.

The first Universities of the Third Age were founded in France in 1973. Immediately afterwards, in 1975 (by the way as the first one in Eastern Europe) Universities of the Third Age were set up in Poland.

There are two models in the European system of education for older people: The first one is the integration model in which young and older students study together at the university. The second one is the segregation model which is the most common. This model consists of study programmes specifically set up for older people. Only few countries offer the integrated academic study to older people, and there are only a few that facilitate a full qualification and academic degree, e.g.

Austria. From the beginning, the universities aimed at offering the study as a pastime for a broad group of older people. For this reason not all the universities maintain a minimum age for their students, or a specific starting level. This is the reason why not all institutions that offer further education to older people are automatically called Universities of the Third Age. For instance, there is also a university for all ages in Lyon (France), „Seniorenakademien“ in Germany, leisure-time-universities and others.

The methods and forms of education are very similar or related to the usual didactical forms but have some adaptations for older students. The lectures form the basis of the theoretic part of education and are often supplemented by discussions, excursions and practical work. At older age intuitive instruction is as important as the use of dialog. The equality of teacher and student is another important basis for the educational process.

The rich experiences of older students offer many possibilities to supplement the theoretical part of the lectures with discussions. That's why older students prefer smaller study groups that encourage personal contacts. Smaller groups are also better for unrestrained discussions to solve specific questions or to work out certain themes.

Through its openness and closer relations the present Europe offers further and broader possibilities for its older students who are hungry for education. It's no problem anymore to arrange a European Study or Friendship meeting or to pay a visit to related universities to learn more about their educational system and the culture of their country. Contacts in international organisations such as AIUTA, EFOS or EURAG as well as participating in international scientific projects offer excellent opportunities to get to know each other and to exchange information. Personal contacts and personal experiences are most valuable. They form the basis for good relations which senior students too should help to build up in the new Europe.

Which themes should be discussed in relation to the further development of our lives?

- safeguarding traditions in view of new developments in society
- new forms of communication and information technology

- prevention of violence against older people and of their loneliness
- quality of life of older people
- international co-operation

What makes EFOS an European organisation in this sense and how do we bring together the intelligence of older people in Europe?

The older people are able to pass their knowledge on to the next generations but this requires good contacts with young people. The most natural contact are family gatherings where the older talk to the younger generation about their own life. For this reason, our senior students have decided to write a book about their own experiences during the Second World War and to collect and compare proverbs from various countries.

The establishment of a European library was a first trial to propagate via the internet European literature that is special in the eyes of older students. Unfortunately, this project hasn't been supported and couldn't be finished. Another interesting example of an international EFOS research was the comparative analysis according to the geriatric depression scale of Ysavage, J.A. et al. The comparison of groups of older students with groups of non-students from three European countries showed clearly that education has a major influence on the positive attitude towards life and on the ability to solve the problems typical for the life of older people.

Conferences, thematic seminars, various meetings, the publication of proceedings and the internet periodical EFOS News have been results of our common work of the last ten years. We also created a web page that has been on the internet for three years. We also applied for the Socrates Grundtvig project and took part in other scientific projects – though these are achievements of the last few years. Our reputation is steadily improving which is an indication that we are successful in achieving the goals of our organisation. The number of members is still increasing which we take as an obligation to arrange more, and more active meetings.

Finally, I would like to express my strong belief that our efforts can only be successful if we have a number of enthusiastic older students amongst us who will help us to overcome the typical problems that are inherent to every voluntary activity.

I wish our present meeting and especially the Polish Universities of the Third Age and the organizers of this meeting in Wroclaw a lot

of success. I hope you will get the active support of your authorities.



The Dutch UTA student

Dipl. Ing. Peter Hug, Groningen, Netherlands



Ladies and gentlemen,

I represent the typical Dutch UTA (University of the Third Age) student. Two reports from 2000 and 2005 support my claim. My motivation to study comes from my wish to learn, to fill up gaps in my knowledge and from the intellectual satisfaction of learning. The two reports confirm that I share this motivation with more than 90 % of the UTA students in The Netherlands. The majority also thinks, with me, that the ten week courses of the Dutch UTA's correspond exactly with our wishes. It offers us the opportunity to make everytime a new choice with no longtime commitment. Typically there is only a small minority of students that stops after one or two courses. For most of us it is: once started, caught for years. Usually the students stop only when age related health problems force them to do so.

