



*"We believe in a Europe  
where seniors play an active role,  
live with dignity, and  
contribute to an inclusive society"*

## ESU with greater impact

Workbook  
for  
Ciudad Real  
Strategic Action Plan 2030

November 2025

## Foreword

Dear Members of the Presidency and Executive Committee of the European Seniors' Union (ESU),

It is with great pride and boundless optimism that we introduce this Workbook, designed to accompany and bring to life our newly adopted **Strategic Action Plan 2030** — proclaimed in the inspiring setting of Ciudad Real, Spain.

In Ciudad Real, during our celebration of 30 years of the ESU, we did more than mark a milestone — we embraced a new beginning. Delegates from across Europe gathered not only to reflect on our legacy, but to chart a bold, shared vision for the years ahead: a Europe where senior persons are recognised as active, contributing, and respected citizens.



This Workbook stands on three pillars that reflect the very heart of our Strategy:

1. **An in-depth analysis of societal developments** affecting older people in European societies — recognising changing demographics, evolving work and family patterns, digital transitions, mobility, inter-generational dynamics and the need for dignity, inclusion and participation.
2. **A clear examination of our own strengths and weaknesses** as a Seniors' organisation — acknowledging where the ESU stands strong, where we must evolve, how we can better represent, engage and empower our members, and how we can leverage our collective voice in Europe.
3. **A firm basis for the development of our annual work plans through to 2030** — this Strategy is not static: it is the umbrella under which each of our national member-organisations, and this Executive Committee, will craft their own Strategic Action Plans, year by year, building momentum, measuring progress, adapting to new challenges, always guided by our shared vision.

Ciudad Real is more than a hosting city — it has become a symbol and a guide for our future work. In its spirit of heritage, renewal and community, we see how age-diverse societies can flourish when experience meets innovation, when generations share, when seniors engage with energy and purpose.

To all of you — the leaders of the ESU — this Workbook is your tool, your companion and your inspiration. Use it to align your national organisations with our collective strategic horizon, to craft actions that speak to your own membership, to mobilise resources, to measure impact, to learn and to adapt.

Let us move forward together — with enthusiasm, with clarity, with commitment. Let this Strategy not just sit on a shelf but become our shared roadmap: from vision to translation, from planning to action, from promise to measurable change.

We look ahead to 2030 with confidence: confident in what we have learned, confident in what we will accomplish, confident in the strength of our union. Let us do it together. Let us do it now.

With solidarity and commitment,

President and Secretary General

***"Voice, visibility and growth to have greater impact".***

Stefaan Vercamer, President

***"Living is ageing. Ageing is living."***

Patrick Penninckx, Secretary General



This workbook reflects both internal insight and external realities. It is not merely about planning for the future; it is about preparing to **continue our mission** in a world that is evolving faster than ever before.

Our strength lies in **togetherness**, in **collective action**, and in the **human connection** we nurture every single day.

This workbook shows us that over the next five years, we have **a lot of work ahead**.  
But we will **not do it alone**.

Each of you are part of this story.

Your daily actions, your ideas, your engagement—**these are what bring our strategy to life**.  
So let us move forward **together**—with **confidence, compassion, and courage**.  
Let us continue to build a Europe where **every generation feels seen, valued, and empowered**.  
A Europe that recognizes ageing not as a burden, but as a **source of wisdom, vitality, and strength**.  
And as we look toward the next 30 years, let us do so with the **optimism, energy, and unity**!

***“Together, we stand stronger”.***



**The member organizations are the foundation of the ESU.**



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## Part 1: ESU's Strategic Action Plan 2030, adopted in Ciudad Real, Spain.

### Irreversible Demographic Changes in Europe

#### Consequences for Seniors and Challenges for European Governance

Europe is changing. Our societies are ageing — not as a crisis, but as a profound transformation that calls for wisdom, solidarity, and foresight.

The megatrend of ageing reshapes every aspect of life: work, health, care, housing, technology, and human connection. It challenges us to rethink how we live together — and how we value every stage of life.

Without strong safeguards, older people's rights risk being overlooked. But with the right vision and courage, Europe can turn this demographic shift into one of its greatest achievements: a continent where every generation has dignity, security, and a voice.

That is the Europe the ESU stands for — and the Europe we are building together.

#### Societies that value ageing as living together with generations.

### What Concerns Do Seniors Have?

#### Ageing with Dignity, Security, and Joy

##### 1. Autonomy and participation

Every person deserves a decent, independent life — and the chance to remain an active participant in their community. This means:

- sufficient income;
- the ability to live independently;
- nearby and reliable care;
- control over one's own decisions.

##### 2. Affordable care and housing

Caring for seniors is not a cost — it's an investment in humanity. When we improve seniors' living conditions, we strengthen families, communities, and social cohesion.

