

NEWSLETTER

February 2022

Editorial

The last two years have seen major disruptions to outdoor learning as school and youth groups have been restricted in their outdoor and residential experiences. In some countries outdoor provision has dramatically decreased with the loss of outdoor centres, leaders and support staff.

EOE has adapted to these uncertain times; we had to postpone our planned conference in Marburg, Germany but we were able to present a series of inspirational webinars with ideas for outdoor activities during Covid times. The webinars have raised the voice of younger members and their views on future directions for outdoor learning. Exchanges and projects have continued, see for example Breo's story and the multinational Elidna project. Let's hope we can build on the creativity and positive changes and continue to find new ways of thinking and living.

Geoff Cooper, February 2022.



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Three Webinars.

Despite having to postpone our face to face meetings and conferences during Covid times the EOE Board was keen to continue our interactions and exchange of ideas through video links and webinars.

The first webinar on the theme of “**Children and Nature – The child’s eye view of nature and how to encourage it,**” was held in November 2020. There were three presentations:

1. “Dawdling, nature through the eyes of a child, based on the recent ENOC project and handbook” by Tanja Liimatainen, from Metsäkartano Outdoor Centre, Finland
2. “Direct experience and observation skills of children in nature as a basis for the development of early science education” by Dr. Gregor Torkar, University in Ljubljana, Slovenia
3. “Why are we afraid of nature?” by Bartek Guentzel, from Droga do Lasu, Poland



The second webinar “What to do outdoor during Covid?” was held in March 2021

1. Sabina Stopar and Teja Gosenar from CŠOD, Slovenia gave a presentation on “How to encourage school groups to do outdoor activities during distance learning”
2. Nik Elvy from Curious School of the Wild, U.K. told about her work with young people.



The third webinar was held in October 2021, “**Celebrating the achievements of EOE over the last 25 years and looking to the future**”

1. In the first part Prof. Kirsti Pedersen Gurholt (Norway) Yari Kujala (Finland) Prof. Barbara Humberstone (UK) and Prof. Peter Becker (Germany) gave personal reflections on EOE and on how the outdoor field has developed over the last 25 years.

2. In the second part four younger outdoor enthusiasts Josh Bennett (USA & Norway) Paavo Heinonen (Finland), Klaudja Koci (Albania) and Therese Oettl (Germany) shared their personal stories and stated their priorities for outdoor learning in the future.



Fond memories of Jan Neumann.

In quiet sorrow we say goodbye to our founding member, Jan Neumann, who died in April 2021.

Jan was pivotal in the development of Outdoor Education in the Czech Republic after the Soviet withdrawal and a central pillar in the degree programme at Charles University. In 1994 Jan and Charles University in Prague organised a conference on the topic of "Outdoor Activities", which helped to establish the EOE. As a committed and always curious colleague, Jan not only co-founded the EOE Institute but also worked actively on the Board from 1996 to 2000. During this time he also hosted the EOE Board meetings several times and brought the Board members closer to the culture of the Czech Republic and the beauty of its capital Prague. He was a polite and hospitable person. In the work of the EOE Board and the development of the institute, Jan contributed to the Czech traditions of Outdoor Education and in particular the concept of "Touristika".

We appreciated him as a committed, reliable and always helpful friend and colleague and will hold him in our fond memories.

The Board of the EOE Institute.

