

JULY 2021



Hello ESU friends

Our Summer Academy 'New seniors, moving into a new economic and digital society', which is the result of intensive cooperation with our Austrian colleagues of the ÖSB and the great support of WMCES and Polak, is behind us.

We look back on the event with confidence.

We received a lot of positive feedback, which of course motivates us to continue our efforts. In this newsletter we will elaborate on the event and give some background information that you can spread within your associations.

We look into the future with our proposal for a resolution '*For an active and competent participation of all in resilient digital societies. The need for media and information literacy for all age groups*' and some information about the Madrid Congress on 23-25 September 2021.



We wish you a pleasant reading and a great, warm summer.

Best regards

An Hermans

ESU Summer Academy 2021



In unprecedented times: a renewed Summer Academy

Already in the run-up to the Summer Academy in 2020, our Austrian partner ÖSB proposed to organize the Summer Academy "in a new guise". In the end, we had to postpone the 11th edition to 2021. On 2 July 2021 we could present our online Summer Academy, from our 'traditional location' in Vienna, but in a totally new format. On our website we have posted a report of the course of the day, we invite you to read it [here](#). The fragmented recordings of the event (several keynote speakers and subjects) will soon be processed into thematic video reports and appear on our website.



Robert Zniva



Gratitude for the organization of the Summer Academy

Although this time, due to COVID-19 measures, we were not yet able to meet in person and organized a live online event with our colleagues from the Österreichische Seniorenbund (ÖSB) and the support of the [Politische Akademie der Volkspartei](#) (POLAK) & the [Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies](#) (WMCES). We could welcome several high-profile speakers. We would like to appoint all our speakers with a special thank you for their interesting contributions and preparation including, ÖSB-president Ingrid Korosec, Austrian Federal Minister for the EU and Constitution Karoline Edtstadler and Vice-President of the European commission Dubravka Šuica, President of the Political Academy Bettina Rausch, Program Director Artificial Intelligence at Imec Mieke De Ketelaere, Professor Robert Zniva, Executive Director of Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies Dr. Tomi Huhtanen, Head of 'Information Society' Department of the Council of Europe Patrick Penninckx, EPP Secretary General and MEP Antonio Lopez-Isturiz White. The preparation of this 5-hour online conference involved a lot of work and cooperation, many thanks to all and everyone and in particular to the secretary general of the ÖSB, Markus Keschmann, and ESU secretary general Guido Dumon.



Digitalization, one of the topics of the Summer Academy: some background information

The digital transformation of our societies is one of the important global challenges of our societies. Also for the EU, its Member States, and all of us. Therefore we made digitalization one of the main subjects of our Summer Academy. In the run-up to the event, we were able to ask your attention for some visual material to warm you up via social media and to provide some background information. We would like to share here an overview and let this be an invitation to enrich your knowledge:

As part of the EPP series 'Tech a look' (prepared by the EPP communication department; interview by Eline Chivot) the following interviews are related to the Summer Academy

- [Interview with our president An Hermans](#)
- [Interview with Mieke De Ketelaere](#)

For more interviews in the serie 'Tech a look' see: [EPP Facebook page](#)

The following video reports are about research around digitization institutions such as IMEC and the AI Experience Centre. These were made in preparation of the Summer Academy:

- [Video about the Artificial Intelligence Experience Centre](#)
- [Video about Imec Gent](#)
- [Video about the Book 'man versus machine' from Mieke De Ketelaere](#)

We thank the EPP for this very helpful support.



Executive Committee meeting 3 July

Following the Summer Academy, on July 3 we held an online meeting with our executive committee, where we agreed on the accounts 2020 and we prepared the extraordinary congress of 23-25 September in Madrid. We listened to country reports with focus on the special circumstances of the COVID-19 period and discussed and reviewed some interesting initiatives created to enhance older persons' skills and knowledge in fields of digitalisation.

EC Vice-President Dubravka Šuica hears the older generation's voice



In the Von der Leyen Commission, vice-president Dubravka Šuica holds the portfolio of democracy and demography. It is the first time that there is a mandate focused on demography in the European Commission. Already several times we were able to work in cooperation with her and her entourage in organizing our ESU events. We also received her eloquent [video](#) message for our Summer Academy. Demographic change is very high on the political agenda of this Commission, which published a Green Paper on Ageing on 27 January to launch a broad policy debate on the challenges and opportunities of Europe's ageing society. The Commission has recently launched a [community platform](#) on FUTURIUM, entitled “Active and Healthy Living in the Digital World”

On the 5th of July she addressed the European Parliament with a [closing statement](#) after the adoption of an EP resolution on ageing, [“Old continent growing older - possibilities and challenges related to ageing policy post 2020”](#), where she stated: *“Ageing is not just a matter for older people. Everyone is impacted directly by the prospect of living a longer life, including the young. We must balance our policy-making for everyone across the entire life cycle, making sure we leave no one behind.”*

Demography of Europe: STATISTICS VISUALISED – 2021 EDITION



Demographic statistics are among the most popular data Eurostat (the statistical office of the European Union) produces, and they are important for almost every area of policy. This new interactive publication *Demography of Europe* produced by Eurostat aims to bring these statistics to a new audience, providing clear visualisations and interactive features to help non-specialist users see what official European statistics can tell us about how the population is developing, ageing, and much more. [STATISTICS VISUALISED](#)

As Vice-president of the European Commission, Dubravka Šuica, says:

“The data presented in this publication will help us analyse the reasons behind the multi-faceted demographic trends across the European Union, because not every Member State is affected in the same way. This publication is another key building block for our demography portfolio, it confirms demography as a catalyst for the development and the success of our policies.”

The Conference on the Future of Europe



Already in our May newsletter we announced this initiative: 'Conference on the Future of Europe' and now we can proudly say that we are part of it. This is the EU citizen's chance to make his or her voice heard, to say what kind of Europe they want to live in, to shape our future. We have [registered](#) our July 2 event, our Summer Academy.

The platform is organised around key topics:

- Climate change and the environment;
- Health;
- A stronger economy, social justice and jobs;
- EU in the world;
- Values and rights, rule of law, security;
- Digital transformation;
- European democracy;
- Migration;
- Education, culture, youth and sport.

The platform will remain available until the first half of 2022, when a closing conference will take place. You are warmly invited to organize and register events with your association and make the difference! Also Individual comments are welcome at the digital platform.

Looking ahead

ESU Resolution: "For an active and competent participation of all in resilient digital societies: The need for media and information literacy"

Following the successful Summer Academy, we decided to prepare a resolution, *"For an active and competent participation of all in resilient digital societies: The need for media and information literacy"*

Hereby we will make the voice of the older people heard around digitization and the challenges this brings for the older generation! A first version will soon be sent to the readers of the ESU Executive Committee which we are currently translating. We will keep you informed!

Madrid Congress: 25y of ESU!



Last year we had to postpone the congress in Madrid to our great regret, but 25 years ESU we will not let it pass unnoticed and we will organize our extraordinary congress in September, planned as a live Congress from 23-25 September. Mrs Carmen Quintanilla Barba, is taking the lead. The first information is sent to the representatives of our member associations in the Executive Committee. Very soon you will get more information.