



EFOS

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



EFOS NEWS

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Seminar in Dresden, April 2011

„The role of education in the democracy of an ageing society“

Conference Wroclaw, June 2011

„Universities of the third age for the knowledge society and understanding“

English edition

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From the editor:

The present EFOS News are mainly dedicated to two events of the year 2011 to which EFOS members made a significant contribution: a seminar on democracy and education for seniors in Dresden and a conference on Universities of the Third Age for a knowledge society and understanding in Wroclaw. Included are the presentations of our EFOS members and a lecture of prof Volprich from Dresden. Prof. Andreeff's keynote speech in Dresden was already published in the EFOS News Nr.1 2010. Dr. Meynens contribution to the conference in Wroclaw about the wisdom of the elderly we would like to use as the opening article in the next issue of the EFOS News in which we would like to report about the start of our new project AVEC.

The translation of the articles is always a major effort. I would like to thank the following translators most sincerely for their indispensable contribution to the production of this issue of EFOS News:

Herta Spitaler, Katarina Grunwald und Stanley Miller.

March 2011

Peter Hug

EFOS News

Publication of the
European Federation of Older
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Report of the resigning EFOS president

PhDr. Nadezda Hrapkova, PhD

EFOS Meeting 10 -12 November 2012 in Vienna



Dear guests, EFOS members, ladies and gentlemen.

EFOS is a federation which has a lot of experience. During its existence we had to deal with several problems and we learned well from them. We are a very good team and I know that the project of the EFOS and its results can be valuable, visible and of high quality. The time runs very quickly and it is sometimes difficult to recount all our activities without forgetting something important, which has happened in our federation in the last 4 years.

The year 2008 was special, successful and very important for the future of EFOS.

In that year:

- six organizations out of seven applicants were accepted for the project Virtual European Cultural Centre (VECU), which meant that an important part of our activities could be financed by Grundtvig funds.
- we met for the first time in Uppsala and also at the university in Kiel. We had possibilities to get more acquainted with the study activities as well as the history and traditions of the visited areas,
- we decided, taking into account the EFOS financial situation, to establish the rules for covering travel expenses of EFOS members and invited guests,
- we established and adopted the rules for the membership in the EFOS,

- we continued updating the EFOS homepage and we started to use the EFOS Forum for a flexible discussion via Internet,
- we started working on the EFOS history.

Active ageing is one of the phenomenon's, which can strengthen our lives, make it longer and improve its quality. EFOS as an association supports active ageing. One of its main goals is to focus on the activities of the members. This is also strongly represented in our **newspaper EFOS News**. Possibilities for the presentation of the students' ideas, their knowledge and experiences is very important not only for the students themselves, but for the whole society including the young generation. In the year 2007, the EFOS News were published 2 times, presenting the results of the systematic research made during the EFOSEC project. Since the year 2008, when we started the project VECU, the EFOS News were dedicated mainly to the presentation of project results. On the other hand the magazine also contained articles from our members which focused on the future of the senior's education, roles of the emeriti, on the activities of the EFOS members and other articles which dealt with some philosophical subjects e.g. „What does it mean for seniors to be Europeans?“ etc. Till now, we have put together 12 issues, the first having been printed in 1993. Nowadays we use to publish one issue per year. I would like to thank those who helped with the preparation of the EFOS News, its writers, translators and mainly to its editor Peter Hug. All the issues are available on the EFOS homepage, including the oldest ones, which were scanned as a magazine.

In September 2007, during the meeting in Wroclaw we started to discuss a project idea of Dr. Daniel Meynen. Discussions among all EFOS members resulted in a **project** proposal of high quality. The application for the project VECU has been accepted by all national

agencies that were approached and almost every university that applied gained support for the project. Our project Virtual European Cultural Centre (VECU) which we started in August 2008, demonstrated that seniors are interested in literature, culture of daily life, in music as well as in collecting proverbs. The VECU project offered a lot of possibilities to seniors for using their knowledge and abilities, meet groups of students and compare interests with the young generation. From my position as the EFOS president, I would like to express a great gratitude for the contribution of all of you. Many of us know what it means to get a project. It is not only a budget of money, but a lot of work too. It is an obligation, which we had to fulfill. The previous project EFOSEC showed, that senior students are able to participate in the management of study activities and even give lectures, prepare own presentations, do research and run projects in cooperation with other partners. Both projects had their own logo and flyer. The formal requirements for Grundtvig projects which are the active inclusion of the seniors in the project, publicity for the project and dissemination of its results were met. The final outcomes, the intergenerational contacts and the discussions on the themes are presented on a special project homepage. The projects were financially supported by the Grundtvig program which is part of the Lifelong Learning programs of the European Union. I would like to thank all the elderly and young persons for their voluntary contributions to the project.

The summer courses were one of the splendid opportunities to make friends on an international level and learn about differing cultures and habits of our countries. Non-formal learning, next to informal forms, offers education to the seniors in friendly meetings and social activities, also arranged by themselves. This way, we could extend seniors' activities and enrich their learning in later life. Summer courses were combined with project meetings and meetings of triples and were attended by seniors from Austria, the Netherlands, Poland and Slovakia.

The members of EFOS are sometimes changing. A couple of years ago in 2007, when the University in Uppsala and its UTA decided to become a member of EFOS we were glad that Scandinavia too got represented in our

European federation. In the year 2009 Niace (the National Institute of Adult Continuing Education) in the UK became a member of EFOS. We were glad, that with them EFOS got a new dimension and wider contacts and information. Almost at the same time the representative from the university in Namur, which also represented Belgium, decided not to continue his membership. In the year 2011 the Universidad Permanente at the University in Alicante became a new member, which gave EFOS an extension to the Southern Europe and gave a perspective for broadened possibilities for co-operation. During the conference in Wroclaw in June 2011 we invited the representative from the UTA from Lvov in Ukraine to participate at our EFOS meeting in Vienna. He showed a preliminary interest to become an EFOS member. We will see how this contact will develop in practice. At the present time our federation has 16 institutional members from 9 European countries and 19 individual members from 6 countries.

Our federation realized, during the last 4 years, 8 regular EFOS meetings at the Senior University in Uppsala, University in Kiel, Graz, Brno, Bratislava, Wien and the Senioren Academies in Dresden and Groningen.

Another important area of EFOS activities were national and international **conferences** in which EFOS was involved. In the year 2009 our president was invited to participate at the Economical forum in Krynica Zdroj in Poland. Round-table discussions focused on the situation of the senior education and the life of seniors locally and globally. In the year 2010 our representatives and members actively participated at some European conferences. The first was held in March at the University of Hamburg, where members of EFOS in three workshops presented aims, activities and results of EFOS. The conference at the University of Wroclaw, which was held in June 2010, was aimed on the one hand at the education of seniors in Poland and on the other hand on the presentation of the VECU project and its results. The third conference where EFOS played an important role was the international conference held in October 2010 at the Comenius University in Bratislava. This conference was organized on occasion of the 20th anniversary of EFOS and was combined with a regular EFOS meeting. In the year 2011

a conference was held at the University in Wrocław on the occasion of the 35th anniversary of its U3A. Our representatives presented the goals of EFOS, results from the projects and also our main ideas for the future.

The future of the education of adults, especially education for the elderly, is one of our main interests. The majority of you remembers our initiative and the letter which we sent to the commissioner of the European Commission. We were not satisfied with the answer and therefore we felt the necessity to deal with this issue further. Due to this, an article "Towards the future of higher education for the elderly" was written. The **discussions** started in April 2009 in Graz on the basis of a paper of the „Goslar Group” of emeriti and were attended by emeriti of the University of Graz. Discussion continued during the next two EFOS meetings. Finally in the year 2010 we decided that the members should write down their ideas about future innovations and changes in EFOS and about the manifesto that was designed by Dr. Daniel Meynen. The manifesto and the papers of the members formed the basis for a thorough discussion during a whole day in October 2010 in Bratislava. This discussion clarified the needs of the seniors and the organizations for senior education and resulted in a new description of the aims and tasks of EFOS. At the meeting in Dresden Olaf Freymark presented a collection of the study possibilities for the seniors in the European countries. The participants decided to prepare a shorter version of the manifesto, which can be used by all the members for various reasons to interest e.g. national governments, representatives of the cities and other responsible persons who could influence the situation in the education of elderly.

The last important topic which was discussed in the workshop held by the Seniorenakademie Dresden was "The role of the education in the democracy of an ageing society." Maybe also this theme influenced us to prepare a new Grundtvig project for the next period, which will focus on the morality and values.

On occasion of its anniversary EFOS published a **book which described its first 20 years**, titled: „Aufgaben und Initiativen der EFOS. 20 Jahre – Geschichte und Gegenwart“ (available only in German). The book about the history of

EFOS contains the speeches, research results and other EFOS activities. In addition to all the information that is available on the website, it is useful to have a printed publication that can be offered as a present when visiting e.g. a university or the governors of a city. It is available also on CD.

On 1st October 2010 the EFOS president attended an UNO event on invitation of Dipl.Ing. Monika Anna Klenovec, the chairwoman of the Committee on Ageing. The information workshop was enriching. It highlighted the global activities of the UNO and its committees.

The **EFOS homepage**, which is under control and arrangement of Peter Hug was permanently updated and enlarged according to the EFOS needs. The pages of the EFOS projects are linked fluently to the main homepage. The EFOS homepage contains the main goals of the federation, the list of the board and EFOS members, EFOS events, special articles, the issues of the EFOS News, the project results and a picture gallery. It is the best way to present our activities and be more visible in the European context and for other institutions. A new design, which became operational this year, makes our homepage more elegant, readable, clear and wealthier.

