

EURAG NEWS-Letter

July 2014



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EURAG Conference in Tirana, Albania – April 2014

Dear Members and Friends of EURAG!

We are happy to announce to you that the European Federation of Older Persons launches with this “News-Letter” its most recent and innovative tool of communication. The concept behind is to offer a forum where members and friends of EURAG can present, exchange and discuss visions, ideas, strategies and good practice examples that have the potential to bring us closer to a true “Society for All Ages” that we so badly need.

Through this approach we intend to achieve four main goals:

Firstly: to highlight important issues in our ageing society that need urgently to be addressed in order to solve prevailing open questions and tensions in the living together of the various generations.

Secondly: to mutually learn from experiences that have successfully dealt with problems of or around older persons in our communities and that may motivate to “creative imitation” by others.

Thirdly: to stimulate communication, exchange and debate on such matters between members of EURAG and all those interested in shaping the future of our society – particularly in a life-course perspective.

Fourthly: to support politicians, administrators, civil society leaders, market actors and other decision makers at all levels to better understand important challenges of European society and to encourage them to put the appropriate issues on their agendas.

Thus I invite you all to actively contribute to the future content of this “News Letter”, to disseminate it largely, to discuss the issues raised it in your personal and institutional networks, to identify not yet chartered or neglected problems – and thus to make the EURAG “News-Letter” a lively, inspiring forum that can trigger off innovative approaches to improve the human quality of our society.

Thanks in advance for your interest and for your expected contributions!

Dirk Jarré, President of EURAG



Albania

A pioneer in the policy for older persons: ASAG work yesterday, today and tomorrow



It was the global movement on ageing in 1999, when the United Nations proclaimed the year as the International Year of Older Persons (IYOP), which inspired the establishment of the **Albanian Society for All Ages (ASAG)** on October 28th, 1999.

The mission of ASAG is to work with and for older people, with an accent on older women in Albania to achieve a lasting improvement in the quality of their lives.

The Albanian Society for All Ages, is an independent non-profit organization working to make Albania a better place for all ages. The vision is to work to enhance the quality of life for elderly people, through social policies, advocacy and community services. [Website](#)



Ageing situation at present and other issues

Older people in Albania comprise around 12% of the total population:

- Before the 90's pension values were calculated at 70% of the average salary, whereas today, the value is calculated at under 30%.
- Albania still lacks legislation in favor of the elders.
- The subject of geriatrics and gerontology is not included in University teaching programs and curricula.
- Due to lack of Geriatric specialists, there are no specialized services in primary care and hospital settings.
- Community and residential care services for aged people are very limited in number and old dated.
- There are no programs to assist the empowerment of the civil society and government capacity to guarantee the implementation of our Strategy.

ASAG suggests some solutions

ASAG members see the solution in preparing and implementing the National Action Plan for Healthy Aging, based on the Albanian Strategy on Aging, which has been prepared taking into consideration the International Plan of Action on Ageing, Madrid 2002. This Plan of Action should tackle all the lacks, possibly introducing other useful components.

„We hope in the attention and engagement of the developed countries - says Executive Director Ermira Pirdeni - in the framework of the International Plan of Action on Aging to assist Albania in both the preparation and, particularly, the implementation of the National Plan of Action on Aging“.

Austria

The University of Graz - Department of Intergenerational Issues



The Austrian Students' Association by statutory body (de: Österreichische Hochschülerinnen- und Hochschülerschaft, short ÖH) is the general students' representative body in Austria and serves as the students' government by federal law. The ÖH is member of European Students' Union. Membership in the ÖH is compulsory for every university student in Austria, including PhD candidates. [Website](#)

Seniors in the knowledge society

The project *Seniors in the knowledge society* aims at the e-inclusion of seniors in the European environment. Institutions (Universities of the Third Age, centers for adult education, national seniors



networks) taking part in this Learning Partnership are associated with education for older people and want to promote ICT (Information-, Communication Technologies). The main objective of this project is to exchange best practice and experience in order to achieve an effective e-inclusion in the EU region, based on high standards. Senior learners play an important role in this project not only because they are the target group of the courses and project activities, but also because their participation can build a more inclusive and intergenerational society.

