



EUROPÄISCHE SENIOREN UNION (ESU)

EUROPEAN SENIORS' UNION (ESU)

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Austria: Seniors' Association in the “Seniors-café”



ÖSB President Ingrid Korosec (right) in conversation with the moderator

Vienna. A promising transmission format has been developed by the channel W24: the “Seniors-café”. In a comfortable café atmosphere, hostess Larissa Putz invites celebrity guests as well as experts to talk about entertainment, travel, health, lifestyle and much more. Performances by invited artists, live piano music as well as the humorous dialogues of the waiters’ duo complete the “Seniors-café”.

Ingrid Korosec, President of the Austrian Seniors' Association (ÖSB), writes: "for me it is very important to show the elderly as they have been for many years: fun-loving, fit, full of energy and willing to participate in society." That's why a broad mix of topics is just right.

The channel W24, receivable nationwide, has up to 60,000 viewers daily and reaches over 1 million households across Austria over the cable networks of UPC, A1 TV, Kable plus, SimpliTV and additionally on R9. And at any time online in the media library of W24.at.

The Seniors' Association is strongly represented in every episode! Ms. Korosec provides current insights into the living conditions of modern senior men and women.

Each episode lasts 30 minutes and will be broadcast first on Sundays (beginning on 4th November) at 9:00 am and repeated at least 7 times over the next few days: Sundays 6:00 pm, Mondays, 12:30 pm, Tuesdays 12:00 pm, Wednesdays 5:30 pm, Thursdays 4:00 pm, Fridays 12.30 and Saturday 16.00. Since the exact transmission times may change, a look at the TV magazine will certainly help, emphasises Ingrid Korosec.

Belgians have chosen

Belgium. On 14th October, municipal and provincial elections took place nationwide across Belgium. Around eight million voters were called to the polls. For the Belgian population voting is compulsory; foreigners residing in Belgium are also eligible to vote but were free to register for the elections. Although regional and federal policies are only partially reflected in the results, some trends are noteworthy.

On the one hand, the leading municipal parties were confirmed nationwide. In Flanders, these are especially the Christian Democrat CD&V and the nationalist N-VA, which is particularly well represented in the Greater Antwerp area. In Wallonia, the Social Democratic Parti Socialiste received the most approval.

On the other hand, one observes a strengthening of the political margins: in Flanders, this concerns the right-wing extremist Vlaams Belang, in Wallonia the extreme left-wing PTB. Nationally, the success of the Greens was most surprising, which is even the strongest force in some Brussels communities.

Source: Belgium country report of the Konrad-Adenauer-Stiftung (excerpt.)

The CD&V is a member of the ESU.

Christian People's Party (CSV) weakened

Luxembourg. There were some surprises in the elections to the Chamber of Deputies on 14th October. The Pirates are in parliament for the first time, the Greens improved from approx. 10% to approx. 15%, and the Alternative Democratic Reform Party, abbreviated ADR, classified as conservative, Catholic fundamentalist and right-wing populist, increased their vote for the first time since 1999. They reached 8.6 percent and 4 out of 60 seats. The only member of the European People's Party, the EPP, the Chreschtlich Sozial Vollekspartei (Christian Social People's Party) CSV, was the strongest political force in all four electoral districts but lost 4.9% of the vote compared to 2013 and received 28.9%. Elections are held every 5 years. Until now they had 26 seats in the Chamber. The turnout was 89.7 percent. At the time of going to press, there was still no information available about the outcome of coalition negotiations. The CSV-Seniors are members of the European Seniors' Union.

CSU needs a Coalition partner

Germany/Bavaria. From the elections to the state parliament of the Free State of Bavaria on 14th October, the CSU with 37.2 percent, once again emerged as the strongest party, but had to accept significant casualties compared to 2013 (47.7%). Probable coalition partners are expected to be the Free Voters (11.6%); Alliance 90/The Greens came in second place (17.5%, 2013: 8.6%). The Social Democrats slipped from 20.6% to 9.7%. With 10.2%, the right-wing AfD moves into the state parliament.

The CSU-Seniors are members of the ESU.

Agnieszka Lada: an unknown European Parliament

Poland. “The elections to the European Parliament in May 2019 are a way for EU citizens to influence the political balance of power in Europe. Although Polish society strongly supports Poland's membership of the EU, since the accession to the European Union (2004), there has been an equally clear lack of interest observed in taking part in European elections. The reasons for this are the general disenchantment with politics, which can be traced back to the political conflicts in Poland among other things, as well as ignorance of the importance and functioning of European institutions. An information and motivation campaign is needed to make Polish EU citizens aware of their role in deciding on the composition of the European Parliament.”

Agnieszka Lada comes to this assessment in the “Poland Analyses” no. 225 dated 16.10.2018. In the course of her remarks, she goes into details, the transcription of which “SI” is unable to reproduce. (www.laender-analysen.de/polen). The author is director of the European Programme at the Institute of Public Affairs / Instytut Spraw Publicznych, Warszawa.