EOE on Facebook



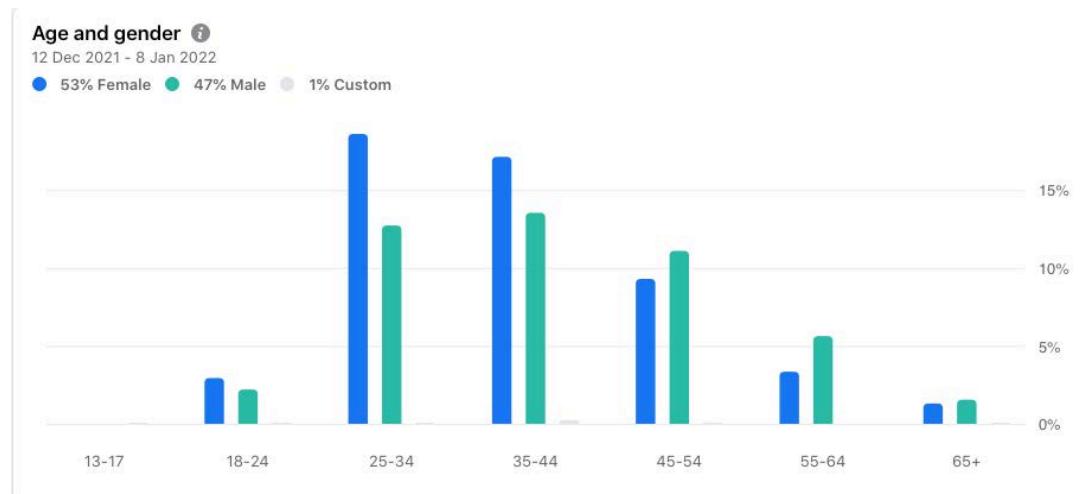
European Outdoor Education Network

Private group · 1.3K members

The closed Facebook group continues to provide a much used and diverse service for those in Europe interested in Outdoor Education. It also has a growing following for overseas especially in Australasia and Africa.

Of the nearly 1,300 members, 55% are active and new posts occur 2 or 3 times a week. For those of you who like to time your posts, most views are early evening during weekdays. If you want to catch the Australasian participants then Friday and weekend mornings is your best slot.

With regard to the diversity of participants the details below reveal a young membership. I wonder if this reflects employment in the field or those more likely to use Facebook? The top five countries are the UK, followed by Ireland, Germany, Finland and Spain (a country where we have yet to hold a conference) with Dublin (Ireland) being the most popular city followed by Oslo (Norway), Helsinki (Finland), Riga (Latvia – that's a surprise – hello Latvia!) and Tralee (Ireland again!). The USA and Australia are the most popular countries beyond Europe taking an interest.



The Group is a closed group so only members see posts and there is no advertising. Applicants are also screened before being admitted.

<https://www.facebook.com/groups/EOENetwork>

And, if you are from Spain, and would be willing to explore holding a conference with us, please get in touch!

Viewpoints

Countries where the olives grow.

In a recent webinar Peter Becker raised an important issue for EOE to consider:

"In the last 25 years the Institute has primarily gathered people and organisations from the northern and north-eastern countries of Europe, where the climate is cold and foggy, where the skies are often grey and you hear the hollow hooting of the tawny owl at night. The Institute did not attract people from countries where the olives grow, where the light is bright and clear, the sky's colour is azure and the nights are starry, a scent of lavender and thyme fills the air and at night the owls do not hoot but the cicadas are chirring.

What is the reason for the slope from North to South? This question opens a large field of speculations of course. Perhaps the life form of the mediterranean Latinité with its feeling for proportion and the middle does not correspond with the activities of the northern concept of the outdoors which is mainly an offspring of modernity, a child of the protestant ethics. "La vie latine connaît ses limites", "Latin life knows its limits." A sentence of Albert Camus, who was familiar with it. Can we learn from this "pensée de midi"? From the Greek concept of contemplation?

In future we should listen and talk to the south. Not from the dominant position of the northern outdoor world but as a partner at eye level. One Outward Bound colonialisation is enough. More in the sense that north and south are doing something together and keep the development open as long as possible for the strange to join in".

A world in transition.

Geoff Cooper writes:

Since the last Newsletter in February 2020 we have faced disruption brought on by the Covid pandemic and freakish weather events causing floods, drought, heat waves and wild fires. There is a dire need to repair our connections with nature, reject our high-energy lifestyles and work for a greener and fairer world. As advocates of outdoor learning should we be more engaged in these bigger questions? Can we present experiences that question our consumerism and show alternative ways of thinking and living that lead to a quality of life in harmony with nature and other peoples on the planet? Are we, through our research and practice, in tune with the needs of younger people and future generations?



Nature Based Economies

Chris Loynes comments on recovery projects in the outdoors:



Outdoor Education (OE) has a new purpose emerging in several European countries. Broadly speaking the outdoors for most people in Europe has become a place of recreation or education. Largely unnoticed, this has helped sustain rural economies that has often been trending in the opposite direction with depopulation, lower paid work and abandoned marginal farmland. Where I live in Cumbria, UK, on the edge of a national park, OE is so prolific it is in the top five of employers in the region providing well paid jobs all year round.

But something new is also emerging that is amplifying this trend. Many rural areas are becoming a focus of nature recovery projects often on a landscape scale. This is creating new employment opportunities. Already, OE is responding with projects to engage local people, who can sometimes turn their backs on the environment around them, in those landscapes. In Wales [The Outdoor Partnership](#) has created a number of jobs as well as a demand for outdoor

ENOC update.

education, recreation and therapy. In Scotland, [the John Muir Trust](#) has piloted a junior ranger programme in secondary schools to develop local advocates for nature and prepare them for the land management and nature-based tourism opportunities ahead.

