

Dear friends of ESU,

The previous month has been an important month for our organisation, not only did we have a very interesting online meeting on EU health policy. On 29 April it was also 'European Day on Solidarity between Generations'. This is the perfect day to reflect on the relevant differences and commonalities across generations.

We are happy to tell you more about it in this newsletter, and we are also giving you some information about our Summer Academy.

We wish you a pleasant reading.

An Hermans
ESU President

9 May 2021 : 71 years of European Solidarity.



Europe Day, held on 9 May marks the anniversary of the historic Schuman Declaration. Aiming to secure peace in Europe after the horrors of the Second World War, the Schuman Declaration proposed cooperation among European countries in two key economic areas: coal and steel. It laid the foundations for today's European Union (EU).

Let's celebrate Europe Day and look ahead to build together tomorrow's world keeping peace and unity, based on democracy and solidarity.

Digitalization is changing our world

Digitalisation brings many threats, but also many opportunities. The current pandemic has shown how useful and important digital technology can be to help us fight COVID-19, how we need digital technology in healthcare, how digital communication makes teleworking, e-commerce, education and training possible... but that we also need it to keep in touch with family and friends, with loved ones. Moreover, it has clearly shown that we cannot afford not to use it and that we have no time to lose in developing it. Meanwhile, the digital divide between young and old and between rural and urban populations has never been more apparent than during the recent pandemic.

In our last Newsletter, we reported on our video conference on 23 March and the ESU Declaration on "Older people and digital inclusion in today's information society". In this declaration, the ESU calls on governments and stakeholders to support and promote the full participation of older people by ensuring access to digital information, removing barriers, facilitating learning and improving media literacy. ESU calls for a response to the digital divide and to 'digital poverty', through a comprehensive strategy and overall operational actions to ensure digital literacy and inclusion for all generations. We are pleased that, thanks to Mr. Lopez, EPP Secretary General, this declaration has found its way to members of the EPP Group and to MEPs.

A European Health Union in the making?

Ensuring EU solidarity for a better healthcare for all



On 20 April, we met online for a video conference on EU health policy. This meeting was in line with the position paper presented by the EPP group on 1 July 2020. We could count two very interesting speakers. **Mrs Stella Kyriakides**, EU commissioner for Cyprus since 1 December 2019. She is responsible for 'Health and Food Safety' in the European Commission. And **Mr. Siegfried Muresan** was our second speaker; he is an expert on 'European Recovery policies'. He is vice-president of the Committee on Budgets, he has been following and influencing the priorities, the choices and the road maps for the multi-annual budget and, of course, he is also aware of the needs and opportunities of the Member States.

In the second part of this meeting we had **Mrs. Carmen Quintanilla** (66y), ESU Vice-President and national President of AFAMMER and **Mr. Carlo Angrisano** (24y), President of the European Democratic Students (EDS) to talk about intergenerational interests.

The video conference ended with questions, which were answered by MEP Siegfried Muresan.

The full report is available on our [site](#).

April 29th: European Day on Solidarity between Generations

In the scope of this day, our president An Hermans together with MEP and president of YEPP Lúdia Pereira and EDS president Carlo Angrisano were invited for an intergenerational interview in the framework of '*EPP Family Talks*' series. It was an interesting interview that tackled, among other things, the set stereotypes that are applied to generations: a stereotype that the media have relayed is that of older people as passive subjects. It is an old stereotype that the ESU has always challenged, showing that seniors are and want to be an active part of society. The digital transition could provide new opportunities in this respect, as long as we are able to overcome all obstacles to a full digital inclusion of seniors. Check out the interview [here](#).



Digital Compass 2030

On 9 March 2021, the Commission presented a [vision and avenues](#) for Europe's digital transformation by 2030. This vision for the EU's digital decade evolves around four cardinal points:

This initiative includes:

- An EU ambition based on common targets to empower individuals and businesses;
- Principles for a human-centred, sustainable and more prosperous digital future;
- A framework to scale up European strategic capacities via multi-country projects;
- A governance structure between the EU and the Member States, and actions to engage with the public.

The document sets forward the notion of 'digital citizenship' that sheds light on fundamental rights and principles that should be incorporated into digital technologies, goods and services.

In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, the document specifically refers to digitally enabled health solutions including telemedicine, remote care and robotics solutions.

You can find the Digital Compass [here](#).

Conference on the Future of Europe: launch of the multilingual digital platform



This platform is the hub of the Conference on the Future of Europe. This is your opportunity to speak up, to say what kind of Europe you want to live in, to help shape our future. [The platform](#) is

available in 24 languages, allowing citizens from across the Union to share and exchange their ideas and views through online events.

European Commission President, Ursula von der Leyen, said: *“Health, climate change, good and sustainable jobs in a more and more digital economy, the state of our democratic societies: We are inviting Europeans to speak up, to address their concerns and tell us what Europe they want to live in. With this citizens' platform, we are giving everyone the opportunity to contribute to shaping the future of Europe and engage with other people from across Europe. This is a great opportunity to bring Europeans together virtually. Join the debate! Together, we can build the future we want for our Union.”*

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.

These topics are complemented by an 'open box' for cross-cutting and other topics ('other ideas'), as citizens remain free to raise any issue that matters to them, in a truly bottom-up approach. The Conference's official hashtag #TheFutureIsYours is an invitation to EU citizens to contribute and define the EU's future: “The future is in your hand”.

There is also a possibility to click on ['organise your event'](#) where every citizen can register his or her event in line with one of the aforementioned pillars.

We as ESU will also register our Summer Academy in this framework.

--- **SAVE THE DATE** ---

Summer Academy 2021



Friday, 2 July 2021
10.30 am & 1.30 pm

**The ,New Senior':
moving into a new
economical and digital world**

Join us on
www.esu-epp.eu or www.seniorenbund.at

In this Summer Academy

- we reflect on the role seniors perceive for themselves in our today's society as active actors in economic and social life, as consumers, as tourists,...
 - with opportunities to participate in all areas of society
 - and enjoy the full development of all capacities.
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- we explore 'the digital era', and the opportunities and risks of our 'digital transforming society'
 - what does digitalization mean?
 - which are the opportunities and risks for the environment we live in? (housing, connectivity, media, businesses, government, public services)
 - what kind of control over technology is possible? What about a human centred approach?
 - how to narrow the digital divide between young and older persons, between people living in rural areas and cities?

Draft Program

Summer Academy

Friday 2 July from 10:30 to 12:30 and from 13:30 to 16:30 : Summer Academy speakers, panels, discussion on demographic change, economic and digital change:
live streaming open to all interested persons

ESU Presidium meeting (ZOOM)

Friday 2 July from 17:00-17:30

ESU Executive Committee (ZOOM)

Saturday 3 July from 9:00 to 10:00

Internal ESU meeting (ZOOM)

Saturday 3 July from 10:00 to 12:15

*Because of the corona crisis, the Summer Academy has **a special touch** this year. The speeches and discussions in Vienna will be broadcast live and simultaneous translation will be provided in English, German and Spanish.*

The participants are at home in front of their laptop and can follow everything live, but can also participate in the discussions. This means that this Summer Academy can be attended in large number by the members of our member organizations from Norway to Spain, from Estonia to Bavaria. Internal meetings are also planned for July 2 and 3, which will take place via Zoom. Participation in these meetings is by invitation.

More information (program and practical info) will follow in the coming weeks.

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