

Dear Colleagues,
Dear Friends,

I hope you have started the new year healthy and well and that we are being able to put our shoulders to a new dynamic year. The year 2022 was another tumultuous year, marked by several events that affected our societies and our daily live. We will remember 2022 as the year of the return of territorial war in Europe. Its destruction, the flow of refugees, but also the courage and determination of countless Ukrainians, left its mark on European public opinion. In this critical situation, we expect European policymakers to work together to provide transparent and adequate answers to the many challenges. Only in building together common and sustainable perspectives, Europe can protect its citizens and ensure a secure future.

We thank you for your loyalty and look forward to meeting you in 2023.

An Hermans
President ESU

16-19.10.2022: European Seniors' Union's visit to Strasbourg, and in particular to the Council of Europe

The history of Europe and the history of Strasbourg: intertwined

From 16 to 19 November, members of the ESU Presidium were able to discover this in a unique way. We could discover the city's history, but also get to know the Council of Europe and European Court of Human Rights. Although there was no session of the European Parliament, we got a clear picture of its functioning.

Study-day on 'THE COUNCIL OF EUROPE: Guardian and promoter of Human rights'

On 18 November 2022, a delegation of the European Seniors' Union undertook a study visit to the Council of Europe in Strasbourg. Mr Patrick Penninckx, Head of the Information Society Department, welcomed our delegates. Mr Penninckx introduced the institutional structure, decision-making processes and relations with other institutions of the Council of Europe. The agenda further included an exchange on the role of the European Court of Human Rights in monitoring respect for human and civil rights and freedom, the role of the Secretariat of the Steering Committee for Human Rights on the promotion of the human rights of older persons, the activities of the Media and Internet Division on freedom of expression and information in the digital age and related challenges, and the activities of the Division of Cooperation on Freedom of Expression on the impact of the war in Ukraine on the Council of Europe.



For more information, check out our [website](#)¹

24.01.2023: A new EU healthcare strategy Video conference with Sirpa Pietikäinen (MEP)

On 24 January 2023, the ESU executive committee was invited to a video conference. Besides some information on ongoing ESU initiatives, the meeting focused on the new European care strategy. Both childcare and long-term care received new European guidelines. We focused only on long-term care.

Although Care is primarily a Member States' competence, the EU can play an important role in promoting and stimulating policies for the senior generation.

More information is available on our [website](#).²



¹ <http://esu-epp.eu/events/the-council-of-europe-guardian-of-human-rights/>

² <http://esu-epp.eu/events/a-new-eu-healthcare-strategy-video-conference-with-sirpa-pietikainen/>

The AI Act: an EU flagship to regulate Artificial Intelligence.

In April 2021 the European Commission presented a long-awaited proposal to regulate the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). The aim was to offer a regulatory model for limiting the potentially risky application of AI and providing democratic oversight on the rollout of advanced technologies. Almost two years following the proposal, EU co-legislators have yet to reach an agreement. The Council has already adopted its position, while the European Parliament is still expected to agree on its position. There are still disagreements between European lawmakers about protecting fundamental rights, as well the necessary obligations for providers and users of high-risk AI systems.

The EU Council is the first co-legislator to finish the first step of the legislative process, with the European Parliament due to finalise its version around March 2023.

Link :

[Regulatory framework proposal on artificial intelligence | Shaping Europe's digital future \(europa.eu\)](#)

Do you have interests regarding Artificial Intelligence, the way it affects our lives?

AI will play an increasing role in our lives in the future. It is essential that we all try to understand this technology and its impact on our present and future lives. Geertrui Mieke De Ketelaere, one of the keynote speakers at the ESU 2021 Summer Academy in Vienna, has written a book '[Wanted: Human-AI translators. Artificial Intelligence Demystified](#)³', very comprehensible for non-technical people and translated into several languages. It is a perfect introduction and answer to everyday questions.



³ <https://www.pelckmansuitgevers.be/wanted-human-ai-translators.html#gref>

DRAFT Meeting calendar 2023

12 January 2023	Presidency meeting - Video Conference	
24 January 2023	Executive Committee - Video Conference <i>"EU Care strategy"</i>	
24 March 2023	Presidency meeting	Leuven (BE)
24-26 March 2023	Executive Committee meeting	Leuven (BE)
20 April 2023	Regional Conference (NL – DE)	Maastricht (NL)
April 2023	Working group <i>"Solidarity with Ukraine"</i> (?)	tbc
29 June 2023	Presidency meeting	Vienna ?
29 June-1 July	Summer Academy	Vienna ?
23 Nov. 2023	Presidency meeting	(venue tbc)
24 Nov. 2023	Executive Committee meeting <i>"Looking ahead to the EU elections"</i>	(venue tbc)