

The pluralisation of transitions to the after-working life phase: *Gender capital, silver productivity and mental health*

10th Conference of the ESREA Research Network on Education and Learning of Older Adults (ELOA)

Ljubljana, Slovenia, 10-11 May 2019

About the conference

The first day of ELOA 2019 in Ljubljana will discuss pluralisation of transitions to the after-working phase of life, including different forms of intermediate stages, educational programs to design the transition and the stage of life after work. Krajnc (2016) acknowledges that making new meaning of life is a necessary preparation for a successful transition to retirement. Forcing older people to a social and psychological death after the retirement by not giving them an opportunity to fully experience the new life situation that they are entering can be devastating not only for them, but also for our society and the state (Krajnc, 2016). In their quantitative research study of more than 2.000 interviewees (men and women) aged between 50 and 69 years from Germany, Schmidt-Hertha and Rees (2017) found that satisfaction with the workplace in all stages of the career, positive perception of work and high personal identification with the workplace are crucial elements on the path to retirement or motivation for delaying retirement. This can also be seen facing the newly appearing practices of bridge employment (part-time work before retirement) and re-careering (second career after legal retirement) (Boveda and Metz, 2016).

The second day of ELOA will merge with the multiplier event of the Erasmus+ project *Old Guys Say Yes to Community*, developed by four partners from the ELOA network. It will thematise the pluralisation of transition to the after-working life phase with the emphasis on *gender capital* and the need to re-define gender capital in the third and fourth life stage. As reviewed by the study *Old Guys Say Yes to Community*, significantly fewer men in the third and fourth life stages than women of the same age realise the importance of lifelong learning and of the advantages of active participation in the community. The low participation rates of older men in organised learning programmes and other free-time activities are evident from a number of research studies (Merriam and Kee, 2014; Schuller and Desjardins, 2007; Tett and MacLachlan, 2007), many of which link this to the men's quality of life, which is lower than the opportunities available to them in their environments otherwise allow (Courtenay, 2000; Golding 2011a, 2011b; Oliffe and Han, 2014). Research also demonstrates that older men marginalise, isolate and alienate themselves more frequently than their female partners (McGivney, 2004; Williamson, 2011; Vandervoort, 2012; Holwerda et al., 2012), that they are more likely to be subjected to loneliness (Wang et al., 2002; Paúl and Ribeiro, 2009) and

that they increasingly rely on their wives and life partners, depending on them emotionally as well as in terms of care, etc. (Vandervoort, 2012; Dettinger and Clarkberg, 2002).

Read more about the conference

The transition from employment to retirement in Europe has significantly changed in last three decades. Not only are years of service extending and the retirement age increasing, but pensions are also falling and they no longer guarantee decent life in many European countries. Retirement is a breaking point in a variety of ways: psychologically, it is seen as a developmental task, as a longer-term process, or a critical life event (Filipp and Olbrich, 1986), sociologically, the loss of identifying activities points to the loss of self, the loss of worthwhile projects that reflected one's personality, also the loss of the meaning of life (Wijngaarden, Leget and Gossensen, 2015), and primarily as 'a significant cut in their biographies' (Schmidt-Hertha and Rees, 2017) that used to define men more but nowadays, because of their higher levels of employment, strongly defines women, too. Despite all the facts and research and with the clear transformations in social life and the increasingly more present re-definitions of *gender identity* and *gender capital*, politicians and the wider society in many countries (particularly in eastern Europe with no institutionalized pre-retirement programmes etc.) pretend that retirement is not a relevant or noteworthy change.

Krajnc (2016) acknowledges that making new meaning of life is a necessary preparation for a successful transition to retirement. Forcing older people to a social and psychological death after the retirement by not giving them an opportunity to fully experience the new life situation that they are entering can be devastating not only for them, but also for our society and the state (Krajnc, 2016). In their quantitative research study of more than 2.000 interviewees (men and women) aged between 50 and 69 years from Germany, Schmidt-Hertha and Rees (2017) found that satisfaction with the workplace in all stages of the career, positive perception of work and high personal identification with the workplace are crucial elements on the path to retirement or motivation for delaying retirement. This can also be seen facing the newly appearing practices of bridge employment (part-time work before retirement) and re-careering (second career after legal retirement) (Boveda and Metz, 2016). 'Facing a pluralisation of transitions to the after-working phase of life, including different forms of intermediate stages, educational programs to design the transition and the stage of life after work, seems to be more relevant than ever.' (Schmidt-Hertha and Rees, 2017, 51)

