



26 August, 2026

Invitation 25th Anniversary of ESO-PES Seniors, Brussels, 1 October 2026

Dear friends,

It is our great pleasure to invite you to join us in Brussels on **October 1, International Day of older persons**, to celebrate the **25th anniversary of ESO-PES Seniors**.

What's in store

Over the past twenty-five years, ESO has been committed to promoting the interests, rights and participation of older persons within the social democratic movement and European society. We look forward to marking this important milestone together with our member organisations, partners and invited guests. **This anniversary, we're writing the next chapter of that story.**

You are welcome to the **festive session and reception at Brussels City Hall (council room) on the Grand Place. We start at 6 p.m.**

For those who wish to join us in discussing the political participation of older persons and civil society, we would be delighted to welcome you to **our seminar taking place at the Vooruit en PS building at Keizerslaan 13 in Brussels from 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m.**

Registration is now open for our anniversary event. For organizational reasons, we would like to receive your **registration before Wednesday, September 23.**

[**Register here**](#)

Provisional program

- **Anniversary Seminar: Participation of Older Persons in Politics by political mandates and through their organizations and Civil Society in participatory democracy**

Venue:

Headquarters of Vooruit and PS
Keizerslaan 13
1000 Brussels

09:30

Welcome and opening remarks by the President.

09:45 – 10:45

Expert Panel: Participation of older persons in politics in Austria, Spain, Flanders (Belgium)

Panel members:

- **Birgit Gerstorfer, MBA, Präsidentin PVÖ** (Austria)
- **Sergio Amante**, former federal coordinator **PSOE Mayores** and **President IUSY** (International Union of Socialist Youth) (Spain)
- **Magda Demeyer**, President of the **Flemish Council for Older Persons** (Belgium)

The panel discussion will be moderated by **Matteo Dressler, Policy Analyst for Democracy and Participation (FEPS)**.

10:45

Coffee break

11:00 – 12:00

Exchange of views with experts, representatives of member organizations and participants also based on the contributions submitted through the preparatory survey.

12:00 – 12:30

Exchanges with **Conner Rousseau** (President Vooruit) and **Paul Magnette** (President PS).

12:30 - 14:00

Lunch

14:00 - 15:00

Expert Panel: Participation of older persons in politics: Germany, the European Union and United Nations perspective

- **DR. Heidrun Mollenkopf** Board member of **BAGSO** and Managing-President **AGE-Platform Europe**
- **Maciej Kucharczyk** or **Philippe Seidel**, Representative of **AGE Platform Europe**
- Representative from the **S&D group** in the EP

The panel discussion will be moderated by **Matteo Dressler**, Policy Analyst for Democracy and Participation (FEPS).

15:00 – 16:00

Exchange of views with experts, representatives of member organizations and participants also based on the contributions submitted through the preparatory survey.

16:00

Concluding remarks by the President.

+++++

- **Academic session: *25 Years of ESO, “Nothing About Us, Without Us”***

Time: 18:00 - 20:30

Venue:

Brussels City Hall, Council-room & room Maximiliaan
Grand-Place, Brussels

Welcome

Address by the President of ESO.

Speakers

- **Anais Maes**, Alderswomen Brussels also on behalf of **Philippe Close** (Mayor Brussels)
- **Hilde Hawlicek**, former Austrian Minister of Education, Arts and Sport; former Member of the European Parliament and co-founder of ESO (PVÖ)
- **Maciej Kucharczyk**, Secretary General of AGE Platform Europe
- **Idoia Mendia**, Member of the European Parliament (S&D group - PSOE) and Co-Chair of the European Parliament's Intergenerational Forum
- **Caroline Gennez**, Flemish Minister for Welfare and Culture and Treasurer of PES

Reception

The session will conclude with a reception offering participants the opportunity to commemorate 25 years of ESO, reflect on our shared achievements, and discuss the challenges and opportunities ahead for older people in Europe.

We look forward to welcoming you to Brussels.

Yours sincerely,

Jos Bertrand
President
ESO-PES seniors

Frieda Ardies
Secretary- General
ESO-PES seniors