[Rewilding Britain](#) (RB) and [Rewilding Europe](#) (RE) are advocates for the new opportunities for eco-tourism. RE has expanded its investment and training programmes for business start-ups and RB has undertaken evaluation work that indicates the potential for sustainable new jobs in rural areas. Our partner, [The Center for Innovative Education](#), has been showing how OE can underpin employment opportunities for those harder to employ in nature recovery work. Whilst in the UK, [volunteering in the environment](#) has been shown to be one of the best ways to support people back into work providing personal confidence, a social life and new skills.

Meanwhile, urban areas are not missing out as the trend to bring nature to the people has inspired a growing wave of community projects creating and restoring gardens, parks, paths and reserves in the heart of hyper-urban areas putting nature on the doorstep of those who were previously least likely to encounter it.

Watch out for this trend inspiring the next generation to work in nature as well as play.



The Erasmus + project, “Aesthetic Approaches in Outdoor Learning” was completed in Spring 2020 and the online handbook is available from the EOE website:

<https://www.eoe-network.eu/enoc/>

It presents the theory and practice of Aesthetic Approaches in outdoor learning and represents current thinking and contributions from a range of researchers and outdoor educators.



ENOC has a page on the EOE website: and there is also a Facebook page:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/706196373082997/>

A follow-up article, "Coming to our Senses- Emotional Understanding through the Outdoors" can be found in Horizons, 91, Autumn 2020.



Co-funded by the
Erasmus+ Programme
of the European Union



Erasmus+-Project “Early Language Development in Nature (ELaDiNa)” (9/2020-9/2023)

In the ELaDiNa project, the two important topics for early education, language promotion on the one hand and nature experiences on the other hand, are brought together to develop a new practical approach. From the perspective of language promotion, a field of learning is taken up that has hardly been considered so far: open natural



spaces. From the perspective of nature education approaches, the focus is on something that has so far received only incidental attention: the opportunities of being outdoors for language-promoting processes. The focus is on the language development of children at the age of 3-7 years. At this age, children take fundamental steps in phonetics and grammar as well as in the development of vocabulary. In addition to the family, it is day care centres, preschools and primary schools that have a significant influence on language development.

ELaDiNa starts here as a qualification project for pedagogical professionals - in international cooperation, which is due to connections within the EOE network. As an international project, ELaDiNa aims to look beyond national educational approaches.

The promising experiences and expertise that the partner organisations have gathered and built up in the field of nature education and language support in recent years are brought into an intensive exchange. The project has been developed and is carried out by the following partner institutions: CŠOD (Slovenia), National Education Institute Slovenia (Slovenia), Jönköping University (Sweden), City of Marburg (Germany), bsj Marburg (Germany). Now, 40 pedagogical professionals from Sweden, Slovenia and Germany are dedicated to the question of how diverse speech and communication occasions arise in natural spaces and how they can be meaningfully taken up and deepened.



In September 2021, Slovenian "Učitelji and vzgojitelji", Swedish "Lärare" and German "Erzieherinnen, Erzieher und Lehrerinnen" gathered

in a joint training near Marburg, Germany, got to know each other, moved together and intensively dealt with the topic "Language Development in Nature". Although it is called "training", ELaDiNa is not just a transfer of knowledge, but a circulation of knowledge, an exchange of ideas and a development of a practical approach. In the event, which was conducted by Carla Sack (City of Marburg) and Martin Vollmar (bsj Marburg), the content-related foundations for the practical phase of the project were laid. Starting from the question of how children's language development works and can be understood, the training focused on the language-promoting opportunities that spending time with children in natural spaces can offer. The international group of professionals from day-care centres, preschools and primary schools used the late summer days in the bsj outdoor centre Weidenhausen near Marburg for practical exercises as well as theoretical reflections and deepening. The colleagues dealt, for example, with narrated adventures and telling stories, language-intensive dialogues when discovering unknown natural things and phenomena, and various methods of language-promoting interaction. All of this will now be implemented in the coming months and years in Slovenian, Swedish and German day-care centres, preschools and primary schools with the help of



The education itself exceeded our expectations, as it was carried out superbly. Our hosts and lecturers Carla and Martin, who were very hospitable, gave us a lot of practical experience, which was also very well supported by theory. Ana Šoba and Barbara Ajdinović, from Slovenia

video-based project support. A joint "roadmap" with tasks and suggestions for practice will lead to Sweden in September 2022, where another joint training will take place for all participants. All phases of the project will be extensively evaluated. ELaDiNa will also produce practical and theoretical manuals reflecting the joint development work.