Also unpaid work and volunteering can be vital to the quality of older adults' lives, especially if they can find self-realisation in such activities. Numerous longitudinal studies demonstrate a positive impact of volunteering on the quality of life (Moen, Dempster-McClain and Williams, 1992; Musick, Herzog and House, 1999; Van Willigen, 2000), while some studies evaluate it economically (Goth and Småland, 2014), proving that older adults are not only factors in the social development, but also economically relevant supporters and enormously important contributors to the community.

From above presented starting points, ELOA 2019 will study and discuss the following themes:

Theme 1: *Silver productivity and lifelong learning: Re-careering, bridge employment, silver economy, survival strategies, autonomous work/productivity in later life etc.*

Theme 2: *Transitions to retirement: Evaluation of the pre-retirement programs, retirement as a significant cut in senior's biographies, doing retirement¹, etc.*

Besides already defined themes, 10th Conference of the ELOA will merge with the multiplier event of the Erasmus+ project *Old Guys Say Yes to Community*, developed by four partners from the ELOA network.² It will thematise the pluralisation of transition to the after-working life phase with the emphasis on *gender capital* and the need to re-define gender capital in the third and fourth life stage. As revieled by the study *Old Guys Say Yes to Community*, significantly fewer men in the third and fourth life stages than women of the same age realise the importance of lifelong learning and of the advantages of active participation in the community. The low participation rates of older men in organised learning programmes and other free-time activities are evident from a number of research studies (Merriam and Kee, 2014; Schuller and Desjardins, 2007; Tett and MacLachlan, 2007), many of which link this to the men's quality of life, which is lower than the opportunities available to them in their environments otherwise allow (Courtenay, 2000; Golding 2011a, 2011b; Oiffe and Han, 2014). Research also demonstrates that older men marginalise, isolate and alienate themselves more frequently than their female partners (McGivney, 2004; Williamson, 2011; Vandervoort, 2012; Holwerda et al., 2012), that they are more likely to be subjected to loneliness (Wang et al., 2002; Paúl and Ribeiro, 2009) and that they increasingly rely on their wives and life partners, depending on them emotionally as well as in terms of care, etc. (Vandervoort, 2012; Dettinger and Clarkberg, 2002).

Various statistical data, too, confirm that older men are less active than women. The largest discrepancy, in women's favour, in participation in the community programmes of active ageing in the countries monitored by Eurostat found are in Sweden (14%), Denmark (9.9%), Finland (7.7%), Iceland (7%), Estonia (5.5%) and France (4.9%) (Eurostat, 2017). Although men are more active than women in Croatia, Germany, Turkey and Switzerland, the difference is practically negligible (between 0.2 and 0.6%) (Eurostat, 2017) and should be considered from cultural and religious aspects – but mainly through *gender capital*.³ The discrepancy in Slovenia is 3% in women's favour (Eurostat, 2017), but men's participation in

¹ See Wanka et al. 2018

² Erasmus+, Strategic Partnership for Adult Education, agreement number: 16-KA204-021604, case number: KA2-AE-9/16 run by the University of Ljubljana and in collaboration with the Slovenian Association of Adult Educators, the University of Algarve (Portugal), the University of Wrocław (Poland), Tallinn University and the Association of Estonian Adult Educators – ANDRAS (Estonia). The project has been coordinated, since September 2016. The aim of the research was to find out how to improve the participation of older men (aged 60 years or more) in the local community and, in particular, how to encourage older men's socialisation, informal learning and inclusion in the organisations which are not primarily meant for education and learning in the third and fourth life stages

³ According to Huppertz and Goodwin (2013), *gender capital* may be an extremely useful concept for exploring men's and women's movement through occupational social spaces, and thus sheds light on the continuity and reproduction of occupational segregation.

various organised programmes of active ageing is substantially more limited: the average share of men in Activity Day Centres in Ljubljana is 15%, while Adult Education Centres and the Third Age University are similarly perceived as predominantly women's organisations managed by women. The reasons for men's non-participation in the existing activities are, among others, the feminisation of the learning programmes and their staff (Carragher and Golding, 2015; Owens, 2000), the negative perception of their schooling in the past (Mark and Golding, 2012; McGivney, 1999, 2004), the weakening of cognitive and social capital, which is part of the ageing process and which determines men more than women (Merriam and Kee, 2014; Schuller and Desjardins, 2007; Tett and MacLachlan, 2007), etc.