The concept of the Knowledge Society [KS] represents the new society that is sharing knowledge in every aspect by using the net. Seniors must be included in this new society. They are valuable resources and "No one is left behind"!

[Website](#)

Volunteers in Action in UNI3

The project - funded by Grundtvig EU program - aimed to enable local communities to use the potential of senior citizens as a resource of knowledge/competence/experience. The Austrian Student Association University Graz, Department for Intergenerational Issues and LUETEB – a Third Age University in Satriano in ITALY were responsible. The seniors (4 ladies from each country) volunteered in a different European country and valorized their knowledge and life experiences in language courses. The main result of the project was that older learners could get successfully involved in linguistic training on voluntary terms. These language courses were the volunteers were included might be a successful example and could play a part in a new set up of a curriculum. [Website](#)



Croatia

Centar HALO za POMOĆ

The organisation was established in Split, in accordance with the Law on CSOs in Croatia, with an aim to develop and to provide different social services for elder and/or disabled persons, and other people in need. For more than 11 years, the organisation successfully promotes the humanitarian and philanthropic concept of living and also voluntary work in this part of the world.

[Website](#)



Social TeleCare for elderly and disabled persons living alone



The main program of the organisation is: Social TeleCare for elderly and disabled persons living alone. This program includes one 24hours Monitoring service a day - 365 days a year - and enables people, especially older and more vulnerable individuals, to live independently and secure in their own home. The user may have different kind of disabilities such as imobility or disease such as multiple sclerosis, Parkinson's disease etc. Social Telecare service gives also peace of mind to family, friends and carers, knowing that when they are unable to watch over their loved ones, telecare will. It can also include location possibility - and can be used to enable an individual to have security outside of their home. It can be as simple as the basic social alarm service, it can include sensors and triggers such as motion or fall detectors and fire and gas alarms,.. **In practice**, it gives to the customers the

devices with one **social alarm button** which can be worn as a pendant or wristband, and is used for any situation at home when a person needs help and cannot reach a telephone. When they put this button they can be sure - not be left to deal with a situation alone!

Through 24hours monitoring, serious and in many cases tragical consequences of falls which puts those people in the most depending position are reduced and it **gives them hope and chance to live better and with dignity in their own homes**. Since 2002, over 700 users (constantly about 100 persons), average age 80 years, have been included in the program. The operators of the centre saved the lives of vulnerable users over 1000 times.



Czech Republic

EURAG Memory Training Centre

EURAG Memory Training Center has been established in Prague in 2002, sponsored by the Czech Society for Memory Training and Brain Jogging and German Bundesverband GedachtnistrainingE.V. with intention to share the knowledge and experience of European experts with countries, where memory training for the elderly has not yet been introduced. The Center offers also intensive memory training classes for individuals in English and courses for certified memory trainers in Prague and in countries which express interest.



Dana Steinova, with the participants of one of five courses for memory trainers given in Singapore. Courses for trainers have been given also in Iceland, Cyprus, Estonia, Albania, Nepal and mainly in Prague. The next course takes place in Voronezh, Russia from July 10-14th, 2014



Svaz důchodců České republiky
občanské sdružení



Union of Pensioners and Council of Seniors

Czech Republic is currently represented by two largest Czech seniors and pensioners organizations in EURAG: Union of Pensioners represented by Mr. Miloslav Vajs and Council of Seniors, represented by Mr. Pavel Kalvach. Council of Seniors of Czech Republic is an umbrella association, gathering

several seniors and pensioners organizations, clubs and individuals, Union of Pensioners with 22000 members in all regions of CR including. They defend, together with other organizations the rights of elderly on the regional and national levels and reached the partial and principal success.