Background

The European Parliament has 751 MEPs, of which are 73 are from Poland. Apart from one independent MEP, they are integrated into 5 factions. The numerically largest group of Conservative and Christian Democrats (EPP), with 219 members, includes 18 MEPs from Civic Platform/Platforma Obywatelska. and 4 from the “Polish People's Party/Polskie Stronnictwo Ludowe” (PSL) These two parties are currently in opposition The PSL-affiliated “Association of (former) parliamentarians/Stowarzyszenie Parlamentarzystów” is a member of the European Seniors' Union.

The ruling party "Law and Justice/Prawa i Sprawiedliwosc" (PiS) is a member of the “European Conservatives and Reformers Group”, which has existed since 2009. It is nationalist-conservative, EU-critical, in parts right-wing populist. This group (abbreviation: ECR) has 18 Polish members (of which 16 are PiS) and, with 73 members, is the third largest in the European Parliament.

The second largest group is the Social Democrats with 188 deputies, 5 deputies coming from Poland, three of whom are from the “Democratic Left Alliance/Sojusz Lewicy Demokratycznej” (SLD).

The European Parliament, whose President has been Antonio Tajani (IT) since January 2017, is based in Strasbourg, but which meets also in Brussels, has eight political groups, 25 committees and 44 delegations that maintain contact with parliamentarians in third countries.

The “EP” is the only directly elected supranational institution worldwide. The election is held every five years, the next time at the end of May 2019.

Election of the “top candidates”

Europe / Helsinki. In the Finnish capital on 7th - 8th November, the Congress of the European People's Party (EPP) will take place to determine the leading candidate for the European Parliament elections in May 2019. It also allows the greatest opportunity for the successor of Commission President Jean-Claude Juncker. The first-named candidate, Manfred Weber, chairman of the EPP group in the European Parliament, has since received several competitors so that the election outcome will be quite exciting.

The ESU is actively involved in the Congress with delegates and guests, as well as being a co-organizer of round-table discussions.

Annual Report: ever older and more active

Germany. “The generation 65 plus plays an increasingly important role in our society,” stated Georg Thiel in Berlin. He is head of the Federal Statistical Office, which recently presented the annual report “Active Ageing”. Accordingly, “older people are more active than ever before”. Life expectancy in Germany is rising. Women will be 81 on average, men 79. Every fifth citizen is over 65; in 12 years, already one in four will belong to the seniors. Half of today's seniors use the internet, and most of them send and receive e-mail. Social networks play a subordinate role, according to the report. The participation of older people in the 2017 general election was above average at 81 percent. They preferred the CDU and CSU. Many seniors now work (voluntarily) longer than before, are more mobile (but also more involved in accidents) and continue to educate themselves: one in four guest students at university in 2017 was older than 65 years. In addition, there are also 2,777 men and women who are enrolled in a regular course of study in the current winter semester.

Letter to the minister

Belarus. Tatjana Zelko, chairman of the Seniors Association “Nashe Pokalene”/“Our Generation” (which has observer status in the ESU), sent a letter to the Social Affairs Minister on the occasion of the International Day of Older Persons on 1st October. This was following a suggestion that ESU President An Hermans had addressed to all member Associations.

The letter deals with the situation of pensioners in the country. Mrs Zelko urges the following measures:

- Improving the conditions for all those who want/need to continue to work beyond retirement age. Background: they are obliged to pay taxes to the pension fund despite low retirement pensions. It is viewed as a contempt for a life's work and working experience,
- Examination of the insurance status. The calculation of pension benefits should take into account military service as well as periods of study and training. For disabled people, special conditions must apply.
- the adjustment of pensions to the inflation rate
- Granting of allowances for medical care and travelling expenses to a doctor

The Organisation distributes flyers highlighting and explaining their demands to the government.

Congratulations to Sverre Mauritzen

Norway. Sverre Mauritzen has completed his 75th year of life. He heads the Seniors' Association of his party "Hoyre" based in Oslo and belongs to the Executive Committee of the ESU. He was born in the city of Stavanger. We warmly congratulate you.

European Heritage Year



Europe. When politicians and representatives of civil society meet in Vienna on 6th and 7th December for the closing conference, the focus will be on the question: "what remains of the cultural heritage year"? How can the synergy effects in the countries and by the European Commission be used for further action? Priority must be given to further raising awareness of the priceless great treasures of cultural property entrusted to us and to promoting practical action for the development and preservation of cultural assets.

Adopted most recently by the UNESCO Commission...

...the admission of the cathedral of Naumburg on the Saale (DE) to the World Heritage list is seen as evidence of paying special attention to the outstanding achievements of European high culture - in this case, late Romanesque and early Gothic. Although the four-towered structure was already one of the biggest attractions in Saxony-Anhalt anyway, the flow of visitors has continued to increase since mid-October, as expected. Everyone wants to see the 12 founding figures of the "Naumburg Master", of whom the ones of Ekkehard II and Uta (photo) are the best known because they are the most beautiful.



New: UNESCO World Heritage Cathedral of Naumburg on the Saale (DE)

Editor: ulrich.winz@web.de; mobile telephone: + 49 174 175 60 50

translated by Margit and Seán Hawkes

European Seniors' Union (ESU): 1000 Brussels, Rue de Commerce/Handelsstraat 10;
Tel.: +32 2309 2866; Internet: <http://esu-epp.eu> Facebook.com/esu-eu
E-Mail: esu@epp.eu Twitter: esu_epp