International contacts and contacts with other organizations on a National, European and World level are also very important for us. They give us possibilities to present our activities, exchange information and find new possibilities for cooperation. In this way we practiced our contacts with AIUTA, BagWiwa, Gefas, Niace, Hovo and ASUTV. EFOS presented its own activities on the occasion of international congresses, conferences, workshops and meetings giving a speech or presenting posters, e.g. at the AIUTA congress in Costa Rica 2010. Personal contacts with other organizations are realized via EFOS members, who are also members of the other organizations. Two of our members are representatives in the Committee on Ageing at the UNO in Vienna and regularly attend the meetings of the committee.

Dear representatives and EFOS members, at the end of my speech I would like to thank all of you for your work, which you have done

for the EFOS during the last 4 years. It is not possible to mention all the names and persons. Some of them I already addressed. Not mentioned yet, are our honorary president Horst Leonhardt, who during the whole period took care of our finances and our managing director Herta Spitaler, who never forget to fulfil her tasks and, with her own precise work attitude, saw to it that the content of all our meetings was perfectly prepared. Thank you also, Peter

Hug, who was always helpful to me and supported me in my work. Thank you, Katarina Grunwald, for your translations from and to German. Thank you, other members of the board, and also all of you who lend a helping hand in the EFOS tasks.

Thank you for your attention.



Participants of the Vienna meeting

Seminar Dresden, 7 April 2011
„The role of education in the democratie of an ageing society“

Reflections and Consequences of Images of Ageing in Modern Society - an Examination of the Problem

Prof. Dr. Elenor Volprich, Dresden (Germany)



1. Images of Ageing Today - in lieu of an introduction

Hardly any other social group - or rather age group - is the object of not only so much public interest but also so much divergence in terms of its social evaluation.

In general journalists persist in spreading spectacular opinions about ageing and the aged. As a social scientist I shall naturally be less concerned with journalistic effects.

The public today is confronted with ideas and opinions about the senior segment of the population which could not be more contradictory. This polarisation of opinion, which includes every variation from age discrimination to the unimportance of ageing for a successful life, illustrates a fundamental lack of balance in the social and individual evaluation of ageing and the aged.

At the same time we are told that the elderly and ageing should not be viewed uncritically and purely negatively and that increasingly discriminatory views of ageing, which are evident and express themselves in human conduct, should be rejected,

A glance at the flood of publications about the process of ageing reveals this multiplicity and the contradictory nature of attitudes. Without wishing to provide an evaluation of their content, I cite the following as examples:

- "Das Methusalem-Komplott" (Frank Schirrmacher) "*The Methusala conspiracy*"
- "Altwerden is nichts für Feilinge" (Joachim Fuchsberger) "*Growing old is not for cowards*"
- "Was uns im Alter zu wünschen übrig bleibt" (Ernst Bloch, Abschnitt „Tagträume“ in seinem Werk „Das Prinzip Hoffnung“) „*What's left for us to wish for in old age*“ an extract entitled „*Daydreams*“ in his work „*The Principle of Hope*“
- "Die Radikalität des Alters" (Margarete Mitscherlich) „*The Radical Nature of old age*“

In purely linguistic terms the impact of these books is blunted by titles such as:

- "Die hohe Kunst des Älterwerdens" (Anselm Grün) "*The Great Art of Ageing*",
- "Das Alter kommt auf neue Weise" (Ilse Bibert, Henning Scharf) "*Old Age Comes In a New Way*",
- "Jung alt werden" (Carola Kleinschmidt) "*Youthful Ageing*",

and display different emphasis in their treatment of the problem.

The political and media community shows itself similarly diametrically opposed. Reference is made to "ageing society", "excessive ageing", "the burden of the aged and pensioners" and the "flood of pensioners". All these terms have - independently of the problem to which they necessarily allude - a discriminatory character.

On the other hand appreciative statements about ageing and the social place of the aged population in politics, industry and the media must not be overlooked.

It is from this social group that a significant proportion of consumers and voters are

recruited, it is also the target of advertisers and a source of the socially engaged. Just imagine the tourist industry without the senior segment of the population! Many jobs would be lost in Germany if these citizens would not and could not travel.

These brief remarks will suffice to emphasise the fact that the images of ageing and the elderly are extremely varied, indeed that it is senseless to seek one single image of the ageing and the elderly. That is as it were axiomatic for our topic.

An additional fact must be recognised when reflecting on the effect of images of the elderly and ageing. It is less interesting whether images of ageing and the elderly are empirically accurate and much more important what their actual effect is, what the consequences of their influence are and what social function they achieve. 2)

The 6th Report on Ageing of the Federal Government is devoted to an examination of the effects of images of ageing and the elderly in society and emphasises that these images are fundamentally determinative for the utilisation of the potential of the elderly in society and in dealing successfully with borderline situations, as well as informing the expectations of young people about their own old age. 3)

2. Ageing of the Population and Demographic Change

The polarisation of opinions about ageing and the elderly compels us to direct our attention to a radical change without precedent in the history of society, which is defined by the concept of demographic change.

Demographic change has long claimed the attention of societies, but has done so increasingly since the second half of the twentieth century. Initially the phenomenon associated with it received little public attention. Only a few far-sighted thinkers especially in the western world dared to effectively examine the problem of demographic changes and to formulate the potential consequences and dangers to society. In the Federal Republic of Germany it was primarily Reinhard Miegel and Kurt Biedenkopf who as

early as the seventies described the complex social consequences of this worldwide process.

At present hardly a day passes in which demographic change is not mentioned in the media and by politicians. The concept has been used for so long and in such varied form, it is used as the basis of almost all social problems and social defects in the world and thus acquires an inflated importance, so that it is difficult to establish a constant human awareness of the social process which this describes.

For there is in fact at present hardly any other development which will have such a comprehensive influence and will alter society so radically as demographic change. This process is justifiably described as a "megatrend".

The central demographic problem is, however, not the ageing of the population - a point of view which today is often associated with negative images of the aged - but the central demographic problem is the "the predictable decline in the population" - and I would add here: in the western industrial countries! 4)

Population development is anything but an easy process to survey, it does not proceed in linear form, it is linked with many other changes and must be regarded as very complex.

In Germany, for example, at least since the mid sixties it has been a process which has increasingly dominated other facets of society, and the persistence of which at present exerts a variety of different influences on social life. The most obvious is the tendency to a decline in the birth rate.

At the beginning of the 21st century the Federal Republic is in 185th place among 190 states in terms of its birth rate. 5)

The statistical data for birth rate is between 1.32 and 1.4 child per woman. Even lower values are found for some eastern European states such as the Ukraine (1.17), Slovakia and Slovenia (1.2), South Korea (1.2), as well as southern European states such as Italy (1.26) and Spain (1.3). 6) 7)

It should be noted that the data provides information about the decline in the birth rate principally in Europe; the simple reproduction of the population - it lies at 2.1 child/woman -

has long ceased to be guaranteed. It is pointless to speak of an increase in reproduction.

But demographic change is neither explicable nor conceivable if simply reduced to a national phenomenon. It has long become a global problem. 8) Beck emphasises two tendencies in population trends.

On the one hand there is a global increase in population. Whereas in 1900 the world population was approximately 1.6 billion, by the year 2000 it was already 6 billion, and in 2010 it was 6.1 billion. 9). Estimates speak of approximately 9 billion by the year 2050.

India is an impressive example of the increase in global population. In the 50's of the 20th century the population of India was approximately 500 million. Today, more than 60 years later, the country has a population of more than 1.2 billion and is the process of overtaking China. 10)

The second trend which is observed today is a slower increase, a stagnation or a reversal of the increase in the population. This is the case primarily in Europe. This trend is characterised primarily by a change in society, that is to say: a reduction in the fertility rate coincides with a reduction in the mortality rate. The fertility rate is less than the mortality rate.

Both trends - increase and decrease in the population - are by no means mutually exclusive but instead coincide and can be observed throughout the world. The tendency in Europe, however, is towards a reduction in the population, in Asia, on the other hand, a continued growth in the population can be expected.

These two contrary population trends are symptoms of demographic change. There is a demographic polarisation as Beck calls it. Worldwide living conditions will change dramatically. Side by side with fertility and mortality migration processes are a relevant factor in the development of population trends. They are as old as the human race itself, but have become increasingly significant in recent times.

Today we are witnessing the fact that particularly since the second half of the 20th century the processes of migration have taken

on a global character. But since this time a reversal of the migration process can be observed. Whereas at the beginning of the twentieth century this migration was from Europe to America, and to a lesser extent also to Asia and Africa, today we are seeing increasing migration to Europe.

Politicians and the media often describe this demographic change in an unrealistic and superficial way. Frequently it is described as an uncontrollable process, as the source of all the present evils in the world. Thus the demographic processes are frequently described as the sole argument for the necessity of a change in the pension and health-care system. But this exaggeration is not only one-sided but false. Both as individuals and as social and welfare communities people are the victims of such inadequate reactions, causing social anxieties. But demographic trends are not immutable laws of nature. People are only unprotected from their effect if society fails to respond or inadequate measures are taken. 11)

Naturally the social systems are being put to the test, because this level of radical social change necessitates a reassessment of all relevant social and political circumstances and new large scale measures.

But there is no need to overdramatise the situation, for the ageing of the population is a success story of the modern age, a triumph of modernisation, that is to say a historical process which in the fifties of the previous century fundamentally revolutionised the living conditions of the population, above all in the social systems of the industrial countries, and led to a hitherto unknown degree of social security for the mass of the population. Never before in the history of the human race could entire generations expect to become old, indeed even very old. 12)

Political decision-making must react to the demands of the modernisation process.

But: The modernisation processes of today cannot be tackled using the means and the conceptual horizons of the pre-modern era. Thus we stand at the beginning of a process of radical change, a caesura in thought processes and the implementation of new measures.

3. Images of Ageing

Demographic change enforces a fundamental change in the social image of the elderly and ageing. It is not coincidental that the 6th Report on Ageing of the Federal Ministry for Family, Seniors and Youth Affairs is concerned with images of the elderly and ageing. 13)

What is one to understand by images of the elderly and ageing?