Both of them have a solid position in the seniors movement in Czech Republic not only on the grounds of the large membership base, but also with regards of the years of continuous work. After the years of ignorance of seniors in Czech Republic demonstrated by the former political structure, the leading teams of these organizations achieved the implementation of the adjustment of pensions from 2015, got the government to be concerned with the question and law of the social housing, cancel the controversial fees in the health care and make efforts to be financed with the state Budget and ESF. The number of elder pensioners increased up to 2,1 million in CR and this gigantic number represents also the gigantic power, which can and must play the positive role in the society. From this point of view it is logic, that both the Council of Seniors as Union of Pensioners have their representatives for EURAG, the oldest NGO addressing the seniors in Europe.



[Website](#)





Estonia

A 65 years old man found out that when the level of education compromises the possibility to work, the solution is not retirement but school!

In Estonia the retirement age for men is 63. Three years ago Ylo Kana got to know that the secondary education will be compulsory for his profession. Ylo works as a rescuer and had only the diploma of basic education, received more than 50 years ago. Instead of ending his career, Ylo decided to go back to school. In fact, he planned to try only for one year. But all subjects, such as art history, economics and geography suddenly attracted his interest and he found them exciting enough to try for and labor. This summer, in few weeks Ylo will get the diploma of secondary school and go to the employer to extend the contract.

Training seminar for memory trainers focused on different target groups of senior population

August 25.-30. 2014 in Tallinn

EURAG* The Memory Training Center will run a one week course for future memory trainers working with the elders. The language class is in English. The place: Tallinn University. The participation fee for one week course is 30 euro (participants' meals, accommodation and travel are not included).



Photo: Margus Ansu (Postimees June 6, 2014)

Ylo Kana, the 68 y.o. man who completed the gymnasium this year.

Memory Training course of trainers for seniors at the University of Tallinn

The University of Tallinn will organize a new memory training course of trainers for elderly people that will take place from the 25th to the 30th of August 2014 in Tallinn. The training is supported by the Czech Society for Memory Training and Brain Jogging, German Bundesverband Gedächtnistraining EV and Tallinn University's Grundtvig project *Older men as active learners in the community*.

A similar training was already organized by a NGO - Puruvanakesed - that invited EURAG Memory Training

Center to Tallinn ten years ago. It is important to develop such courses, because the number of people aged +65 is constantly increasing and, as a consequence, the careers in the field of healthy ageing will become good job opportunities.

One important part in working with the elders is working on their self-esteem and motivation. The training provides "turnkey" solutions, but the trainer must constantly develop new exercises and activities for a specific group.



France

E-Seniors: for active ageing and against e-exclusion

E-Seniors is a non-profit non-governmental organization, founded in 2005 by Monique EPSTEIN, the general manager of the association. E-Seniors aims at fighting e-exclusion by providing access to and training in ICT to seniors and/or disabled people. Its main objectives are:

- Shrinking, and where possible, bridging the digital gap between generations,
- Caring for elders by fighting seniors' isolation,
- Opening new horizons for efficient use of free time.



E-Seniors have a substantial experience in projects related to ICT-tools designed for seniors and for active and healthy ageing. Some of the projects developed by the association are:

- AAL project "**NACODEAL**": creating a mobile device which will help them to easily perform everyday life tasks.
- AAL project "**ASSISTANT**": assisting seniors in their use of public transport by an application available on PCs and Smartphones.
- AAL project "**SONOPA**": developing a social network for inactive seniors encouraging them to carry out more daily activities.
- AAL project "**TOPIC**": providing a set of online-shared spaces to support the physical and mental care ability of informal caregivers in their daily needs.
- FP7-ICT Project "**ALFRED**": developing Virtual Butler for elderly, a service that is available on mobile devices.
- ICT-PSP project "**SEACW**": creating Ecosystem that provides training, informing and promoting activities in the field of New Technologies reinforcing healthy and active ageing.

