

Dear Colleagues and friends,

Our society is still slowly and cautiously trying to find a way out of these strange times. We hope that finally a 'new time' can dawn that will bring back the dynamics of 'normal life'. We are still unable to plan our ESU activities for the coming months with any certainty. In this Newsletter we announce some activities that we hope to be able to realise. In addition, you can read about the events of the last few weeks. We are sure that you enjoyed a festive Easter period.

Easter is a symbol of hope and new life, overcoming our daily sorrow and pain. May values of respect for everyone, solidarity and mercy with vulnerable people guide us when we take up our engagement for inclusive societies.

We wish you a pleasant reading & happy Easter!

An Hermans
ESU President



[Launch of our 2020 annual report](#)

[The era of digitalization - ESU video conference on 23 March](#)

[Older persons and digital inclusion in today's information society. \(ESU-statement\)](#)

[April 20th: EU Health EN verwijzing naar EPP EU Health zie op de uitnodiging](#)

[April 29th: European Day on Solidarity between Generations](#)

['Mein Leben als Frau in der Politik' - Astrid Lulling](#)

[Upcoming event 1-3 July Summer Academy](#)

1. Launch of our 2020 annual report

For ESU too, 2020 was an unforeseen year, our annual report gives an overview of how we learned from this abnormal year and how we tried to overcome the obstacles. We are pleased to present the annual report at our ESU executive meeting on 23 March 2021.

Read our Annual report here: [2020: an unprecedented year.](#)



ESU
Annual Report 2020

2. The era of digitalization - ESU video conference on 23 March



How to participate in today's digital society? Which are the opportunities for older persons? Is the 'digital society' taking into account the 'competences and skills' of older persons and their rights to participate in society? How to create 'room for all generations' in this information society?

To introduce us to and give us insight into the opportunities and risks of today's 'Digital Society', we have invited as keynote speaker: **Patrick Penninckx**, Head of the Information Society Department at the Council of Europe.

Read more about this event and find the presentations of our speakers on [our website](#).

3. “Older persons and digital inclusion in today’s information society.” (ESU-statement)

The European Seniors’ Union, welcomed recent European policy initiatives promoting and supporting digitalization, including the **participation of all in the developing digital era**. ESU and its member associations are ready to take their responsibilities and act as active partners in the policy processes on digitisation. They call on the EU, governments at different levels, stakeholders and all those involved in promoting the participation of all in the digital age not only to emphasise the principle of inclusion, but also to take operational initiatives to remove the barriers faced by seniors and to invest in all kinds of processes to facilitate access and participation in the digital society. ESU calls for Europe-wide awareness-raising campaigns and pilot projects to make seniors understand that digitisation and participation in digitisation are "gateways to the world" that cannot be missed. You can find our statement on our [website](#).

As announced in the statement, we have sent this to various policy makers and stakeholders and will continue to push for the access and participation of seniors in the digital society. Our member associations are also making efforts in this regard.

As a follow-up to our video conference and our statement on inclusion in digitisation, we intend to continue our work and make "digitisation" the central focus of the Summer Academy. Our Austrian colleagues from the ÖSB have proposed setting up an ‘internal exchange group’ of the ESU. You will certainly hear about it very soon.

4. April 20th: A European Health Union in the making? ESU- video Conference.



The new realities of the current health crisis have increased the focus on health policy at the European level at EU level. COVID-19 has demonstrated that we must put health much more at the core of European politics. The EPP Group calls for the rapid implementation of a European Union for Health. Check out their [position paper on health](#).

How can we implement the lessons we learnt from the pandemic, giving healthcare a higher priority in the recovery policy, placing health policy at the centre of our priorities, addressing the health and care needs of older persons? We will get insights into this important issue at our video meeting on 20 April.

5. April 29th: European Day on Solidarity between Generations

Solidarity: One of the cornerstones of an inclusive, sustainable society.

Solidarity: We needed it in the recent year and months to find medical, economic and social solutions to cope with the pandemic.

Solidarity: We have seen wonderful examples, but also a lack of togetherness, a lack of a common perspective to join forces and move forward together.



As a senior citizens' organisation, 29 April is the perfect time every year to reflect on the concept of solidarity and draw the attention of politicians at European, national, regional and local levels to how the concept of solidarity and cooperation between generations can be rethought. But... Most importantly, let us begin to develop common perspectives together with young people. In 2017, for example, we already met with the younger generation to engage in [intergenerational dialogue](#).

6. 'Mein Leben als Frau in der Politik' - Astrid Lulling



The European Seniors' Union - ESU congratulates ESU vice-president Astrid Lulling. On 25 March Astrid Lulling presented her book: "Mein Leben als Frau in der Politik". Astrid Lulling has a long history in politics, as well at the local and national level as at the European level. She assisted and participated in the unification of Europe during half a century. We

congratulate her with her engagement and we thank her that she continues sharing her experience with the ESU.

'I spent more than 50 years of my life trying to make rights between men and women more equal' - Astrid Lulling

7. Upcoming event 1-3 July Summer Academy



Over a period of 10 years, from 2010 to 2019, we have enjoyed organising our Summer Academy in Vienna, where we have inspired and been inspired by leading figures from senior associations across Europe. Last year in 2020, we 'postponed' the planned Summer Academy, but the uncertain COVID-19 circumstances did not allow us to organise an alternative. For this year 2021, our Austrian colleagues from the ÖSB who are taking the lead on this, are making a first draft and... we are already setting the date. And we are excited to follow our colleagues and prepare the programme together.

We are sure we can offer you a great event, partly digital, partly 'live'.

SAVE THE DATE : 1-3 July 2021.

We hope to be able to send you a first draft of this very special Summer Academy very soon.

* * * * *