Images of the elderly and ageing include the widely disseminated opinions, beliefs and social attitudes about the elderly and ageing.

They thus also provide information about possibilities of exerting influence, opportunities as well as expectations which are attributed to the aged in society. Images of the elderly and ageing can also be regarded as intellectual and moral potential which society makes available to the elderly.

In the scholarly literature there is an emphasis on the important way in which images of the elderly and ageing influence the expectations of young people with respect to their own life processes and also on the thinking of older people with respect to their possibilities and limits of the way in which they may shape their lives. 14)

Thus images of the elderly and ageing have a wide scope and a compelling force.

Because they also undertake an evaluation of each stage of the ageing process and establish the prescribed behaviour for each of them, images of the elderly and ageing possess an intense influence. They are sharply differentiated according to gender and social status and have a long term and stabilising effect. Thus images of the elderly and ageing are a form of knowledge which reflects the essence of the ageing processes.

They intensify insights into ageing and permeate the whole of social life. They are markers of social thought and serve to shape and focus it.

This form of existence and influence makes it difficult to have any effect on the fundamental images, schema and stereotypes. 15)

But demographic change compels us to surmount precisely this difficult obstacle to human thought and action and to analyse the current effective images of the aged and of

ageing with the goal of changing them as circumstances demand.

Not to be discounted are the initiatives of EFOS (The European Association of Older Students in Universities) which have for more than 20 years significantly contributed to providing the aged population in Europe with a modern appearance, which to an increasing degree characterises it. In this, learning plays an outstanding role. It must be regarded as one of the most important factors of the new image of the elderly population and be treated as such. 16)

The recommendations of the Academy Group Ageing in Germany emphasise among other things the following: 17)

First, all tendencies towards a unified image of the elderly and ageing should be opposed. Old age and ageing is characterised by a multiplicity of variations. There is no other group within the population which displays such strong contrasts and differentiation.

Second, we need to revise the current familiar, wide-spread and structured model of “active seniors”. It must be extended by activities such as gainful employment, service to the community, activity within the family, including the care of family members, and also further education in a new social context. While taking into consideration additional and changed needs for recreation and rest, the afore-mentioned fields of activity constitute a new image of the “active senior”.

The idea and practice of a strict separation, which incidentally did not emerge until the 20th century, between the phase of gainful employment and retirement is losing its validity. That is an aspect of the new view of the elderly and ageing.

That is to say: the allocation of learning, training and study to the youthful phase of life, of work to the “adult phase of life”, and relaxation and recreation to old age is no longer acceptable, neither for the individual nor society as a whole.

Third, the practice of measuring old age in terms of calendar years and from there to characterise society by the concepts “ageing society” and the “the aged in society”, conflicts

with the changes which accompany demographic change.

Thus for a long period of time the 60th year of life has been regarded as the symbolic threshold of old age. This can still be found, for example, in scholarly literature even today, and contemporary statistics uses this year of a life as a reference point when it computes the proportion of the elderly in the population. According to surveys in Germany the population regards the beginning of old age as between 70 and 75 years of age. People usually regard themselves as 10 years younger than their actual age measured in calendar years. 18).

The identification of old age with actual years of life is a purely statistical construct. It is undoubtedly necessary, above all for administrative and national organisations. But it ignores biological and social age. To cease doing so requires us to rethink old age and ageing in an intensively and rapidly changing world, to envisage it in new ways and to change our behaviour accordingly. Biological and social age have in recent decades changed to a degree which makes it no longer possible to identify the image of the so called young seniors today with that of the generation of those of the same age 20 years ago, indeed 10 years ago.

Historical Aspect of Images of the Elderly and Ageing

Images of the elderly and of ageing have long existed. They have to a greater or lesser extent influenced the relationships between the generations, established processes of division of labour based on age and regulated human coexistence in small and large social units.

Many aspect of images of the elderly and ageing which are influential today arose in far distant times. Other features - if we look at modern industrial societies - were formed in the second half of the 20th century.

Thus the "pensioner" became a paradigm for old age: it meant being freed from paid employment, materially secure, in good health and in general enjoying a great deal of leisure and a wide range of recreational activities.

Bismark's social legislation in the late 19th century contributed substantially to an image

of the elderly and old age in Germany aspects of which are can be observed even today.

The question to what extent this image is still valid for the characterisation of the "no longer gainfully employed phase" of the human biography, should not merely be regarded with scepticism, it must be critically analysed.

In any event this view of the "pensioner" must be revised so as to conform with social reality.

Hence the fixed view of the elderly and ageing in the entire period from the cessation of gainful employment until death is no longer applicable. That was still applicable when there was a span of a maximum of 10 years between reaching pensionable age and death, i.e. ten years in receipt of a pension.

The significantly increased life expectancy after the cessation of gainful employment has today doubled this period of time to approximately 20 years. Whereas the life expectancy for women in Germany at the beginning of the 20th century was 48 years and for men 45 years, today it is 82 years for women and 77 years for men. 19)

A differentiation in the concept of ageing and old age is required. Thus it is necessary to distinguish between "young" and "old" elderly, or between the "third" and "fourth" phase of life. The former applies to the active phase after the cessation of gainful employment, the fourth applies to the phase of physical and intellectual decline prior to death. In the scholarly literature this [differentiation] is expressed by the terms "senior" and "old age".

It is, however, critically important to change destructive images of the elderly and ageing in the context of employment. In times of crisis it is particularly the elderly who are - in defiance of reason and common sense - let go, although this does not by any means result in increased employment of younger people. (20) However, this is often used as an argument to dismiss older employees. Younger employees are to be given the opportunity for career advancement at the expense of older employees.

All this also applies to employee representatives and the unions. The battle against age discrimination plays hardly any role.

Recently in German rethinking has occurred in industry and commerce. The pressure of reality makes rethinking unavoidable and thus the realisation that economic development has no future without the qualities of the elder employees, without the interaction of all age groups. We must hope that such thought and action will continue over the long term.

Summary

In principle the images of the elderly and of ageing which have been handed down to us over the course of history - even if they are becoming less and less influential - conflict with images of the elderly and of ageing which are still influential today, because

- they ignore the increase in life expectancy, health and performance even in advanced age - which is the result of demographic change. Thus today people in this age group live misunderstood in a world which is increasingly alien to them;
- it does not see the increasing variation, i.e. the individually greatly varied ways in which the elderly and ageing manifest themselves ;
- standardisation of the images of the elderly and ageing or the application of calendar age limits, such as a standardised pension age between 55 and 67 years of age do fulfill social functions such as the release of the generations from gainful employment, but they do not reflect the reality of the elderly and of ageing, and thus become questionable.

Today we are witnessing a paradox:

The completely new views of ageing and of the elderly and their productive potential for society which accompany the process of demographic change also go hand in hand with forms of age discrimination which precisely counteract this potential.

Much remains to be done in order to make room for modernity; it ought to and must also be the task of the elderly to move this process forward.

(translated from German)

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Educational opportunities for seniors in Austria

Mag. Herta Spitaler, Vienna (Austria)



Fortunately today people live longer than in former times. And a great number of them can enjoy their pension for many years. Therefore it would be advantageous to consider before going into retirement which aims and wishes you want to carry out in order to achieve a „successful ageing“. One part of the retirees is interested in education. In Austria there exist many possibilities for education particularly in larger cities.

In order to be able to participate in education, cultural events and journeys, appropriate financial means and a good health are necessary. The participation in cultural events as well as the use of the new technical media is connected closely to the social stratum and the school education of the elderly. The use of the new media offers good chances for the seniors, it ensures their social integration and facilitates to become part of the informed society. It makes it possible even for people more than 80 years old to participate at home in educational activities by using television and radio and by reading newspapers, magazines and journals. Reading is the favourite occupation indicated most frequently by seniors. Those who always read a lot will do this also in older age. (Kolland 1996)

In Austria the school education of people with more than 80 years is comparatively lower in relation to younger people. According to the census data of 2001 two thirds of this group have only basic education and only 3% of them have university education. Therefore the participation in higher education of people with more than 80 years is rather small although education in higher age would have a special value in health prevention. According

to results of research higher education decreases the risk of mortality.

The participation in further education increases the positive social prestige of seniors, heightens their physical and psychological well-being and has a favourable effect on honorary and voluntary work. (Rosenmayr & Kolland) Already in the nineteen-seventies it could be shown (Lehr 1977) that the learning aptitude does not get worse generally during life but only with regard to certain factors and contents. In spite of this the participation in education in the phase of life after the job is rather small in Austria.

This can also be connected to the fact that in Austria education such as general education, interest in classical education, philosophy etc. has a rather low status. Technical studies, languages (first of all English), computer knowledge, business or commercial studies by which you can earn money have a higher standing.

But particularly in the phase after your job activities it would be possible to study “beautiful things” such as classical subjects. But unfortunately large groups of older people in Austria are not familiar with education and therefore they are not interested in it. Only 16% of the persons from 60 to 79 years said that they would be interested in further education.

In parts of Austria where it is difficult to have access to educational institutions people are interested in private studies with the help of specialist literature, computer-added internet learning, educational broadcasting etc.

In Austria we are in the happy position that older people have free access to the universities. Only for some studies there exist entrance restrictions and examinations such as for medicine and psychology. Apart from those restrictions also older people who meet the entrance requirements such as the university entrance qualification can frequent the universities as regular students and get academic degrees or hear lectures without

giving exams (non regular students). At the moment neither young nor senior students are charged with any tuition fees at the universities if they don't exceed the programme by more than two semesters.

Apart from the universities there exist many other courses or learning opportunities of other institutions, like in cultural institutions and education centres where you can study languages, first of all in the so-called "Volkshochschulen" (adult education centres) a large number of which exists in Vienna. Vienna – the city of music – has also many music schools and choirs.

