

DRAFT PRESS RELEASE



Europe's Recovery: building the future of fair and resilient societies - including all generations

The COVID-19 worldwide health crisis concerned all and everyone. Older persons faced a significant risk of developing a severe COVID-19 contamination. ESU wants to call on all governments and stakeholders to work together for a resilient recovery for all generations.

The ESU urges that older persons' human rights must be protected on an equal basis with others; advanced age should never by itself be a criterion for excluding persons from specialised care. Fighting discrimination and abuse of older persons involves fighting ageism as a structural factor of stereotyping. Adapted social support and smart efforts to reach older persons could – and can – help older persons to maintain the feeling of 'being part of a community' and diminish the risk of social isolation.

It is time to improve the Europe-wide coordination and to support the member states to strengthen their systems in the field of public health. Taking into account the challenge of a growing demand for sufficient, accessible, good quality and affordable health and long-term care services as enshrined in the European Pillar of Social Rights. Our societies need health, social and long-term care systems that provide individualised support to older persons, while promoting their full inclusion in the community. Therefore, we call for the integration of long-term care in the Social Scoreboard indicators, feeding into the preparation of the Country Reports in the context of the European Semester. It complements the more qualitative assessment of economic and social challenges across the EU.

All generations count the same and must be heard in the upcoming process of European recovery. Therefore we recommend that all social, economic and humanitarian responses must take the needs of seniors fully into account. Initiatives for healthy ageing and life-long learning including digital skills need to be boosted and rural depopulation combined with an ageing population require ambitious investments to attract the youth, create jobs and make rural areas vibrant while also developing adapted services for all generations. Seniors are and want to be part of all areas of society. The crisis has highlighted, again, the power and importance of solidarity. "Life time healthy ageing" concerns all generations.

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