In view of all the reasons it is important to establish why older men in a number of countries, including Slovenia, have been, essentially speaking, excluded as relevant participants in society, because the consequences of their marginalisation are dramatic. The men's exclusion and inactivity in the third and fourth life stages have a significant impact on the quality of their lives, on cognitive and mental capital (Golding, 2011a, 2011b, Foresight Mental Capital and Wellbeing Project, 2008), on emotional well-being (Williamson, 2011) and, of course, most importantly, on their health (Coutenay, 2000; Giles et al., 2005; Golden, Conroy and Lawlor, 2009; Schmidt-Hertha and Rees, 2017). Numerous social factors strongly influence health quality, too. In their meta-analytic review of 148 studies, Holt-Lunstad, Smith and Layton (2010) concluded that individuals with sufficient interpersonal relationships have a 50% increased likelihood of survival compared to those who are lonely.

Among the best examples of men's (self-)organisation and its advantages scientific literature quotes the development of the Men's Sheds mass movement in Australia (Golding, 2015; Golding, Mark and Foley, 2014), which has spread to Ireland, Scandinavia, the USA and Canada. Many researchers of men's sheds have demonstrated, similarly to the findings of the *Old Guys* project, that men need (self-organised) spaces in which they can substitute for the lack of performance (the 'career of male domination') that is so important to them. There they can overcome the fear of having to prove themselves (again) and/or admit to not having their previous roles and adapt to the new ones (Gregorčič, Jelenc Krašovec, Radovan and Močilnikar, 2018). Most of all, however, they can mutually strengthen their mental capital – in addition to the already emphasised positive aspects of active ageing (Lum and Lightfoot, 2005; Ybarra et al., 2008; Williamson, 2011), the sense of belonging and the community (Goth and Småland, 2014), they can empower one another and, last but not least, prove to themselves that they are still needed and valued in contemporary society (Gottlieb and Gillespie, 2008).

The scientific and professional research suggests the need for men's clubs, men's sheds, men's spaces and activities, men's counselling centres and even safe houses where men can socialise with each other (Reynolds, Mackenzie, Medved and Roger, 2015) and mutual support and where they can self-organise and redefine *masculine capital* to achieve older men's empowerment, etc. (Hanlon, 2012; Ribeiro, Paúl and Nogueira, 2007; Carragher and Golding, 2015; Huppertz and Goodwin, 2013; Jelenc Krašovec and Radovan, 2014). Additionally, in many countries instead of developing plurality of transitions to retirement with part-time or occasional employment, older adults are forced to work illegally because of poverty and adopt other survival strategies. Various studies indicate numerous ways of being

an old guy in contemporary societies as well as many tendencies towards a redefinition of *gender capital*, work (employment) and retirement.

From above presented outlines of the *Old Guys* project, ELOA 2019 will study and discuss the following themes:

Theme 3: Re-defining masculine and feminine capital after the retirement and the importance of learning, doing and creating for mental health

Theme 4: The role of community participation and engagement after the retirement

Academic contributions addressing one or more of the topics mentioned above are cordially welcome.

Prepared by dr. Marta Gregorčič & dr. Bernhard Schmidt-Hertha

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Conference themes

Theme 1: *Silver productivity and lifelong learning:* Re-careering, bridge employment, silver economy, survival strategies, autonomous work/productivity in later life etc.

Theme 2: *Transitions to retirement:* Evaluation of the pre-retirement programs, retirement as a significant cut in senior's biographies, doing retirement, etc.