[Website](#)



Silver Economy in France

Silver economy is the economy dedicated to the ageing societies. As its name suggests, the Silver Economy is not a "market" but a cross "economy", which has several forms in many markets, or rather in all markets! Thus, like the Green Economy, the aging population is a true "groundswell" that will impact all sectors: leisure, transports, food, security, health, home, collective housing, insurance, telephone assistance, Internet, sport, etc. All these markets are already beginning to adapt or to decline in segments related to aging and aging well.

In France the sector of the Silver Economy has recently structured, as the global phenomenon of aging populations is becoming a real opportunity, a source of growth and jobs.

The expected French GDP growth from the Silver Economy is 0.25% per year.



Israel

Longevity and Poverty

Israel is still a relatively young country: only 10% of the total population is over 65 years. That means about 800.000 people. The longevity or life expectancy is one of the highest in the world 82 for women, 78 for men.

According to the OECD year report for 2013 and the data given by the Israeli Social Security Institute, about 1.6 million people (440.000 families including 800.000 children) live under the poverty line, suffering from lack of food or nutrition

security. One out of five old people are under the poverty line (about 20%). Israel has reached the highest place in poverty among the OECD countries and in the same time we climbed to the 5th place in the numbers of milliners. Some of the reasons are linked to: 1 Not updating the pensions 2 Growing gap between the upper class and the middle class causing the middle class to shrink 3 A change in the labor market by a constant shrinking of the organized labor and steady

growing of out sourcing up to almost 70 % of the labor power in Israel. According to Mr Zwang Raziell, if this trend will continue the social cohesion of the society well become weaker and weaker. "We must remind ourselves – says Mr Zwang - that we will be measured by our deeds and our intergeneration responsibility. We have to stand as firm as possible to break this vicious circle; otherwise poverty has a tendency to perpetuate itself".

The Edward D. and Anna Mitchell Senior Citizens' Center

The Edward D. and Anna Mitchell Senior Citizens' Center is a wonderful multi-purpose facility located in North Tel Aviv. Approximately 500 seniors use the Center daily for athletic, arts and social activities. For many, the Center is a home away from home and the place where they go to meet other community members, family and friends



Its partners are:

- Tel-Aviv-Yafo Municipality and Eshel – JDC Israel;
- Keshet – The Association for the Elderly – adult day centers, supportive communities;
- Reut – multi-service centers and adult day centers, rehabilitation programs;
- LaSova Association – credit cards designated for the purchase of food and personal grooming products
- Naamat – prevention and treatment of elder abuse;
- Holocaust Survivors Welfare Fund – Nursing Care Law entitlements and A Flower for the Survivor program;
- Tel Aviv - Los Angeles Partnership – Café Europa,

Testimony Theater, documentation of survivors' stories;

- Emda Association for Dementia and Alzheimer Patients – programs and projects for the benefit of Alzheimer patients and their families.

[Website](#)

Latvia

RASA

RASA was funded in 2010 to engage in active operation as many people aged seniors, as well as for cooperation between generations.

The Society has a close cooperation with the Ministry of Welfare, Ministry of Health and parliament.

The association is actively involved in projects and activities about active ageing that are organized in Latvia, as well as members of their societies, and organizes events which involves the public.

[Website](#)



Goals of RASA:

- Identify and combine active seniors, to participate in the socio-economic processes.
- Defend Seniors' socio-economic rights and interests, mobilizing and supporting the members, helping them to adapt to changing economic conditions.
- To promote lifelong learning and the transfer of knowledge to the younger generation.
- A common mutual feedback on the principle of co-operation "Generation-generation".
- To facilitate the introduction of innovative processes in education and economic areas.
- To promote an active, healthy lifestyles and health care.
- Involve members of cultural and sporting events.
- Attracting financial resources smoother operation of the association to achieve its objectives (projects, funds, donations, investments, etc.).
- Collaborate with other similar Latvian seniors organizations, Europe and the world.



