



20th anniversary of the European Seniors Organisation: together for Europe's senior citizens

Adopted by the PES Presidency on 24/02/2022

On the occasion of the European Seniors Organisation's (ESO) twentieth anniversary, we, socialists and democrats, restate our commitment to improving access to fundamental rights, living conditions and political participation of Europe's senior citizens. The pandemic has imposed a tragic toll on our continent's population, in particular the elderly. The recovery must be an opportunity to restore intergenerational solidarity and justice for the old and the young. By reinvigorating solidarity between the generations, our united societies will be better able to face the challenges of the future.

We fight for workers' rights at all ages. Older workers should be respected for their skills, experience and contribution and should be able to participate fully in the labour market until retirement. Those who wish to reduce their workload while passing on their knowledge to younger colleagues or retire early have the right to do so and enjoy a decent income. Deploying lifelong learning will facilitate longer and more fulfilling careers.

We fight for dignity at all ages. The end of one's career must not equate to a decline in living conditions, yet 1 in 7 pensioners are at risk of poverty, especially women. Pension systems must remain public sources of income for old age and must give fair consideration to career breaks. They must be complemented by affordable and accessible quality public services, including truly universal, lifelong healthcare to address the gap in life expectancy between rich and poor. Investment in adapted housing and the care economy, such as the public provision of assisted living and care homes, is needed to maintain independence and improve wellbeing. Ageism is unacceptable. Psychological or physical violence against the elderly, including gender-based violence, are crimes and must be fought.

We fight for the right to participate at all ages. The digital and green transitions present exciting new opportunities, but only if everyone is given the tools to benefit. Public authorities should continue their efforts to spread digital literacy. Human contact must be maintained through offline alternatives for administrative procedures. The elderly must be empowered to remain users of active mobility through accessible transport networks, and safe pedestrian and cycling infrastructure.

Policies for the elderly must be designed with and by the elderly. For the past 20 years, ESO has been a strong voice for senior citizens inside the PES, in relations with member parties, sister organisations and the European institutions. We look forward to continuing working together for a fair and green Europe built on intergenerational solidarity.

