



ESO (European Senior Organisation) – PES-seniors

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ESO's contribution to the European Commission's public consultation on the European Intergenerational Fairness Strategy. (second contribution)

ESO (European Senior Organisation) www.socialistseniors.eu – the European umbrella organization for older persons organizations committed to the social democratic values of solidarity, equality, and the respect for universal and democratic rights – aspires for a European intergenerational fairness strategy that aims for solidarity, equality, and non-discrimination, in accordance with the EU treaties.

In our view, this is only possible if the strategy relies on **a balanced set of supporting policy instruments**. In our previous contribution to the discussion – document attached – we pointed out the lack of **a European strategy for older persons, or an AGE equality strategy**, as a third building block alongside the existing youth strategy and guarantee and the child guarantee.

Aging is a policy priority that affects all generations: indeed, today's children and young people are tomorrow's older people, and the policies designed today will apply to them. Additionally, in reality that parents and grandparents often step in to care for their grandchildren when childcare is lacking, and parents are cared by their children when care and long-term care are not available.

We therefore regret the lack of support from the European Commission for a European strategy for older people or an AGE equality strategy, as a third cornerstone underpinning a European Intergenerational Fairness Strategy.

ESO therefore fully supports the proposal for an Action Programme Against Ageism with its nine flagships, as proposed by AGE-Platform-Europe.

We wish to express our concern about the growing distancing between generations. Rather than focusing on conflicting interests between generations, we are demanding to address the growing gap between (advantaged) rich and (disadvantaged) poor groups in society, between the highly educated and the less educated, and the large differences in life expectancy across these two sections of society. Aging requires an approach across the entire life cycle, with an emphasis on prevention. Aging also requires a fundamental shift in mindset about ageing: a positive mindset increases the chances of healthy and active aging.

Therefore, it is important that all generations strengthen each other, works together, and **that their organizations are strongly involved in the intergenerational and intragenerational strategy**. This strategy must be supported by a set of supporting policy instruments.

ESO draws the attention of the European Commission to the considerable experience and expertise in ageing-policy of the World Health Organisation (WHO), including its instrument for age-friendly cities and communities and the new "Aging is Living" strategy, and **urges genuine collaboration between the European Commission and the WHO.**

Attached you will find our previous written contribution to the consultation from June 2025, in which we also call for **a rights-based approach to ageing**, for a strong **directive on equal treatment and against discrimination, including discrimination based on age**, for the **provision of the necessary financial and human resources** to prepare, monitor and implement the strategies, and for the **recognition of all age groups involved, including older people and their organisations, as full citizens and partners in the process.**

Brussels, November 10. 2025

Annex to the second ESO-contribution on the European intergenerational fairness strategy



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First ESO-contribution in the consultation from the European Commission for a European strategy for intergenerational fairness/solidarity.

A European Senior Strategy with a European care guarantee as third cornerstone for a European intergenerational solidarity/fairness strategy based on a human rights approach and with legally binding instruments against age discrimination and against agism.

- ESO welcomes the initiative from the European Commission to work out a European fairness/solidarity strategy and points to its ESO Work Programme for 2024–2029, approved at the ESO seminar in November 2024, which contains key elements for building this strategy. https://socialistseniors.eu/wp-content/uploads/simple-file-list/ESO_Multiannual_program_2024_2029.pdf
- This strategy should aim at **promoting solidarity between generations: young people, seniors and people who are unable to claim their rights** (such as children and future generations). A connection between past, present and future: older people who have learned from the past and from this experience want to help shape the future as full citizens in the present; young people who look forward to their future, who should be able to enjoy the fundamental rights acquired in the past and therefore also want to have a say in decision-making about their future; and children and future generations who do not yet have a say in this themselves.
- A European strategy for intergenerational solidarity should focus on three target groups (children, youth, seniors). As there already exist a strategy for protection from children defined in the Child-guarantee, and a European Youth strategy and guarantee, it should be logical and consistent to create a **“European senior strategy”** or **European AGE-equality-strategy** that mainstreams attention to older persons interest in different policy areas, as a third cornerstone for the building for this European intergenerational fairness/solidarity strategy. Therefore, ESO’s first demand in the European Intergenerational solidarity/fairness strategy will be: a European senior strategy that among other things **includes a European care guarantee for access to care and healthcare for all generations**. It is an analogy with SURE that was set up in unemployment during the COVID19-crisis; the care guarantee should concern elderly-care and longtime care and also include childcare.

- This European senior strategy will concern different policy-area's (we are looking to another international instrument as already exist by WHO: the WHO action programme for age-friendly cities and communities). In analogy with WHO, the strategy should concern different policy-areas, but the European strategy should be **based on a right-based approach on ageing**. We propose to consider following policy areas : **income**; **end of career** education/employment; access to **care and healthcare**; access to **services** (including financial services) / digitalisation; **age-friendly habitat** (housing and public spaces-planning in rural and urban environments); **mobility**; **full participation** (politics, social/cultural, economic) (note that digitalisation is a big burden for participation and widens the gap between the generations).
- ESO urges for **a horizontal equal treatment directive against discrimination, including the ground of age** and an **action plan against ageism**.
- These strategies can only be successful if provision is made for the **necessary resources** to implement and monitor these strategies, both **financially** (MFF and EU-budget) and in terms of **human resources**, for preparation, implementation and monitoring the strategies.
- **"Nothing about us, without us !"** Talking about senior policies and intergenerational solidarity, ESO pleads for full recognition of all target groups concerned as full-citizens. We notice that the Commissions department responsible for the strategy is the DG on education, youth, sport and culture and does not concern ageing or senior-policy. We notice also that seniors (because they are mostly not-longer in professional statutes) are not present in many - most informal but - very important networks involved in the definition of policies of their concern. Therefore, ESO is demanding **full and active participation of civil society in the elaboration of these strategies**, and in particular senior-organisations as AGE-Europe platform who organises most European, national and regional senior-organisations.

Brussels, June, 6 2025