



## Candidate's presentation form for EAEA President and Executive Board elections 2023

Please introduce yourself with this form and make your motivation known to the members of EAEA, who will elect the new Executive Board in Zagreb, Croatia on 6 June 2023. We kindly ask you to submit the nomination latest on 30 April 2023 so that we can include it in the EAEA General Assembly papers, to be shared with members in early May. Please note that the information that you include below will be displayed on a dedicated page of the EAEA website.

<b>Full name of the candidate</b>	Oleg Smirnov
<b>Title</b>	Board member
<b>Organisation</b>	Integration and Development Centre for Information and Research
<b>Nominated by</b>	Ukrainian Adult Education Association
<b>Email address (of the member introducing the nomination)</b>	andreev@uaod.org.ua
<b>Running for</b>	<input type="text" value="Board member"/>

**Please upload an ID picture.**



**Please describe your current position.**

I remain involved in activities of several organisations. Being part of the team of the Ukrainian NGO “Integration and Development Centre for Information and Research” (IDCIR), originated in 1997 in Simferopol, I left Crimea in 2014 together with other colleagues. Since 2015 I have been a member of its board, still engaged in the educational activities, especially during the last year, which turned out to be terrible for all Ukrainian people. The organisation’s priority has changed in accordance with the changing needs of Ukrainians, and consists in finding flexible solutions to offer the vital support in the orientation and adaptation of people in need (internally displaced people, unemployed, people under psychological stress, disabled, etc.). The organisation was recognized for its work in previous years: in 2009 the NGO was granted the Max Van der Stoel award for its “contributions to the development of tolerance and understanding in Ukraine”. In 2016 the organisation received the Grundtvig Award. The IDCIR was among the Ukrainian Adult Education Association (UAEA) founders in 2015. Since then I have been involved in the promotion of Lifelong Learning and ALE in Ukraine through productive cooperation with UAEA and being the director of the DVV International country office. This gives an opportunity to influence the growth of the image of ALE in the country, increasing its popularity among the adult population, changing attitudes towards LLL, developing policy documents, and raising steadily professionalization of providers.

**How would you like to contribute to the work of EAEA, based on the experience in your organisation?**

The last year has given us all a lot of new, and often negative, emotions, but at the same time, a lot of new life experience which was acquired during a very short time. War as an extreme crisis situation shows that adult education is not just a fashion trend today, it is a necessity in order to be competitive in the labor market, to be resistant to hostile manipulation and propaganda, sometimes just to survive. I believe that I will be able to bring to the work of EAEA and its member organisations this charge of energy and resilience of Ukrainian people and ALE providers, obtained in a new environment, despite

shelling, alarms, blackouts and other challenges through various short-term training programmes, be it courses of the first aid, media literacy or new professional skills.

I think it is important to continue developing the collaboration of organisations in non-EU countries, which has been intensified in recent years. During two years of deeper involvement in the EAEA's activities, I saw how effective the teamwork of NGOs, educators, scholars and governmental officials can actually be. We have successful advocacy campaigns that have led to the development and adoption of legislative documents (e.g. approval of the AE law in the first reading by the Parliament of Ukraine). This is an opportunity for all of us to pay more attention to the development of various networking initiatives to influence the capacity building of the organisations themselves and strengthen their ability to influence local authorities.

### **What are your motivations as a candidate?**

My personal motivation today is based on the support I felt during the last year from communication with other Board members, with many representatives of the association's member organisations. I have learned many things that have helped me to live through, resist and cope with the stress. I feel that I know that a constant commitment to learning can help many people who are in difficult situations.

I am driven by the motivation to influence the development of new European policies in the field of adult education, which would make it possible to attract more European resources for joint initiatives of organisations from non-EU countries and to have a greater influence on the formation of stable networks of non-formal education in these countries. Strong civil societies in many countries of the region is one of the last decades' achievements that plays a significant role now.

I also see the potential of NGOs in the countries of the Eastern Partnership and the Western Balkans, and how this experience, often gained in unfavourable harsh conditions, can be useful for all members of the Association, and can be intensified within the framework of inter-regional cooperation.

### **What other information would you like to share with EAEA members?**

I would like to take this opportunity to thank all NGOs and educational institutions united by EAEA which during the last year in every possible way supported, provided food and housing, and trained our citizens who were forced to move to other countries. You have truly proven how much education can do.