EU project card:

<https://ec.europa.eu/programmes/erasmus-plus/projects/eplus-project-details/#project/2020-1-SI01-KA201-075971>

Martin Vollmar, bsj Marburg

I like the fact that my personal forest, language and pedagogy backpack gets a bit fuller with every meeting of the ELaDiNa group and that I can put more and more different tools into it that help me to be a little more precise, a little more supportive and a little more professional in everyday life.

Ines Dietrich, from Germany

The most important new knowledge I will bring with me from the training event is the use of nature when working with storytelling and children's fantasy.

Thina Strid, from Sweden

Lifelong Outdoor Enthusiasts.

EOE conferences are great places to share ideas and follow up interests. Over the years there have been many examples of joint projects arising from conversations. Three EOE members from the UK, Prof. Barbara Humberstone, Di Collins and Geoff Cooper have developed a project based on the experiences and interests of older outdoor enthusiasts. They collected narratives from 32 participants over the age of 65 who have been engaged in outdoor activities throughout their lifespan. From findings it is clear that early childhood outdoor experiences have had a strong influence on the development of their interests, activities and attitudes to the outdoors. The research also showed how the participants have adapted their activities to mental and physical changes they face with ageing.



Some of the preliminary findings can be found at:

Collins, D., Cooper, G., & Humberstone, B. (2021) The impact of childhood experiences on ageing outdoor enthusiasts. *Horizons*, 93, 25–27.

Nordic Master of Outdoor Studies (Friluftsliv Studier) (NOFRI)

The two-year Nordic Master in Outdoor Studies (Friluftsliv) is run jointly by four leading Nordic universities: University of Southeast Norway (USN) (coordinator), Norwegian School of Sport Sciences (NIH), The Swedish School of Sport and Health Sciences (GIH), and Hólar University College, Iceland.

Application is available for students from European and Nordic countries who have a bachelor's degree in sports, physical education or outdoor education. Other students can also apply, for example, students with a BA in the social sciences, or the humanities.

The programme is organised around three semesters taught in Stockholm, Sweden (GIH), Bø in Telemark, Norway (USN/NIH), and Hólar, Iceland. In the fourth semester, the students conduct their

master thesis supervised by professors at four universities. The students receive a joint Master's Diploma in Outdoor Studies on completion.

The programme emphasises the socio-cultural and education perspectives of Friluftsliv/Outdoor studies and nature-based tourism. NOFRI offers the students two years of high quality, cross-border and cross-disciplinary studies in the cultures and practices of Nordic Friluftsliv. The first run of the program started in 2020.

To apply for the program, here: <https://www.usn.no/english/academics/find-programmes/nordic-master-in-friluftsliv-studies/nordic-master-in-friluftsliv-studies-outdoor-studies-1>.

Application deadlines: EU citizens before March 1st 2022, citizens in the Nordic countries before April 15th 2022. Contact persons: Kirsten Wieland Houe, USN houe@usn.no and Kirsti Pedersen Gurholt, Dr, professor, NIH kirsti.gurholt@nih.no



When you are feeling Slovenia-experiences of a Spanish outdoor teacher

Decisions usually need bravery as they always come with unexpected factors that are often out of your control. But making decisions guides both, personal and professional growth. I have always loved the outdoors. My childhood's best moments took place surrounded by nature; in my village, while doing sports, playing, walking, just observing or writing, but always learning. I thought that "the outdoors" was the best possible classroom. Being flexible was a must if you wanted to start a new adventure. You were free to try, and making mistakes was "allowed" as long as you were aware of the possible consequences. Perhaps, this way of doing things has helped me choose certain paths in my life.

In 2011, I went to work in Switzerland. It was my first international teaching experience, the first experience of a proper outdoor learning approach and the concept of "Outdoor Education". La belle Switzerland and its Alps, together with all the challenging and surprising experiences I encountered, became a turning point in my life. I had found what I wanted to do.