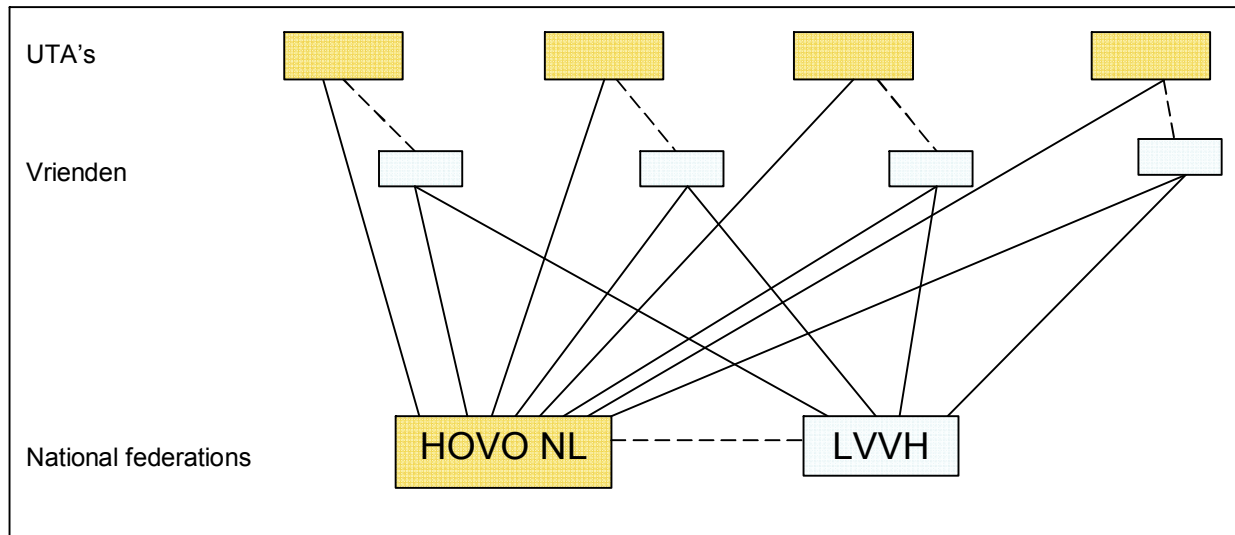
I have to admit however, that in other aspects I clearly differ from the majority of the UTA students, namely where it concerns the commitment for the cause of the UTA and the active participation in the studies. There is an increasing tendency for the students to become mere consumers who do not choose for active participation in workshops or to volunteer for supporting activities for the UTA. This can partly be explained by the growing individualism in the Dutch society. On the other hand it might also be based on the fact

that the generation that retires now had all the opportunities to study at young age and, in contrast to the people that are now 75 to 90 years old, doesn't feel a need to catch up for missed opportunities. Luckily there still remains a group of enthusiastic students that is willing to do homework, to take an active part in the discussions in the workshops and to prepare short presentations. With a bit of persuasion one can also find volunteers for the support of the UTA and for the board of the "Vrienden", the student organisation at the UTA's.

My personal opinion is that an active engagement of the elderly students is of great importance. This is the way to keep the education for elderlies vivid and to demonstrate to the universities and authorities that the UTA's fulfill an important role and must be supported.

In The Netherlands we have now good structures for this engagement:

- each UTA has its student organisation (the "Vrienden") that on the one hand comes up for the interests of the students and on the other hand actively supports the UTA. "Vrienden" is Dutch for "Friends".
 - The "Vrienden" work together in their national federation, the "Landelijke Vereniging Vrienden HOVO" (LVVH) (HOVO is the abbreviation of "Hoger Onderwijs voor Ouderen", the common name for the education at UTA's)
 - All "Vrienden" organisations are also members of the national federation of UTA's "HOVO NL" and nominate (via the LVVH) two members of the board
- HOVO NL represents thus UTA organisations and students.



It's now up to the students to make optimal use of these possibilities to participate.

Finally I would like to point out another aspect that makes me differnt from the majority of Dutch UTA students: the interest in international contacts and developments. In Groningen there is a quite active group of elderly students that regularly participates in meetings with UTA's in Germany and the "Sommeruni" in Berlin but international organisations like AIUTA or EFOS havn't yet caught any interest, nor in Groningen nor at the other UTA's. I'm just on myself in this. But I

don't give up hope so easily and try to transplant some of my enthousiasm via articles about my experiences with meetings of EFOS and AIUTA. Maybe they will animate the one or the other student to attend a meeting like the one we have today here in Wroclaw and to experience themselves how inspiring contacts with like-minded people from various other countries can be and how it widens one's own horizon. For me this is still one of the main effects of my activities for EFOS and I hope that I will be able to continue them for a long time to come.

Literature:

M.M. Heijnsbroek, W.H.A. Hofman, "*HOVO heeft de toekomst*", Rotterdams Instituut voor Sociaal-wetenschappelijk Beleidsonderzoek (RISBO), Rotterdam 2000

M. van Kempen, "*Marktonderzoek naar de wensen van senioren inzake Hoger Onderwijs voor Ouderen*", Universiteit van Tilburg, 2005



Prospects of universities of third age

Dr. Daniel Meynen, Sulzburg, Germany



Summary:

The institutions of academic studies for elderly students in Germany have reached a critical point because of the enormously increasing number of younger students and the regulations of the Bologna process.

When one looks at the present institutional framework one is amazed how few of these

reveal a solid foundation as regards finances and personnel.

The author discusses the main chances for the future of independent study-communities of emeriti and older students, affiliated to the universities, privately organized and financed by foundations and donations.

The initiative should come from the senior citizens themselves. The aims and structures of the future universities of the third age should be determined according to the problems, knowledge and interests of senior citizens.

These universities of third age will only have a chance if they achieve a gain in knowledge for the rest of the society. As far as elderly people have indispensable problem solving capacities, those universities of third age are indispensable.

