

Dear Members of ESU,
Dear friends,

The end of the year is a period of contemplation about what happened over the previous twelve months, but also a moment to look forward to what the next year will bring. I would therefore like to use this opportunity and address how the ESU operated in order to achieve our common goals and to outline which important events lay ahead of us.

2018 was a tremendously interesting year with plenty of meetings with our Presidium, Executive Committee and national members. We are grateful to have participated in the inspiring regional conferences in Aachen and Vilnius, the 9th Summer Academy in Vienna and the Symposium on 'Inclusive Governance for Sustainable Democracy' in Brussels and the successful EPP Congress in Helsinki.

But, as has been said, let's also look to the future. 2019 will be an extremely important year for our European project. With the upcoming European elections in mind, we will intensify our presence among the people and continue to advocate for seniors' rights at all government levels. Our Memorandum will be used as the cornerstone of our ambitions for the EPP Manifesto towards the elections. Furthermore, we will strive for an even stronger cooperation with our national members and other EPP associations in order to underline the importance of seniors in European policies. In that regard, we are looking forward to our Executive Committee in Prague (22nd-24th February), the Regional Conference in Bozen (20th-23rd March), the Regional Conference in Madrid (April) and the European Day of Inter-generational Solidarity (29th April). During these events, we will bring together people from all over Europe to exchange stories, thoughts and ideas. Only together, we will be able to deliver a great campaign and successful elections!

Apart from taking stock of last year and looking to the future, the Christmas period needs to be a celebration of hope, love and understanding among all people. We would therefore like to express our gratitude to everyone involved in all seniors' organisations around Europe. Together we build on a better future for all!

We wish you all the best for the coming year. May your world be filled with warmth, health and good cheer this Holy season, and throughout the year.

Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year,

Guido Dumon
Secretary-General

An Hermans
President