Theme 3: Re-defining masculine and feminine capital after the retirement and the importance of learning, doing and creating for mental health

Theme 4: The role of community participation and engagement after the retirement

Important dates

15 January 2019 Submission of abstracts

15 February 2019 Acceptance of abstracts confirmed

20 February 2019 Registration

10 April 2019 Final papers must be submitted

10-11 May 2019 Conference in Ljubljana, Slovenia

Organisation

This conference is organised by the Department of Educational Sciences, Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, in cooperation with Old Guys Say Yes to Community (Erasmus+ project) (<http://oldguys.splet.arnes.si/>); Slovenian Third Age University (<http://www.utzo.si/en/>); Slovenian Adult Education Association; Electronic Platform for Adult Learning in Europe, EPALE (<https://ec.europa.eu/epale/>); CMEPIUS (<https://eng.cmepius.si/>); the ESREA research network “Education and Learning of the Older Adults”.

Programme (*draft version attached*)

Call for papers and workshops

The abstract should be maximum 500 words long and include a title and 4 keywords. Please send a separate file with the author(s) name(s), institutional affiliation and contact details, indicating which authors are going to be present at the conference. If you want to propose a workshop, please use the file containing the authors' data to state the requirements of space, facilities or equipment that would be needed. Groups of authors willing to organise round-tables/symposiums should contact the organisation prior to submitting the abstract.

All abstracts should be submitted by email to Marta Gregorčič (marta.gregorcic@ff.uni-lj.si) and Meta Furlan (meta.furlan@ff.uni-lj.si) by 15 January 2019. Acceptance of papers/workshops will be confirmed by 15 February 2019. If accepted for presentation, final versions of papers (no more than 6,000 words including references) must be submitted by 10 April 2019, also via email. Please use Times New Roman, 12 and the APA (American Psychological Association) reference system, 6th edition.

Conference fees (*will be defined in 3 weeks*)

The method of payment will be explicit in the second call for papers/register form.

Conference fee includes the digital Conference Proceedings and refreshments only for the first day of the conference (10th of May). **The second day (11th of May) will be fully organised by the project *Old Guys Say Yes to Community* (Erasmus+) and free of fees!**

ESREA offers two bursaries of 250 € each for PhD students attending the conference, provided they contribute with a paper. To be eligible to apply, students need to be ESREA members (individual or institutional membership). PhD students should declare their willingness to apply when sending the final version of paper. In this case, the email should be addressed to marta.gregorcic@ff.uni-lj.si and meta.furlan@ff.uni-lj.si, but also to Bernhard Schmidt-Hertha - bernhard.schmidt-hertha@uni-tuebingen.de PhD students are to use the bursary money in expenses related to this conference (accommodation, flight, etc.) up to the

limit of 250 €.

ESREA will refund these expenses against the presentation of receipts. PhD students willing to apply to this bursary are therefore advised to do it earlier.

For conference information please do not hesitate to contact us:

Marta Gregorčič (marta.gregorcic@ff.uni-lj.si) & Meta Furlan (meta.furlan@ff.uni-lj.si)

VENUE

10th of May 2019 ELOA conference will take place at the Faculty of Arts, University of Ljubljana, Aškerčeva cesta 2, Ljubljana, Slovenia

11th of May 2019 (ELOA – Old Guys Say Yes to Community, Erasmus+) conference will take place at the old power station, Slomškova 18, Ljubljana, Slovenia

The city of Ljubljana

Ljubljana is the political and cultural heart of the Slovenian nation. It is an important European commercial, business, exhibition and congressional centre as well as the transport, science and education centre of Slovenia.

In Ljubljana the old meets the new; and it seems that history has spent all of the settlement's five millennia preparing it to become the nation's capital. It has managed to retain traces from all periods of its rich history; from the legacy of Roman Emona; through to the Renaissance, Baroque and Art Nouveau periods characterised in the house fronts and ornate doorways of the city centre, the romantic bridges adorning the Ljubljanica river, the lopsided rooftops and a park reaching deep into the city centre. Here eastern and western cultures met; and the Italian concept of art combined with the sculptural aesthetics of Central European cathedrals.

The city owes its present appearance partly to Italian baroque and partly to Art Nouveau, which is the style of the numerous buildings erected immediately after the earthquake of 1895. In the first half of the 20th century, modern Ljubljana was shaped by the strong personal style of Jože Plečnik, a great European architect and a local of Ljubljana. The cityscape was complemented by his modernist followers as well as by creations of the "New Wave" of acknowledged young architects. All the different facets of Ljubljana blend harmoniously into a single image. Please check this [website](#), ask in your hotel or visit the tourist information office for further information. Download brochure [EN](#), [SI](#).