Netherlands

Care and Health System in the Netherlands

In the Netherlands Medical care (hospitals, regional doctors, medicine, psychiatrists, district nurses etc.) is insured by law for all inhabitants and carried out by about 20 cooperative insurers. About 50 % of the premiums is paid by a nominal premium to the insurer, chosen by the client, and about 50 % by a special income depending tax to the government, which distribute this amount to the insurers by an age and health depending system.

Each adult has his/her own risk of (2014) € 360 per year. The premium for children is paid by the government. The insurance company makes purchases by the health care institutes for their own customers.

Long-term care for older people (the elderly) and



invalids (in institutes as nurse homes) is insured by law (law on long-term care), premium is paid by a percentage of the income as a part of the income tax. Long-term care at home is organized by the municipalities and is paid out of the income of the state and the municipality. There is for long term care an income and health depending own risk. The costs of health care are in average about € 5000 - for each of our 17 million inhabitants! In 2015 there will be a big change in long-term care because of the rising costs. The motto is: Being an older man or woman is not an illness but a special time of life. That must be paid, if you have the possibilities, by yourself and not by the society.



Pension system in the Netherlands: a unique pension system is changing

As in most European countries the Dutch pension-system is build on three pillars: a basic state pension, supplementary collective pensions and private individual provisions. State pension amount is € 1000 a month for all inhabitants over 65, paid by 65 - and by government through taxes. Most common collective pensions are provided as defined benefit (DB) by industry-wide funds (80%) based on average salary (used to be final salary). Intergenerational risks and all other risks are shared by members and employers in 400 efficient funds, with solidarity through compulsory participation. Pension rights are accrued during working life: capital funding by flat rate contributions and return on investment.

Pension schemes are determined by employers and employees and their representatives (in equal) form the board of trustees of the not for profit foundations (funds). One or two retired members can take up the employee seats on the board (July 2014).

Size of pension funds varies from € 300 billion to a few millions. Total capital is € 1400 billion (160% of GNP). Two regulators keep an eye on the goings-on of pension funds: Dutch Central Bank (DNB) and Netherlands Authority for the financial Markets (AFM).

Main changes

- Pension age 65 will grow to 67 (and up) in 2021.
- Increased financial reserves will be required by law.
- European rules may collapse with this Dutch system
- Shifting of risks away from employers (accounting rules)
- Discussions are going about commutation to pay off dwelling loans or care costs and about more individual choices (younger people want less compulsory participation).

So how long this unique pension system will survive?

Poland



HIPOKAMP Association

HIPOKAMP Association is a Centre for Intergenerational Integration, concentrated on activities for elderly people that are designed and developed in cooperation with seniors, according to their expectations and capabilities.

HIPOKAMP is involved in several groups of interest and cooperate with local and governmental authorities in the field of "active and healthy ageing" through a wide and interdisciplinary approach.



In Poland there is a document called "Assumptions of the Senior Long-Term Policy for Poland - 2014-2020". As a representative of the HIPOKAMP

Association, Grazyna Busse is a member of the Council for the Seniors Policy in the Ministry of the Labor Market and Social Affairs. Therefore, the priority of the association is to implement the recommendations from the Policy

Papers and to identify and solve the most urgent problems.

The challenge is also to integrate issues relating to demographic ageing into all the strategies on the local and community levels. That's why, the gerontological education and information campaigns are very important, as well as to empower the civil society enough to face the future difficulties and complicated social changes.



HIPOKAMP promotes also the idea of "age friendly cities" in all the aspects, as a suitable tool and signpost for the seniors policy as a whole.

Association HIPOKAMP is a provider of the educational, activating, supporting work in the communities, focused on the elderly people and the intergenerational dimension in a demographic context. The association supports seniors clubs and other non-formal seniors groups and we also cooperate with nursing homes and daily stay houses for seniors.

[Website](#)

We, Young in Hearts

HIPOKAMP is a publisher of the free Seniors Citizens Newspaper providing seniors aged +60 the opportunity to express their point of view and to speak out their ideas. The number of seniors engaged in the newspaper is constantly increasing.

