

Farewell to all of you!

Time has come for me to say goodbye to all I have met and worked with during my time in AGE. Having had a rather “sliced” life, changing country of residence fourteen times, I proudly look back at the largest slice of all: the eighteen years I worked for AGE.

When I joined AGE back in 2002, I already knew Eurolinkage and AGE through the Social Platform. AGE had just been established the previous year and was actively recruiting new members. In the secretariat, I joined three colleagues, one of whom was working part-time. Today the Equip’AGE - as we like to call ourselves - has increased fivefold and AGE budget has almost quadrupled.

From the beginning AGE has been a rights-based network of like-minded civil society actors which mission is to advance the rights and interests of older persons at EU level. Over the years, its work has expanded to project work to influence the outcomes of key EU research seeking to develop solutions to empower older persons to live healthier active lives and keep up with the digital transition.

AGE development over these past 18 years is the result of the hard work and dedication of all my past and current colleagues who love what they do and do it so well together! I warmly thank them for having been so patient with me and so responsive to my suggestions, even those which were not so obvious at first sight. I hope that they will remember to never give up as long as they are convinced that what they fight for is the right thing to do because this is what AGE members want.

I also want to warmly thank all members who trusted me and have been so supportive all over these past 18 years, even during turbulent times. Looking back, I feel that it is not only the secretariat which has grown a lot in size and expertise, but also the membership which has become more engaged in AGE work and know better how to “use” AGE work to advance on their own objectives.

Finally, I would also like to wholeheartedly thank all the external stakeholders, colleagues in EU institutions, national ministries, research centres, industry representatives, NGOs and other stakeholders, who have worked with me over almost two decades now. I very much enjoyed engaging with you and hope that your collaboration will continue with my successor Maciej Kucharczyk.

I am confident that the transition will be smooth if all of you continue to support my colleagues and trust them for delivering added value for our ageing European society. We need you all to achieve a more inclusive and resilient EU!

Anne-Sophie Parent, June 2020