The "Volkshochschulen" have already a long tradition in Austria, it started in 1895 with "popular university lectures" at the university of Vienna, in 1897 was founded the "Wiener Urania" in accordance with the example of Berlin. The Urania put the main emphasis on giving knowledge to the people on science and particularly on astronomy. During the Austro-Hungarian Monarchy the term "Volkshochschule" was not allowed. The financial engagement was borne mainly by patrons like the Rothschild family. The term "Volkshochschule" had been created by Nikolai Frederik Severin Grundtvig who founded in 1844 in the Danish Southern Jutland the first institution of this kind. Since then huge numbers of people frequented the courses at the "Volkshochschulen" which range from languages to history, travel reports, practical courses like computer classes, photography or gymnastic courses. At present there are 272 "Volkshochschulen" in Austria. The participation of women in the courses amounts to 76,5%. This can be explained by the fact that many courses take place in the morning.

Also the university offers lectures at the "Volkshochschule" by the initiative "University meets public".

As to education you need not forget the media such as radio and television. Handicapped or old people who cannot leave the house can consume education at home. The Austrian radio station Ö1 has a very good level and informs about new scientific trends, gives book reviews, classical music, interesting lectures etc.

People who are interested in further education have many possibilities in the cities. However, it is often not the case in the country, even though in many larger villages there exist popular education centres or other courses but the universities are often far away. Though, in our experience, a considerable number of older persons accept long journeys to be able to hear lectures at the universities.

Which tasks – apart from their duties as grandparents – are required for the "older generation" and assigned to them?

This is mainly the field of honorary and voluntary work. According to researches contacts to groups outside one's family belong to the main factors of a successful ageing. But it should not be only activities which help to improve one's own well-being but also those which are in public interest. But if you ask the seniors to do public work it may be suspected that the community wishes to avoid expenses.

Honorary activities target mainly the "young seniors" who just retired. Not all such persons perform similar activities but mainly those who worked previously in associations or political parties. The voluntary work differs from honorary work thereby that it is mostly limited to the immediate social milieu.

It is a pity that the study "generation 50 plus" showed that less than one third of the persons of more than 50 years engage themselves at least now and again in honorary work. For persons with more than 80 years it is 7% for men and 1% for women. As to voluntary work: it decreases already clearly at the age of 70 years (44% for the persons from 60 – 69 years and 28% for persons between 70 and 79 years). According to a study for Vienna (Rosenmayr & Kolland 2002) there exists a strong relation between honorary activities and satisfaction of life, perception of oneself as healthy, and optimistic expectations for the future. But it has been found a decrease of interest to become member of an association and to adapt oneself to certain forms and norms and that people prefer to accept a temporary task. Many volunteers change from one activity to the next and participate in limited projects.

The retired people are a very heterogeneous group. Ageing strongly depends from one's

span of life, one's profession, family life, pay attention to one's health etc. There is a large difference between the "New Olds" which are interested in education, sport, journeys etc. and

those older than 85 years. This group is constantly growing in Austria, in 2050 already 500.000 persons are said to belong to this group.



What motivates an older student?

Dipl.Ing. Peter Hug, Groningen (Netherlands)



What makes us older students sit once again after our retirement on those hard and narrow university benches and strain our grey cells for hours? Here are some personal thoughts on this subject, based on my 14 years experience as an older student, in contacts with other older students in Groningen and the Netherlands and also in other European countries through EFOS. In addition I will use the results of surveys at a Dutch senior university and in the EFOS project EFOSEC.

To start with I would like to point out the difference between the personal motivation of the older student and the benefit, education for the elderly generates for society. Too often I read that our older citizens seek additional knowledge through study in order to enable them to make a more valuable contribution to society. I consider this as an inversion of cause and effect. An older student studies because it gives him intellectual pleasure. Quite simple! Of course, the benefit for society is distinctive and I do not wish to diminish it in any way. But I consider it as an effect of the study and not as its motivation.

Please allow me a comparison with the economic theory of Adam Smith, a theory that, undoubtedly, in its essence is known to you all. The sum of the self-interest (or should we call it profit seeking?) of all individuals in a free market economy results in an efficient economy that benefits all. Seeking of profit is the motivation of individuals. An efficient economy and its benefits to all is the effect. I know that the theory is not accepted anymore to its full extent, but what I want to point out with this example is that the motivation of an individual can be on a completely different level from the benefit to society. The individual pleasure of study by the elderly

results in significant advantages for society, such as , for example, active participation in civil society, committed citizens and improved well-being leading to lower cost for healthcare.

After these introductory remarks I shall now move on to the different kinds of motivation for study.

As I have already pointed out, the main motivation is the pleasure of learning and the acquisition of additional knowledge. In most cases the chosen topic lies in domains that are unrelated to former educational and professional activity. This new experience is an enrichment of life. For the elderly of the pre-war generation study was a chance to make good the missed opportunities of their younger days. Academic study was out of reach for most of them. They had to earn money as soon as possible. But after retirement the chance finally came to catch up with the desired study. The students of that generation were mostly very dedicated, putting much energy into their study and enjoying discussions, giving presentations and participating in workshops. In the last few years, however, we observe a different attitude on the part of seniors of the post-war generation who have recently joined senior universities. They don't have this feeling of missed chances. Most of them did have the opportunity to get a higher education. They now seek the opportunity to orientate themselves in other areas of knowledge and to deepen their understanding. They act more as consumers of education than as active participants. Of course this is a generalisation. There are always many exceptions as for instance in the Netherlands:

1. a lecture course rounded off with a paper
2. an initiative of senior students in Groningen to organise and run their own workshops parallel to a series of lectures
3. possibilities offered by the senior university (HOVO) Utrecht to write a thesis and get a Ph.D

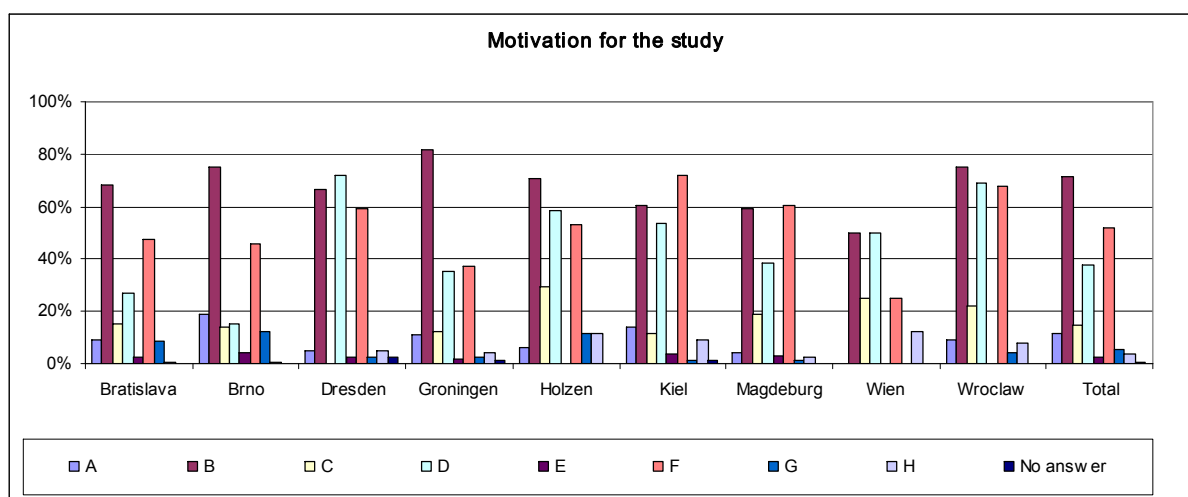
For all three examples above there are always a number of interested students who like to be more actively involved with study than just

sitting listening. But alas, nowadays they form a minority.

Reading through the surveys among senior students, we see that there are several motives for studying. Take as an example the following statistics from the EFOSEC survey:

What motivated you for the study at university/academy?

a/ enlargement of knowledge in my own professional subject	11%
b/ enlargement of knowledge in a different subject than my profession	71%
c/ fulfilment of my desire to study at university/academy	15%
d/ meeting people and social contacts	38%
e/ effort to be equivalent to my partner and my environment	3%
f/ need to have better quality of life after retirement	52%
g/ needing to upgrade knowledge for the present profession and work	6%
h/ another reason	4%



Source: EFOSEC

The pleasure of learning, social contact with other students and improvement in the quality of life are by far the most important motives. This applies to all universities that took part in the survey. What differs is the sequence of importance.

The survey in question was carried out in 2007 as part of the EFOSEC project of EFOS. It

involved 841 students from 8 universities and a group of former senior students who all filled in an extensive questionnaire.

This impression is confirmed by a survey among students of the senior university HOVO Brabant in the Netherlands in the year 2008.

Reasons for study at HOVO	important %	unimportant %
1 to develop practical skills	18	56
2 to be well informed	77	6
3 to feel confident in contact with others	17	60
4 to be able to keep socially active	48	29
5 to acquire knowledge and insight	92	0
6 to acquire background information about current issues	70	14
7 self-realisation	81	5
8 to check whether I have the abilities for higher education	17	62
9 to meet like-minded people during study trips	9	68

10 HOVO as second chance	9	73
11 to develop own intellectual and creative potential	83	5
12 to delve into the meaning of being	50	25
13 to make good use of free time	22	57
14 to meet with other people	40	28

Source: HOVO Brabant

Social contact with fellow students is an important factor for many older students. They enjoy meeting previous members of courses again and exchanging ideas about the subject of the courses and about the daily life. The EFOSEC survey showed that at some of the senior universities (e.g. Dresden, Wien, Wroclaw) the social element is one of the most prominent motivational factors. For me this is an argument in favour of courses in a classroom and against distance learning or online courses. The personal contact with fellow students and teachers is much appreciated.