Travelling to Ljubljana

The country's main airport, [Ljubljana Jože Pučnik Airport](#), is 26 kilometres away from Ljubljana. It serves flights to most of Europe's major airports.

From Ljubljana Jože Pučnik Airport to the main railway and bus station

By shuttle:

- [GoOpti](#)

Phone: +386 1 320 45 30

Price to the city centre: 9€ (also offers low cost transfers to other airports)

- [MARKUN](#)

Phone: + 386 41 792 865

Email: info@markun-shuttle.com

Price to the city centre: 9€

By taxi:

- [Airport taxi](#)

Phone: +386 31 216 111

Price to the city centre: 30-40 € per car

By bus:

- [Airport to Ljubljana buses](#)

Price to the central railway station: 4,10 €

- [Ljubljana City Public Transport \(+ map\)](#)

From the main railway and bus station to the University of Arts

The meeting will be located at the University of Arts, Aškečeva 2, 1000 Ljubljana. From the main railway and bus station you can take the city public transport:

- [line 18](#) (direction Center stožice)
- [line 2](#) (direction Nove Jarše)
- [line 27](#) (direction NS Rudnik)
- [line 9](#) (direction Barje)

to the bus station Konzorcij and then get bus [line 1](#) (direction Mestni log) or [line 6](#) (direction Dolgi most) to bus station Aškerčeva or you can take taxi. We recommend [taxi Metro](#), phone +386 80 11 90, email: info@taximetro.si.

Where to stay

There is a vast array of accommodation options in Ljubljana, ranging from hostels to 5-star hotels. Most of them are located in the very city centre, the rest are well connected by city bus or shuttle services. Ljubljana is very popular tourist destination, especially during the summer, therefore prices go up during the summer season. We suggest that you take care of the accommodation issues as soon as possible.

Please find some suggestion below (we recommend that you make reservation through the hotel website):

[Adora Hotel ***](#)

Rožna ulica 7, 1000 Ljubljana

Phone: +386 820 57 240

Email: info@adorahotel.si

[Allegro Hotel ****](#)

Gornji trg 6, 1000 Ljubljana
Phone: +386 59 119 620
Email: info@allegrohotel.si

Best Western Premier Hotel Slon ****

Slovenska cesta 34, 1000 Ljubljana
Phone: +386 1 470 11 70
Email: sales@hotelson.com

Lesar Hotel Angel ****

Gornji trg 7, 1000 Ljubljana
Phone: +386 1 425 50 89
Email: info@angelhotel.si

Vander Urbani Resort ****

Krojaška ulica 6-8, 1000 Ljubljana
Phone: +386 1 200 90 00
Email: info@vanderhotel.com

Art Hotel ***

Soteska 8, 1000 Ljubljana
Phone: +386 1 252 68 00
Email: arthotel@mihovec.si

B&B Hotel Ljubljana Park ***

Tabor 9, 1000 Ljubljana
Phone: +386 1 300 25 00
Email: info@hotelpark.si

Hostel Tresor

Čopova ulica 38, 1000 Ljubljana
Phone: +386 1 200 90 60
Email: info@hostel-tresor.si

Hostel Celica

Metelkova 8, 1000 Ljubljana
Phone: +386 1 230 97 00
Email: info@hostelcelica.com

Where to eat

Ljubljana has a wide and varied choice of a good restaurants. You can choose from traditional gostilna restaurants serving Slovenian cuisine and restaurants offering different international cuisines. We leave some links of where to eat in Ljubljana.

<https://julijarestaurant.com/>

<http://www.prekmurska-gostilna.si/>

<http://www.nagradu.si/en/>

<http://www.sestica.si/en/home/>

<https://www.hotelcubo.com/en/restavracija-cubo/>

<http://www.neboticnik.si/sl/restavracija-10>

<https://www.restavracijaatelje.com/>

<https://www.union-hotels.eu/en/grand-hotel-union/culinary-offer/restaurant-union/>

If you need something else, please do not hesitate and contact us.

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