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**On “EURAG’s membership and what to offer”**

(Draft as of 17 February 2021)

EURAG has been founded in 1962 by personalities from different European countries involved in work for older persons – in associations and institutions – with the main objective to create a network for exchange of experiences, ideas and good practices in order to improve their respective work through mutual information and cooperation.

*Today EURAG’s mission is “to promote social, economic and cultural developments in society which raise the recognition of the value and the contributions of older persons, to improve their integration in society, to reinforce the prevention of any kind of adverse discrimination on grounds of age, to improve the living and working conditions and the quality of life of older persons through the full development of their potential by creating the necessary enabling and supportive environment offering appropriate training opportunities and self-determined retirement flexibility. EURAG also presses for effective policies and measures having the objective of enabling older persons to lead, as far as possible, an independent life.”*

EURAG has presently members of various categories in 28 European countries and many additional personal and institutional contacts also in other countries and regions.

The following categories of membership and partnership relations have to be distinguished:

- Organisational members – like associations/institutions of older persons or working for them
- Individual members – like older persons or persons interested in ageing matters, researchers, etc
- Partners which are benefitting from EURAG’s services – like memory training, etc
- Political institutions which are interested in getting advice and information from EURAG
- Friends who sympathise with the objectives and the work of EURAG – but are not members

It is clear that all these various interested actors have also different needs, objectives or expectations – and can themselves make different contributions - which determine the extent and the quality of their relationship with EURAG. This has carefully to be taken into account – and further developed in a modulated manner according to the listed different target groups.

What EURAG can effectively offer to its members, partners and friends are, in general, the following:

- Statutory meetings in which members can debate and decide on internal organisational and financial issues, objectives, programme developments, elect office holders, and alike business
- Conferences on topical issues, with internal and external contributions, exchange of experiences and other information, leading to important findings and recommendations to decision-makers
- Sessions of memory training for individuals as well as qualification of trainers in this field – and this in various countries and on demand
- Support of organisational members in their efforts to influence policy-making processes in their respective country by offering politico-strategic contributions to national conferences, and alike
- Information and advice to national and international political bodies and administrations concerning living conditions, needs, problems and demands of older persons
- Orientations and proposals to policy makers on how to better develop policies, legislation, strategies and programmes for the improvement of the situation of older persons in many areas
- International exchange of age-related persons, literature and information – including support of cooperation networks and alliance building.

Additional areas and forms of information and cooperation are still to be developed by EURAG in order to respond to new needs of older persons, of the political bodies, of market actors and of society at large. Among these external relations approaches and initiatives can be mentioned, just as examples:

- Proactive steps to attract decision-makers in ageing matters to topical conferences
- Appraisal of ageing policies and strategies from the point of view of older persons
- Strategic advice to urban and regional planners on needs and capacities of older person
- Offers of co-production to producers of goods and services for older persons
- Evaluation of public services on the value for and usability by older persons
- Testing of new technological devices for their acceptability by older persons
- Development of health, nutrition or positive behaviour information for older persons
- Etc., etc.

Such measures, council and products can certainly be marketed and consequently generate income for EURAG to finance its internal activities.

The present draft is meant to serve as a starting contribution for an in-depth discussion on a strategy for the future development of EURAG.

It simply calls on the imagination of colleagues to think about opportunities and all reasonable possibilities to adapt the association to the demands of the present changes in society – and to come up with creative, innovative proposals ensuring the ongoing success of EURAG.

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Dirk Jarré, President of EURAG