I would like to round off by quoting some of the remarks made by respondents to the EFOSEC survey. In my opinion they provide supportive evidence of my opening thesis that education is a joy for older people:

- “I am satisfied because I learn a lot.”
- “Education for older people is a luxury that I appreciate very much.”
- “Older students are very grateful for the educational opportunities of the U3A, that they can train their intellectual abilities and keep active.”
- “I have a busy life. The courses that I choose give me the opportunity to relax and to enjoy.”

- “After many years of working in industry I experience the Senioren Academy as an oasis of free thinking and learning, based on one’s own abilities, without pressure to reach a certain standard.”
- “The workshops are an indispensable part of a course. My choice of course depends on whether there is a workshop attached to it.”
- “Use bilateral communication between lecturer and student and offer opportunities for reactions. The senior student doesn’t want to be a passive listener.”
- “The ideal learning environment: An enthusiastic lecturer and approximately 12 interested, intelligent students, half men, half women. A building with a long history situated in a garden.”

(translated from German)

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Why do older people need further education?

Olaf Freymark, Magdeburg (Germany)



Dear members,

On the occasion of the EFOS meeting in Bratislava we discussed the further development of senior education in Europe. As a result of the discussions further steps for future tasks were fixed. Among questions posed was “Why do older people need further education?”

In the following paper some trends regarding the present state of senior education will be presented. We would like to encourage you to reflect on this in your institutions and to share with us your opinion regarding this matter.

A. The development of the infrastructure of university senior studies

Starting point

Universities have offered a wider range of services in recent years.

General studies, children's university, professional courses, senior studies and open lectures all take place. The main reasons for the activities of the universities is the public relations effect through those participating. The widening of target groups in universities has taken place over a long period and is socially necessary and welcome.

Which are the target groups? I would like to classify them in five dimensions:

- Time (with reference to age - from Children's University through to Peoples University and Senior Academies)
- Specialism (Teachers through to Therapists)
- Biographical / present background such as Full and Part-time work, Gender, Migration

- Place – where the learning takes place
- Status and Environment (Student, Collaborator, Occasional participant)

Training is in addition to undergraduate teaching duties and an equal area of activity. Education is in a state of flux. Further education takes place in different places, at different times and in different forms. That is equally true for topics and methods for both participants and providers of further education.

Universities offering senior studies have adapted themselves to this situation. They are developing new forms of learning and are dealing with pedagogy and methodology for special target groups. Within the universities senior studies are also a part of the reform process of higher education.

In this connection, discussion is necessary regarding:

- The place of senior studies in universities? What is their future direction?
- When these programmes are initiated, what form will they take?
- Which structural changes have taken place in universities?
- Has that any impact on my organization? (Association, Academy, Limited company)
- What form does cooperation with the university take? Which content needs to be discussed?

We would like to encourage you to discuss these questions in your working groups. The discussion will be continued at an EFOS meeting.

B. What is the value to the community of offering learning opportunities to older adults?

The current basis for senior education is contained within:

- Learning from cradle to grave

- Employability as a motive for further education – what is employability?
- Older people undertaking voluntary work
- Education benefits personal development
- Education is a human right

There remains the question: How can experience be used profitably?

Today many older people are fit and have a high level of knowledge. They can and indeed must participate in education. Otherwise they will not be able to take part in community life. Education is also necessary in later life for the accomplishment of new tasks, for consideration of possible activities and for the use of existing potential. According to Friebe, education is necessary to avoid social exclusion. (cf. Friebe: “Exclusion and inclusion of older people in education and society, Bertelsmann Verlag 2010).

However, the educational needs of his age-group are varied.. This can be seen from the composition of the participants. Those with limited education don’t enrol in the university. About 85 % of the participants have been students and have worked in professions and now want to undertake further education in their post-professional life.

In conclusion it can be asserted that education can be seen as a human right.

The role of further education is up for discussion. It is a part of the politics of mobilization of older people. Further education as such can contribute to cognitive fitness; it can help to inform and offer scope for decisions regarding the maintenance of the quality of life and the accomplishment of tasks in later life. Therefore people need support in this regard.

In more concrete terms there are the following reasons for education in later life:

- Changes in society, among others individualization, modernization, pluralism, neo-liberalism and globalization, are manifold and complex. Older people in particular have difficulties with these changes in society. Participating in education provides a more equal opportunity.

- Education helps to become more aware of one’s identity. By gaining knowledge and competences one’s own situation in life can be understood more easily. Individuals more readily learn to deal with their own environment. Adult Education can be seen as a personal design process.
- Education enables a critical look at social, political, economic and cultural life.
- Education fosters independence and personal responsibility and leads to more engagement which increases satisfaction with life.

University programmes offer self- study opportunities. Increasing participation in project work confirms this statement.

C. What value accrues to the universities from these programmes?

- Senior students are included in the university’s strategic mission statement.
- Older people are included in research undertaken in the faculties. Important questions of age, ageing and of skill development can be examined.
- Intergenerational learning is important for both groups. But it does not replace the systematic planning of learning processes between young and old.
- The opening up of the university is very important for its reputation. Just as the Children’s University enhances the way in which the university is regarded, post-professional studies are very important for the local reputation of a university. Neither group could be a better “communication medium” for the institution. Senior education is a feature of the institution’s image.
- Universities will need to consider how to involve teachers in senior study programmes and in research on the topics of “Education in old age” and “Future Research on Ageing”.

D. Which social and political challenges do we have to meet?

- The participant is the main concern in respect of the development of study

programmes. We have to orientate ourselves **according to the target groups**. Therefore we need to know our clients. What are the needs of each individual? What do they expect from the university programme? How well will the participants cooperate with others? How much time do they wish to schedule?

- We must consider how we can reach out to those who come to us with a poor experience of education . We are quite aware that this problem cannot be resolved by the university alone. Society and politics have to assume some responsibility. The values of a socially just society are at issue here.

- A network of regional initiatives is necessary regarding the topic of age and ageing.
- It is important to consider how the experience can be used for the development of 2020.

Dear “comrades-in-arms” in senior studies. We invite you to engage in a lively discussion on structural changes. Ahead of us lies a glimpse of the future with questions over the role of senior studies in Europe.

(translated from German)



Significant aspects of the learning seniors in a democratic society

PhDr. Nadežda Hrapková, PhD., Bratislava (Slovakia)



Every historical period, depending on the values of society and its development, perceived ageing and old age differently. Ageing significantly affects the lives of everyone. On one side there is the standard of attention and interest of the state, but on the other side it depends on the individuals themselves, how they can influence the process of ageing and old age.

Since 1989, Slovakia is trying to build the rule of law. A legally consistent State gives the citizens confidence that nobody can interfere with their freedom. At present the question of the necessity of the democracy, its limitations and the harm it could inflict is constantly refreshed. (Chovancová, J.)

For the individual person, democracy is a necessary prerequisite. Plato, who was Athenian citizen, developed his own views on democracy in the 8th book of dialogues „Constitution“. Plato thought of democracy more as a distant ideal state, because anyone can do what he likes and does not try to ensure that the government consists of the best persons. On the other hand, according to Plato it is the most beautiful of all state establishments.

The principle of democracy is "public", so political, judicial and other authorities are operating in the sight of the public and are assessed and evaluated by it. Everybody may apply for the participation in political power, but he must in this regard submit to the decision of the citizens (Chovancová, J.).

In my speech, I would like to focus on some aspects of our life in a democratic society in connection with the older generation:

1. Quality of life

2. Socialization, equal opportunities
3. Communication, freedom of speech
4. Education and its utilization

1. Quality of life

The quality of life has, at every stage of human civilization, different evaluation parameters and many dimensions. In its social dimension it is mainly subject of the social sciences. Currently, quality of life has also the political dimension, when it is studied in relation to the socio-economic systems and to the social policy of the state. Quality of life is the integrated phenomenon. Human Development Index (HDI) according to the World Human Development Report considers as important indicators of the quality of life:

- life expectancy,
- real gross domestic product per capita,
- the index of women's participation in social life,
- the literacy rate of population,
- enrollment rates in schools of all levels.

Although ageing makes differences between desire and reality, it is in the power of the person to accept reality and to try to satisfy and fulfill one's own life, to become qualitative for him. In assessing the quality of life we must take into account the combination of values which we can divide into:

- Measurable values (such as human health, material wealth and rate of poverty)
 - Abstract values (freedom of citizens, democracy and morality)
- (Blažej, A., 2005)

The term quality of life we meet in a wide range of understanding, which Čornaničová (2005) introduces in four lines of conceptualization of this concept:

- Socio-economic,
- Psychological,
- Applicative,
- Synthesizing.

Socio-economic concepts of quality of life focus primarily on the material conditions of life. As the indicators we can notice: income and expenditure, quality and standard of housing, household amenities, and also education.

These include such issues as standards of health and social services, the proportion of

individuals in the cultural and social life of the community (museums, universities, libraries, sports) and educational opportunities.

Psychological conceptualization of quality of life sees the quality of life by some individual view of people to their own satisfaction or dissatisfaction with life. Important aspects in achieving well-being and life satisfaction are:

- Ability to adapt to living conditions
- Ability to handle stress situations and thus ability to cope with difficult life situations.

One of the possibilities, how to increase the quality of life is lifelong learning. Leisure activities fulfilled by learning can be considered as a factor retarding the beginning of involutionary changes and increasing in most cases the quality of life. We asked senior students, whether the study at UTA improves their quality of life? From 120 respondents 117 (97%), said yes, response no was not indicated (0%) and 3 respondents (3%) didn't answer. Not only these results but also our personal experience clearly confirms the improvement of the quality of life by participation in informal learning.

2. Socialization, equality of the opportunities

According to Plato, women can belong to the dominators and guardians as well as men, if they receive education and be released from domestic duties.

