

EUROPEAN EPILEPSY DAY 2014

*Epilepsy
is more
than
seizures*



**VITOMIRA
LONČAR**

Actor

CROATIA

**I had two seizures
on stage and then I
realised that it was
the end.....**

10 FEBRUARY 2014
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EUROPEAN EPILEPSY DAY

Vita was diagnosed with focal epilepsy at 15 and has been on medication ever since. Her acting career began in 1977 and from 1989 to 1997 she also had a daily live show on national TV, in addition to stage and film work. However, her career took a change of direction when she began having seizures caused by stage lighting (photosensitive epilepsy).

“I had my last opening in autumn 2004. I had two seizures on stage and then I realised that it was the end...” But while the curtain closed on one career, Vita sought new opportunities. Aged 47, “when no-one believed in me”, she began PhD studies and became a scientist. She is still the only actor in Croatia with a PhD. Today she focuses on stage production; runs her private theatre; and is assistant professor at the Music academy of Zagreb.

“When I came ‘out of the shadows’, my daughter was 12. School kids were cruel to her. She was also stigmatised because I was on the front page of magazines. In Croatian we have a politically incorrect term for people with epilepsy and they called me that. 50% of the population then thought that epilepsy was a psychiatric disease”. Vita says epilepsy stigma remains an issue in Croatia although, personally, she now receives good public support. However she is still the only Croatian celebrity to have gone public with her epilepsy.



MALA SCENA THEATRE
MAKES A DIFFERENCE

**European Advocates for
epilepsy**

Epilepsy
Advocacy
Europe



European Epilepsy Day is organised by Epilepsy Advocacy Europe Task Force,
European Advocates for Epilepsy MEP special interest group,
and by national epilepsy associations across Europe