After four years of working in an international school in Sweden as a Physical and Health Education teacher, I decided on further study to boost my career. Dr Uxío Otero Urtaza, the coordinator of the Master's in Outdoor Education at the Santiago de Compostela University and one of my former professors, encouraged me to join the programme. It is the only Master's related to Outdoor Learning in the South of Europe and it ended up being a wise choice. Then the global pandemic hit us all, and the world shut down. All plans shifted to the background but this reaffirmed the importance of Outdoor Learning and the need for its role in education for society

Although I knew about Slovenia and its leadership in Outdoor Learning, I was not aware of how they had organised it as a country. Sometimes you just miss the important or you find it at the right moment. A simple and clear email opened the door of CŠOD (Center šolskih in obšolskih dejavnosti, or The National Centre for School and Outdoor Learning). Luckily, my profile matched and collaboration began with the University of Ljubljana.

As an assistant researcher, in collaboration with CŠOD and Dr Gregor Torkar, I have visited 10 out of the 25 Slovenian Outdoor Learning Centres that are coordinated by CŠOD. There are two main academic objectives: Connections between Outdoor Learning & Physical Education throughout CŠOD Sports Programmes and Approaches to learning through activities and their outcomes.

For almost four months I shadowed and participated in CŠOD activities, mostly related to sports but also to natural science and social studies, all of them connected to the Slovenian curriculum. The qualitative research used mixed methods. CŠOD has been operating for 30 years and one of the goals of this study was to provide evidence of the value of its work to Slovenian youth and to society in general.

However, this is much more than academic research. It is a unique opportunity to be part of a pioneering organisation for Outdoor Learning in Europe, to travel across the whole country, to visit breath-taking places, to gain awareness of historical and cultural traditions and enhance teaching and learning skills in a collaborative way with students and teachers and to go deeper into experiential & enquiry-based learning.

I'd like to mention Irena Kokalj and Domen Uršič. Thank you for giving me the opportunity to understand the true meaning of your slogan. The best classroom will always be outdoors, I learnt that when I was a child.

Breogán Gómez Requejo.



Webinar Series: What can Outdoor Education Do for Society?

Hosted by The University of Cumbria

1. Asia and Australasia 0800 UTC Thursday 5th May 2022
2. The Americas 2100 UTC Monday 9thMay 2022
3. Europe and Africa 1600 UTC Wednesday 11thMay 2022

OE is a ‘many splendored thing’. It is understood as a pedagogy and a subject. It takes place just outside the classroom or and far away in other lands. Any one intervention can last minutes or months. It makes claims for impacts on cognitive, non-cognitive and meta skills and knowledge. It claims to deliver personal, social, environmental and cultural benefits. Over its long history it has arisen independently in various countries and spread from one country to another. It has arisen as a groundswell or movement amongst educators and it has been applied strategically by Governments and educational institutions.

These webinars seek to explore the diversity of purpose, practice and impact from around the world placing these case studies in the context of cultural and social theories. They may form the basis for a round table discussion at 9IOERC in July, and/or further research and exploration by the global OE community.

Supported by The EOE Network and the International Outdoor Education Research Committee.



EOE conference 2022

19th international Conference of the European Institute for Outdoor Adventure Education and Experiential Learning (EOE)

Conference-Theme: Childhood and Nature, 19th - 23th October 2022 in Germany

The 19th Conference of the EOE Network under the Theme “Childhood & Nature” will take place from 19 – 23 October 2022 in Germany/Marburg. Conference registration will be open soon under:

www.bsj-marburg.de/eoe2022.



Invitation for EOE AGM-meeting

Dear Members of the European Institute for Outdoor Adventure Education and Experiential Learning (EOE),

The board of the EOE would like to invite all members to our Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 22 October 2022, (6p.m.). The AGM will be held during the 19th EOE conference in Wolfshausen, Germany.

We are suggesting the following agenda:

1. Welcoming
2. Agreement to the Agenda
3. Report of the Board of the Institute and Discussion
4. Board election
5. Discussion of Future Perspectives and Future Conferences
6. AOB

Marburg, den 02.02.2022

Martin Lindner, Board member (on behalf of the Board of the EOE)

EOE- seminar at Youth Centre Metsäkartano, 4-7th October 2023

Team Finland welcomes you to the EOE-seminar of 2023 to Metsäkartano in Eastern Finland! Our theme is “Well-being and sustainable future”. In Finland there is increasing interest in empowerment and inclusion of young people, sustainable development and environmental responsibility. We'd like to explore how adventurous and experiential methods can be used to empower young people and to strengthen their relationship with nature and environmental policy. How can adventure education contribute to combat feelings of loneliness, social isolation and anxiety caused by the Covid pandemic?

The seminar is held in Metsäkartano youth center.

<http://www.metsakartano.com/en/>

Heli Eischer
Coordinator of the Finnish Adventure Education Network.