With the beginning of the post-revolutionary period in 1989, our society develops and shapes in all areas in the spirit of democracy. Over time, various economic, financial and social problems have been noticed, which society tries to address in a spirit of justice and democracy. The above problems have changed the status of elderly and old people in contemporary society. Old age does not only consist of painful losses and limitations.

Socialization in old age means active engagement in social life, to be in company with certain social ties and relationships. The social world of the seniors depends on the society, which determines their social situation. So that seniors couldn't be excluded of the society and its events, it is necessary to create a wide range of programs and equally inform them about the possibilities of leisure activities.

Place of the activities of the seniors:

Item - place	Number	%
Educational institutions	120	100
Activities at home	102	85
Visits of the cultural centers	48	40
Libraries	28	23
Church	24	20
Club of the seniors	22	18
Centers for the seniors	8	6,5
Others	3	2,5

Influence of the activities:

Item	Number	%
Health conditions	75	62,5
Finances (available for seniors)	63	52,5
Sufficient information about the possibilities for seniors	49	40,8
Sufficient number of the institutions for seniors	40	33,3
Acceptation from the relatives	15	12,5
Without answer	5	4,1
Others	4	3,3

Where did they get information?:

Item	Number	%
Friends	80	67
Media	36	30
Others (Internet, Institutions – Ministry of education)	2	2
Health care institutions	1	1
Total	120	100

Lifelong learning is a means of socialization and coping with ageing. Lifelong learning is understood as preventing social isolation of seniors, the possibility of carrying out one's own life goals. Education and participation in programs designed for seniors gives participants:

- the chance of integration into society,
- the opportunity to pass on their own experience,
- the ability to use them for the society and in their own environment within the family, friends, clubs or between pensioners.
- opportunities for self-realization and participation in the life of society.

3. Communication, freedom of speech

Man cannot live alone for a long time. He needs contact, communication, be with other people. His needs, we could describe as:

- need to be informed: to have information about the world in which man lives, to know what is happening in the city, have information about people nearby and relatives;
- need to speak and be heard: have the opportunity to talk to someone, to communicate;
- need to belong to a group: to be integrated into social groups of students, the club, etc;
- need for love and understanding
- fellowship gives meaning to a life.

Communication has several forms in the education of seniors:

- need to communicate, to narrate, which is typical especially for single people;
- communication as a transfer of own experiences and knowledge on the subject in the study team;
- interest to help with the organization of studies in UTA by communication.

Unfortunately, some students do not take into account the possibilities of schools and of the organizers and steadily increase their demands and requirements to obtain sometimes also personal profit. This is one

not good aspect of communication in a democratic society.

Plato assigns a central feature of democracy, which is unlimited freedom - "to organize the life in such a way as we like it." This property is then determining the behavior of individuals. (Plato 1993).

Ralf Gustav Dahrendorf as a representative of sociology, politics and philosophy was also concerned with issues of freedom. He says that political action can only create a framework in which liberty is possible as far as each of us accepts it. It is the freedom to listen and read what we want, freedom to say what we think, freedom to participate in the change of circumstances, etc. (Chovancová, J.).

"Freedom of speech" is one of the bases of our democratic societies enshrined in European treaties and also in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union. Freedom of expression and communication among senior citizens in the learning environment should be closely linked, to achieve results with a positive effect with importance for an older person - a senior student.

The EU action plan on ageing in the information society, accompanied by European research programs focusing on ICT aims to improve the lives of older people in homes, workplaces and society in general. (EC, 2007). These steps of the EU should allow older people to be more active and live independently. ICT programs for the elderly can support various communication meetings, whether in reality or in cyberspace. Mobile phone is also used to maintain contact and communication. Phones extend the personal network and reinforce existing social and family contacts and intergenerational communication between parents and children. They bring confidence to children and welfare for elderly. For this reason, in Japan the project in active ageing U-Japan was started using the telecommunicative communication way for "ageing in place"

(Lai (2008). On the one hand, the phone is seen as a facilitator in providing advice, monitoring of older people, their movements and a general control, on the other hand, occurs in the context of family life to a loss of face to face communication.

4. Education and its utilization

Learning outcomes acquired a certain degree that besides the self realization in life and at work, helps person solve problems in life situations, allowing him to be equal in a team, family and social environment. Education has gained importance not only for the individual and his surroundings, but for society as a whole. By level of education, obtained skills and qualifications, is person throughout his life considered and accepted for a jobs. Individual quality of life is increasing by planned physical and mental activities and active lifestyles. Information empowers individuals, give him a sense of security, well orientation, give him a greater ability to adapt, orientation in new environments and in changed conditions. Educated senior has a different view of the world, is more flexible, able to change his own ways of life and be better oriented in a society. In this context, we believe that education, as an active mental activity is an important way of contributing for building the quality of life of individuals.

The importance of learning in solving life problems is also evident in the Memorandum on lifelong learning (2000) developed by the European Commission, where it says that " Education opens the door for building a satisfactory and productive lives regardless of the status and prospects at work., One of the key messages of the introduction of lifelong learning into practice is:

- to ensure that everyone has easy access to quality information and advices about learning opportunities throughout Europe and throughout their lives,
- to encourage in active participation in all spheres of modern public life.

In the "Memorandum" is further said:

Today Europeans are living in difficult social and political world. More than ever, individuals want to plan their own lives, are expected to have an active contribution to the society and must learn to live positively with cultural, ethnic and linguistic diversity. Education in the broadest sense is the key to the knowledge and understanding how to deal with these challenges. In terms of lifelong learning is all learning an unbroken continuity from the "cradle to grave".

Education and training of seniors has great influence on the younger generation. Today, at the time of shifting the retirement age, unfortunately older people - grandmothers and grandfathers cannot devote time to younger generations, to grandchildren, as in the past.

The value of knowledge and education and the value of family life are undermined and crashed. So, the mental education of the young generation is impoverished, as well as transmission of cultural and historical values and own traditions. Cultural heritage of every country in the world is often overlapped by the property values and by the need to provide ourselves and society mainly economically.

Conclusion.

Social and educational interests of seniors are facts of their general integration as well as integration of individuals within social groups.

Social activities help to increase the proportion of seniors in the life of society. They are usually voluntary and are often directed at improving health and social situation of old people, for mutual assistance, active share in the legislative changes and participation in municipal administration in matters relating to seniors.

Educational activities of older people, according to the latest EU interests, focus (except as we mentioned above) on the need for more flexible use of acquired

knowledge with a wider application in the labor market.

Year 2011, International Year of Volunteers opens new possibilities of knowledge utilization of older people in favor of society. Seniors volunteer activities in many countries haven't found their place, but support for these programs by the EU can open space for the application of knowledge also in old age.

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Conference Wroclaw, 28 June – 1 July 2011 „Universities of the third age for the knowledge society and understanding“

From 28 June till 1 July 2011 the University of the Third Age at the university Wroclaw closed its 35th study year with a festive scientific conference “Universities of the third age for the knowledge society and understanding“.

The conference dealt with problems arising from the ageing society and especially the role of universities of the third age as a form of education of the gerontology prophylaxis. We wanted to draw the attention on our scientific and didactic potential and to prize this specific area of lifelong learning. In addition to presentations from Poland, Belarus and Ukraine we heard lectures of Dr. Nadezda Hrapkova, EFOS- president and head of the U3A in Bratislava, and Dr. Rosemarie Kurz from Graz. Dr. Daniel Meynen sent us a contribution in writing.

A conference book will be published soon, containing all important presentations in Polish and English. The polish reviewer highly appreciated the contribution of Dr. Daniel Meynen.

Dr. Anna Gozdowski

LENA – LEARNING IN LATER LIFE Learning that works for older people

PHDr. Rosemarie Kurz, Graz (Austria)



We live in a society that changes constantly and rapidly. Because of an immense explosion of information and knowledge, learning is becoming more and more important.

The memorandum “Making a European Area of Lifelong Learning a Reality” from the European Commission in 2001, established Lifelong Learning as the guiding principle for the development of education and training policy.

The term “Lifelong Learning” implies much more than simply “education” or “learning” and – most importantly – Lifelong Learning embraces older people!

In an interim review of “Progress towards the Lisbon objectives in education and training”

(Commission Staff Working Document 2006) the issue of participation in lifelong learning by adults is raised. The Commission believes that these future generations will be more mobile, more inclined to work later in life and to consume new goods and services and that they will wish to continue to socialise actively.

It is within the context of changing demography and of the promotion of lifelong learning that the LENA project has taken place. The partnership is committed to the inclusion of older adults in learning. It is particularly concerned to focus attention on learning that contributes to quality of life post-retirement.

LENA has shown how learning can equip older adults with some of the skills they may need to remain in the mainstream ... it has reinforced for us that lifelong learning means lifelong ... it has proved that the need to learn does not stop in retirement.

Learning in later life ought to be an act of empowerment. Learning that empowers improves the capacity of people to relate to the

world around them as active, critical, reflective citizens. It is a social experience where the educational focus is on collective, innovative, problem solving processes of action, reflection, communication and co-operation.

Simply acquiring skills is not enough and indeed may obscure and exacerbate issues of inequality. Instead learning must provide opportunities for the improvement of “critical literacy” whereby people are encouraged to debate, argue, challenge, disagree, evaluate and resist.

Definition of an empowerment curriculum:

An empowerment curriculum is a programme of learning that in its content and in its conception ought to lead individuals to be empowered. Learning among other factors has the

potential to support individuals to maintain an independent and active life physically, cognitively and socially.

Empowerment and Learning

Key values of empowerment are: justice, participation, equality, diversity and co-operation.

Empowerment is not something that is done to people. It is a process whereby people come to recognise their own situation and develop the ability to do something about it.

In order to be “empowered” people must have an understanding of what power is, in relation to themselves as individuals within families, communities and the wider political context. What is within their grasp? What do they have the right to do? What skills, knowledge and understanding are necessary?