The title is "My, M-Łodzi Duchem" - "We, Young in Hearts". The newspaper is released in Lodz - the city where HIPOKAMP is located - and in 2 other communities nearby.





Slovenia

An example of good practices: *Elderly for Elderly*, for better quality of life at home

Zdus association has been recently involved in an innovative project for seniors: *Elderly for Elderly*. The aim of the project is to find all seniors over 69, who don't live in institutions, and find among them those who need assistance in daily activities in



order to enable them to stay as long as possible in their home environment. Volunteers of local Associations of pensioners are visiting periodically all seniors over 69 in their local environment. They find the assistance for 15-20% of seniors over 69, who cannot live independently anymore, coordinating all local public, private and nongovernment non-profit organizations. 80% of non-professional assistance is done by volunteers of local associations of pensioners, other assistance is done by field nurses, professional long-term carers, Red Cross and Caritas and other NGOs.

Progress in implementation – concrete results

Until 31.12.2014 64% older than 69 (142.661) in Slovenia were admitted in the project. Our volunteers did in 10 years made 524.774 visits, organized different kind of assistance in 119.468 cases. Project is led by retired experts, only two young social workers are employed.

[Website](#)



United Kingdom

Learn with Grandma

Learn with Grandma is an NGO from United Kingdom founded by Valerie Wood-Gaiger aiming encouraging greater learning across the generations: which in this technological age means encouraging young people to help older ones to use ICT, while seniors will teach them how to live and enjoy life. Teach them the skills they need to survive – perhaps even become their mentors.



Learn with Grandma aims include:

- To create an international organisation to promote intergenerational learning & fun.
- To encourage parents and grandparents to instill a love of learning; create lasting memories & have intergenerational fun.
- To encourage respect between the generations and show that each generation has skills that they can learn from each other.
- To create local & internet support networks for grandparents, parents & children.
- To research, create and provide learning material and resources and encourage a reading culture.
- To work with organisations in other countries to promote our aims internationally.

[Website](#)

The engagement in Africa

While in Uganda Mrs. Wood-Gaiger came up with the idea of creating e-books. The project will be to create a network based on intergenerational learning and will include the recording of stories in indigenous languages. Young people will be asked to connect with the older generations and record traditional stories in local languages. The text will be translated into English (or any other major language) & produced e-Books, which can be used to watch films and photos and are a useful tool to preserve indigenous languages - traditional stories, culture etc. - and teach both the indigenous and major languages.





Ukraine

An example of good practices for the Elder Abuse Prevention in Ukraine

In 2013 Ukrainian Charity *Turbota pro Litnih v Ukraini* (Age Concern Ukraine) started a project aiming at revealing the cases of elders abuse, supporting the victims and preventing elders' abuse.

Using the experience of British Safeguarding policy the organization developed its own model – Safeguarding commissions in Ukrainian cities. The commissions comprise officers of local administrations, social services, police, health service and NGO.

The Ministry of Social Policy of Ukraine supported the initiative and recommended the local authorities

throughout Ukraine to establish the Commissions. Unfortunately due to political situation in Ukraine the process was suspended and only 9 cities have established the Safeguarding commissions.

The Commissions happened to be the only body to protect elder citizens facing abuse and age discrimination. The positive effects of the project are proved by nearly 300 successful histories.

A new Pension Code

A project of a new Pension Code has been registered in Ukrainian Parliament. The authors intend to develop an integrated, systematized and unified legal act to regulate legal relationship in the field of pension provision for all categories of Ukrainian citizens. It will also preserve all social standards and guarantees apart from those which are unjust and discriminating. In particular the new Code will increase the pension age and will cancel the excessive privileges for some government employees, members of parliament, judges, etc. Besides it is stressed out that the new Pension Code adoption won't affect the state budget revenue or expenditures. [Link](#)



Upcoming event

Meeting in Prague (Czech Republic)
2nd and 3rd of October 2014



www.eurageurope.org