Learning that empowers improves the capacity of people to relate to the world around them as active, critical, reflective citizens. It is a social experience where the educational focus is on collective, innovative, problem solving processes of action, reflection, communication and co-operation.

Simply acquiring skills is not enough and indeed may obscure and exacerbate issues of inequality. Instead learning must provide opportunities for the improvement of “critical literacy” whereby people are encouraged to debate, argue, challenge, disagree, evaluate and resist.

Learning in the context of empowerment – roles and actions

The learner

- ✓ understands what learning is, what it can do, what it can't do
- ✓ reflects on his/her current skills, knowledge and understanding bank
- ✓ understands how existing skills, knowledge and understanding can be channelled and repackaged to fit the current situation
- ✓ identifies new skills, knowledge and understanding that will promote and support participation and engagement
- ✓ describes how best s/he learns and can negotiate appropriate learning opportunities
- ✓ understands that the process of learning delivers a range of skills, knowledge and understanding – not just the content of the course – that is of value and can be transferred to other learning and to daily life
- ✓ undertakes learning that s/he knows is fit for purpose having been enabled to make informed choices about its relevance
- ✓ understands how learning acquired in one context can be applied to other contexts and to daily life
- ✓ recognises and can explain the difference learning has made
- ✓ evaluates learning and decides on an individual level its contribution to quality of life and to the ability to function effectively as an individual, within families and communities

The facilitator / trainer...

- finds ways and means of meeting older people to talk about learning
- finds non-threatening, positive and realistic ways of discussing learning and opening up the opportunities it holds for older adults
- presents an impartial view of learning that enables people to make their own decisions about it
- has strategies that enable people to reflect on their existing knowledge and skills, evaluate them and match them to current need

- demonstrates how previous experience and existing knowledge, skills and understanding can be tailored to meet current need
- negotiates and delivers learning that will enable the refreshment of skills, knowledge and understanding and/or that will channel experience into usable formats for participation and engagement.
- finds non-prescriptive ways of introducing skills, knowledge and understanding that are or may be new
- develops learning offers around new skills, knowledge and understanding that are rooted in relevance to the daily lives of the learners
- facilitates discussions about relevant learning and about the practicalities of engagement with learning with older people ensuring that this facilitation is without bias and enables all voices to be heard
- engages learners in learning processes and methodologies that are intrinsically empowering
- demonstrates how learning can be applied to daily life to enhance participation and engagement
- makes overt the process outcomes of learning and shows how these can be transferred to other contexts
- helps learners to action plan around things that have been learned in order to maximise impact
- supports learners to take control of learning and to make it work for them ... provides the means by which learners can make value judgements about learning and its potential to enhance their lives

Methodology

Empowerment is, however, essentially an individual experience. Each learner will have a different set and balance of needs. The teacher must account for this in the development and implementation of learning. Involvement with individuals as well as the management of the group will be key responsibilities. On an individual basis teachers will seek to create confident, informed, inquisitive, adaptable, assertive learners, they will use the dynamics of the learning group to do so.

Expectations of an empowering learning environment will include: that it is an active, lively place where everyone is busy and engaged in learning; that the teacher is part of this activity, directing but not controlling; that each learner is doing something that s/he can see and

describe as relevant; that s/he is learning using resources that can be accessed with ease; that learners interact with each other in ways that promote learning; that they give and receive information and feedback about how things are going between each other as well as with the teacher.

The concept of empowerment provides a learning programme that is designed with the potential beneficiaries not for them. A commitment to ensuring that learning has a relevant place in the lives of older adults means that we need to be certain that we know what is required from a learning experience. The best way of knowing is by asking.

The LENA project has used the “focus group” as its principal tool of an engagement of older adults.

Summary

Lessons learned about running focus groups

It is easier to approach a group that already exists – people know each other and they are used to meeting regularly. It is good to give people some input or ideas for discussion rather than to ask them open questions like: “What would you like to do/learn?”

Lessons for curriculum development

“Learning” is not the best term to be used with older people, it is better to replace it with “activity” or something else. It is necessary to motivate people to start learning/doing something in older age. Learning can successfully combat isolation. It is necessary to take into account the life experience of older people.

The empowerment curriculum consists of seven modules, which can be used independently or all together.

The LENA empowerment curriculum allows older learners freedom to participate in the creation and selection of activities that meet pre-determined objectives.

- Back to the future
- Sharing between communities
- Computers – don't panic!
- Safe and sound
- Keeping fit in mind and body – Mind your memory
- Keeping fit in mind and body – Keep fit stay fit
- Learning to teach older people

The modules were developed from information gathered in national focus group meetings. The

professionals translated into a learning programme what the older learners were suggesting. As far as possible learners' wishes regarding content, timing, location, resources for learning were accommodated in the development process.

Description of the units www.bia-net.org/LENA

Dr. Rosemarie Kurz foundress of GEFAS Steiermark and department director of the Austrian Students' Union Karl-Franzens-University Graz. "The LENA project fulfilled a lifetime's dream and realized my vision of a concept for Lifelong Learning for older learners". <http://oeh-ref-generationen.uni-graz.at/> ; rosemariekurz@gmx.at

Intercultural work and education of the seniors.

PhDr. Nadežda Hrapková, PhD., Bratislava (Slovakia)



The culture of our society is a phenomenon that affects our daily lives and determines our manners. Each society has its own typical culture, which confirms its identity. Despite the globalization, which is now going on all over the world, each nation is seeking to preserve its identity and culture maintained for many generations. Due respect of one's own culture and sense of identity are a prerequisite for the intercultural work and for the understanding of the cultural diversity.

Cultural diversity is not a problem. To the contrary, it adds richness and extra possibilities to the dialogue, the mutual enrichment and the ways for the co-operation. The great variety of cultures creates possibilities of finding new forms of work in various fields, also for the work with seniors.

What exactly is intercultural work?

In the past, opportunities to travel to other countries were not common, nor were intercultural work, or intercultural communication. Today we don't find it strange to talk daily about meeting different nationalities, people from different countries and about the exchange of information in various forms.

Many activities aimed at seniors and for the elderly also allow the realization of intercultural work. The use of different forms leads us to acquire new information, interchange them and transfer them between different cultures.

Which subjects of study at our UTA are focused on the culture?

- Ethnology and folklore
- General history
- History and monuments of Bratislava
- History of the fine art

- History of religions
- Life of Italy and Latin
- Theatre and music in the transformation of time
- World of the opera
- UNESCO

How to implement intercultural work to the environment of seniors?

Intercultural work with seniors includes:

- Intercultural learning
- Cultural and creative activities and their presentation
- Intercultural exchanges and visits of other cultures, objects and cities
- Intercultural contacts within the teams and individuals- Intercultural work within generations

Forms of intercultural work:

- Lectures (guests from abroad)
- Sightseeing tours, visits of the cultural objects (museums, galleries, historical buildings)
- Participation in cultural events and festivals
- Exhibitions of handmade works
- Implementation of the projects aimed at intercultural education and activities

Methods of intercultural work:

- Intercultural Dialogue
- Self-study online
- Exchange of experiences and adventures
- Detection of differences and similarities in the cultures
- Publishing of written materials about the results of cross-cultural activities

Examples of good practice

1. EU Grundtvig projects

Danube Networkers: Writing stories about people, bridges, natural monuments, important and interesting things from Danube area (<http://www.danube-networkers.eu>)

- European Soiree as complementary activity of the project: It is an intercultural event where the chosen person adopts the role of an important person from history, culture or economy and invites to a European soirée persons from various eras, countries or

cultures, persons who are important for their countries. And who through their live and actions have a relationship to Europe.

Project VECU (Virtual European Cultural Centre)

Subjects of the culture: music, fine art, traditions in the family, eating culture, events in a human life, yearly festivities - traditions during a year (<http://vecu.efos-europa.eu>)

2. Membership in the international organizations

EFOS, as an international European federation gives possibilities to its members to realize intercultural activities and learning together in the European framework. EFOS keeps in contact with the UN in Vienna, a representative of EFOS is a member of the "Committee on Ageing" and with AIUTA (International Association of the Universities of the Third Age).

EFOS issues the periodical "EFOS News". Homepage: (<http://www.efos-europa.eu>)

EFOS has the following aims:

- Fostering of academic studies of older people together with younger students or at special academies/universities for older people
- Fostering of joint projects for older students throughout Europe
- Fostering and securing the access of older people to academic education also without formal qualifications
- Public support of academic education for older people in politics and society
- Fostering of autonomous national organisations with similar goals
- Identifying possibilities to utilize the skills and expertise of older students for the benefit of science and society
- Cooperation with other international organisations that support lifelong learning (LLL)

AIUTA as a world International Association of the Universities of the Third has as *main objectives*:

- to federate Universities of the Third Age across the world, including those organizations, which under different names, subscribe to the same objectives;
- to constitute, with the support of Universities around the world, an international framework of a lifelong

educational nature and concerned with research for, by, and with the old,

- to develop the exchange of knowledge that the older generation achieves for the benefit of society as a whole.

The Governing Board elected Professor Francois Vellas (son of the professor Pierre Vellas, who established first UTA in the world in 1973 in Toulouse) as President at its meeting on Friday 21st January 2011. In AIUTA there are member's UTAs from all over the world.

In April 2011 had been realized an International Conference in Toulouse on "Urban Tourism, Culture, Health and the Third Age".

There will be a World Symposium in Lignano Sabbiadoro, near Venice, on Friday 23rd September 2011 on "Voluntary Work & the Third Age".

AIUTA homepage: <http://www.aiu3a.com/>

Other possibilities for the intercultural work could be:

3. Professional meetings abroad - conferences, exchange between universities
4. Club works and activities for example on a voluntary basis, a team of enthusiasts with deep interest in the field of culture.

Working methods of the projects:

- Discussion in the same age group,
- Discussion in the group of young students
- Reading collection of stories – good practices
- Searching of literature about everyday culture
- Testing of knowledge and opinions of the youth
- Interview and discussions at school
- Visit of the cultural centers
- Creative writing

Research methods in the projects:

- Questionnaires
- Personal recollections
- Writing stories
- Interviews with eyewitnesses
- Visits of museum
- Study of sources on the Internet, in the press and in literature
- Discussion circle

Methods of transmission the culture

- Meeting young students at schools and discussions in the groups
- Collection of the stories in a book given to the youth
- Discussions with the youth
- Cultural festivities – good practices
- Folks groups participation and performances
- Contributions on the website
- Best way is inside the families

Conclusion

It is necessary to preserve the own traditions and culture of each country and pass them on

to future generations and to other cultures. Indeed older people are the group that has a profound relationship to the traditions, culture and history of the home country. Therefore, this group of our population is predetermined to participate regularly in activities aimed at intercultural exchange.

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Senior Participation

PHDr. Rosemarie Kurz, Graz (Austria)



The growth of the older population has significant policy implications for all nations across the EU and there is a debate regarding the ageing population and the increasing costs of health and pensions.

However, people are not just living longer; for the most part they are also healthier and many are in a position to actively contribute to society. Great opportunities thus exist as future generations of older people are expected to be healthier, more skilled and educated, and remain more active in the workforce than their predecessors.

Positive attitudes to ageing and expectations of continuing productivity challenge the notion of older age as purely a time of retirement and withdrawal from society. The focus is on lifetime experiences contributing to wellbeing in older age, and older age as a time for ongoing participation in society.

Older people are important members of society and have the right to be afforded dignity in their senior years. They possess the skills, knowledge and experience to contribute positively to society. The expected increase in the elderly population during the coming decades will provide EU with a valuable resource. Furthermore, continued social participation of the elderly holds benefits for the individual concerned, the community, and society as a whole.

Unfortunately, for some older people, their full participation in society is hindered due to a low sense of worth or due to restricted opportunities. Social exclusion may occur through one, or a combination of, a range of circumstances, including a lack of access to personal, community or state resources and facilities, insufficient personal capacity and opportunity, as well as negative attitudes to ageing.

The ability to age positively is assisted by good investment in education throughout life, to provide individuals with a repertoire of skills and abilities to set and achieve goals. It is also dependent on an environment that provides opportunities for older people to remain actively involved in society and offers opportunities for continuing participation, something which is often times lacking in modern society.

Retirement from the paid workforce should not mean that people cease to contribute to society, rather opportunity exists for participation in a range of different roles: as volunteers, special employees, family members, neighbours, caregivers, committee and trust members, business mentors and advisors, and members of communities.

The choice to work later in life is important in meeting the challenge of positive ageing. Evidence suggests that those who work longer enjoy better health in their old age. However in order to achieve this, more emphasis needs to be placed on life-long learning (LLL) for workers of all ages, so that they maintain and increase their skills and productivity as they grow older. LLL makes more sense if it is followed by society participation and contribution. This involves a radical change in attitudes towards ageing and older workers.

Information Technology offers a unique opportunity to provide senior citizens with a specialised virtual network to facilitate their engagement in the Information Society 2 and to empower their participation in all facets of society by enabling them to contribute with their knowledge, expertise, experience and wisdom.

The benefits of positive ageing for individuals are multiple: good health, independence, intellectual stimulation, self-fulfilment and friendship being just some of the valued outcomes. Society as a whole has a lot to gain from such outcome: a healthy, a happy and confident ageing population contributes a wealth of expertise and skills to the community and the workforce, places less demand on social services, and provides positive role models for younger generations.

People should be supported as they grow older, in leading productive lives in the economy and

society. It is important to allow and encourage older people, and future generations of older people, to experience ageing as a positive and productive phenomenon.

What can be done?:

- Study and apply how senior citizens can contribute to society: to public institutions, local and national government, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), companies, education centres, etc.
- Study and apply roles of experienced seniors (business mentors and advisors, volunteers, committee and trust members, members of communities, etc.) for participation and contribution to society, in order to bring social cohesion, integration and dynamization.
- Bridge a gap that exists between modern day and traditional societies in terms of empowering senior citizens to contribute their wisdom and experience to society. Bridge that gap with new methods: the use of new technologies for networking, communication, linking and remote participation.
- Disseminate the use of those tools for participation in society among senior citizens

throughout the countries of the EU. Teach senior citizens to use those tools. Build virtual networks of senior citizens.

Participation of post-retirement senior citizens will have to be promoted and encouraged by diverse organisations and companies, private companies of all kind, public institutions, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions, healthcare institutions, etc.

Last not Least I want to pay attention to intergenerational issues. We have to promote a society for all ages. This concept was developed through a debate during the World Summit for Social Development in 1995.

« A society for all is one that adjusts its structures and functioning, as well as its policies and plans, to the needs and capabilities of all, thereby releasing the potential of all, for the benefit of all. A “society for all ages” would, additionally, enable the generations to invest in one another and share in the fruits of that investment, guided by the twin principles of reciprocity and equity. »



The Spanish congress on university education for older people

Prof. Petr Vavrin, Lenka Shromazdilova, Brno (Czech Republic)



The principal role of universities has, since the times when these centres of learning were established, been research and the education of leading specialists. A fundamental change in the view taken of the importance of universities to society took place in the middle of the last century. The two roles given above were joined by a third role as a service to society, meaning the engagement of the university in the resolution of contemporary problems. In line with ever increasing demands on citizens' general and specialist knowledge this means, first and foremost, the opportunity of lifelong learning. Education for seniors holds an increasingly important position within this relatively diverse and wide-ranging group of activities. The number of people of pension age interested in education is increasing year by year, and the number of students attending Universities of the Third Age (U3A) is several times higher than the number of students taking other lifelong learning courses at almost all our universities. There are 26 public universities in the Czech Republic, of which 21 now offer seniors a number of courses within the scope of U3A. The total number of students in this type of education exceeds twenty thousand, and is growing every year.

The issue of education for older people is one that concerns practically every country in the world. The IV Ibero-American Congress (IV CONGRESO IBEROAMERICANO DE UNIVERSIDADES PARA MAYORES) held in the Spanish seaside town of Alicante 27–30 June 2011 was an important event in this regard. As the name suggests, the experts taking part in the congress were largely from Spanish-speaking countries (Latin American countries, Spain and Portugal). The previous three congresses were held in Latin America; this was the first event of its scope on the

European continent. The Association of Universities of the Third Age of the Czech Republic (AU3A CR) was invited to take part in the event by the Spanish organisers of the congress. In recent years, we have been working on joint European Grundtvig projects with representatives of the organising university in Alicante.

The five-day programme was literally packed with plenary papers and presentations in a number of parallel sections. More than two hundred people from European and Latin American countries took part in the congress. We gave a paper on the situation at Czech universities, and at Brno University of Technology in particular. The representatives of European and Latin American universities present were interested by the breadth of the specialist issues presented and, in particular, by the method of financing the activities of U3A. State support at the governmental level is unusual to date, and puts senior education in the Czech Republic in a leading position in terms of care for seniors. We might add that there is to be a significant formal change to support for U3A in the Czech Republic this year. The method of financing U3A used so far, involving centralised and decentralised developmental projects, is to be replaced from 2012 onwards by subsidies from the Ministry of Education within the framework of indicator F of university budgetary rules. A key problem relating to this change was how to measure the performance of a given university in the area of U3A. The solution is the number of "student-hours" taught (to put it simply: the product of the number of hours of active instruction and the number of students taking the individual courses). A number of foreign universities operating similar systems of senior education are likely to take advantage of our experience in this area.

The IV. Latin American Congress demonstrated the seriousness of the issue of senior education. Essential requirements for the successful implementation of this increasingly important university activity were formulated at the end of the congress.

News in short

European Values Study

The European Values Study is a large-scale, cross-national, and longitudinal survey research program on basic human values. It provides insights into the ideas, beliefs, preferences, attitudes, values and opinions of citizens all over Europe. It is a unique research project on how Europeans think about life, family, work, religion, politics and society. It is a common project of universities in 47 European countries who since 1990 have carried out surveys with nine year intervals. The last survey dates from 2008.

The results are presented in the *Atlas of European Values, Tends and Traditions at the turn of the Century* (Leiden 2012).

More about this research programme you can read in www.europeanvaluesstudy.eu

An interactive version of the atlas you can find at www.atlasofeuropeanvalues.eu



Monitor EU-Bildungspolitik aktualisiert

The European co-operation about educational policies gets more and more complex. The *Nationale Agentur Bildung für Europa (NA beim BIBB)* has, on behalf of the German ministry of education and science, issued a *"Monitor EU-Bildungspolitik"*. The updated version of February 2012 is available on

www.eu-bildungspolitik.de/uploads/monitor/monitor_eu-bildungspol_2012_nr02.pdf .

The publication lists the previous results of the applications of the "Strategic guidelines education and vocational training" and provides an overview of the activities planned for the coming years.



UNESCO launches World Atlas of Gender Equality in Education

The [World Atlas of Gender Equality in Education](http://www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/gender-and-education/resources/the-world-atlas-of-gender-equality-in-education/) includes more than 120 maps, charts and tables featuring a wide range of sex-disaggregated indicators produced by the UNESCO Institute for Statistics. The Atlas enables readers to visualize the educational pathways of girls and boys in terms of access, participation and progression from pre-primary to tertiary education. It also illustrates the extent to which gender disparities in education have changed since 1970 and are shaped by factors such as national wealth, geographic location, investment in education and fields of study.

See www.unesco.org/new/en/education/themes/leading-the-international-agenda/gender-and-education/resources/the-world-atlas-of-gender-equality-in-education/