##### 3. Safety, mobility, and independence

Technology can be a bridge — not a barrier. With better digital access, innovative mobility, and smarter care systems, seniors can live freely and securely, even in a rapidly changing world.

##### 4. Intergenerational solidarity

Seniors are builders of bridges — between experiences and generations. They remind Europe of its roots and inspire the next generation to carry the torch forward.

## 5. Multicultural connection

There is significant multicultural diversity among seniors, so policies and advocacy must reflect their real and diverse needs across regions and backgrounds.

## 6. Fighting ageism

Age discrimination diminishes us all. Valuing ageing means valuing life itself. Together, we must promote respect, inclusion, and a positive image of ageing — because every age has its beauty and purpose.

## Our Vision

### Seniors as Full and Valued Participants in Society

Seniors are not on the margins of Europe's story — they are at its heart. Their experience, knowledge, and solidarity enrich our democracies and our daily lives.

We want to see ageing not as an “end”, but as an essential part of life — something that affects everyone. A society that supports its seniors supports everyone's future.

ESU envisions a Europe where policies in every sector — housing, health, digital access, work, voluntary work, mobility, sustainable environment — reflect the reality of an ageing population.

We call on European, national, and regional leaders to work together, with civil society, to make this vision real.

## Our Mission

### We connect, empower, and represent seniors across Europe — fostering cooperation, knowledge-sharing, policy influence and solidarity between generations.

We believe in a Europe where seniors play an active role, live with dignity, and contribute to an inclusive society for all ages.

We have been fulfilling this mission for 30 years and we are a significant organization representing senior citizens.

The member organizations are the foundation of the ESU.

Alongside our dedicated volunteers, we make ESU exceptional.

Together, we can build a Europe of peace, prosperity, solidarity, and care — for seniors and for future generations.

## Our Aim

**ESU with greater impact. Strengthen the voice and role of seniors in shaping Europe's future.**

- Broaden our membership.
- Deepen our discussions on subject matters
- Emphasis our representation through all channels and in political bodies - at all levels - to defend our rights and interests in European debates.
- Strive that senior citizens are formally represented in political decision-making bodies.
- Be a source of inspiration — promoting democratic values, inclusion, and human dignity.

## Our Core Values

- Respect
- Fairness
- Dignity
- Solidarity
- Equal Rights

These values are the compass that guides our actions.

## Our Strategic Objectives for 2030

**Voice > Visibility > Growth**

### 1. Visibility and Representation

We want seniors' voices to be seen, heard, and felt.

Through clear communication, strong partnerships, and active engagement in the EPP, AGE Platform Europe and other networks, ESU will ensure seniors are part of every key discussion.

### 2. Awareness and Advocacy

We champion policies that promote independent living, decent pensions, affordable housing, healthcare, long-term care, and digital inclusion.

ESU aims to be a trusted voice — shaping a Europe that cares for all ages.

### 3. Expertise and Knowledge-Sharing

As a learning community, we connect ideas and experiences across Europe.

Working with academic and policy partners — especially the Wilfried Martens Centre — we share knowledge that shapes policy and strengthens democracy.

### 4. Cooperation and Bridge-Building

We build bridges — between generations, between member organizations, and across Europe's borders.

Together with YEPP, EPP Women, EPP SME, and many partners, we form one family with one purpose: to promote shared values and intergenerational solidarity.

##### 5. Policy Capacity and Influence

Seniors' voices must be present where decisions are made.

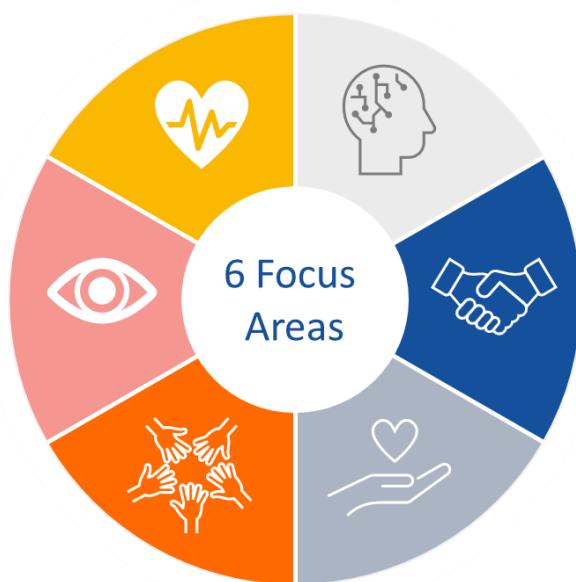
Through strong engagement within the EPP and European networks, ESU will continue to shape policy and inspire solutions for a fair, caring Europe.

#### Our Focus Areas for 2030

##### Building on Strong Foundations

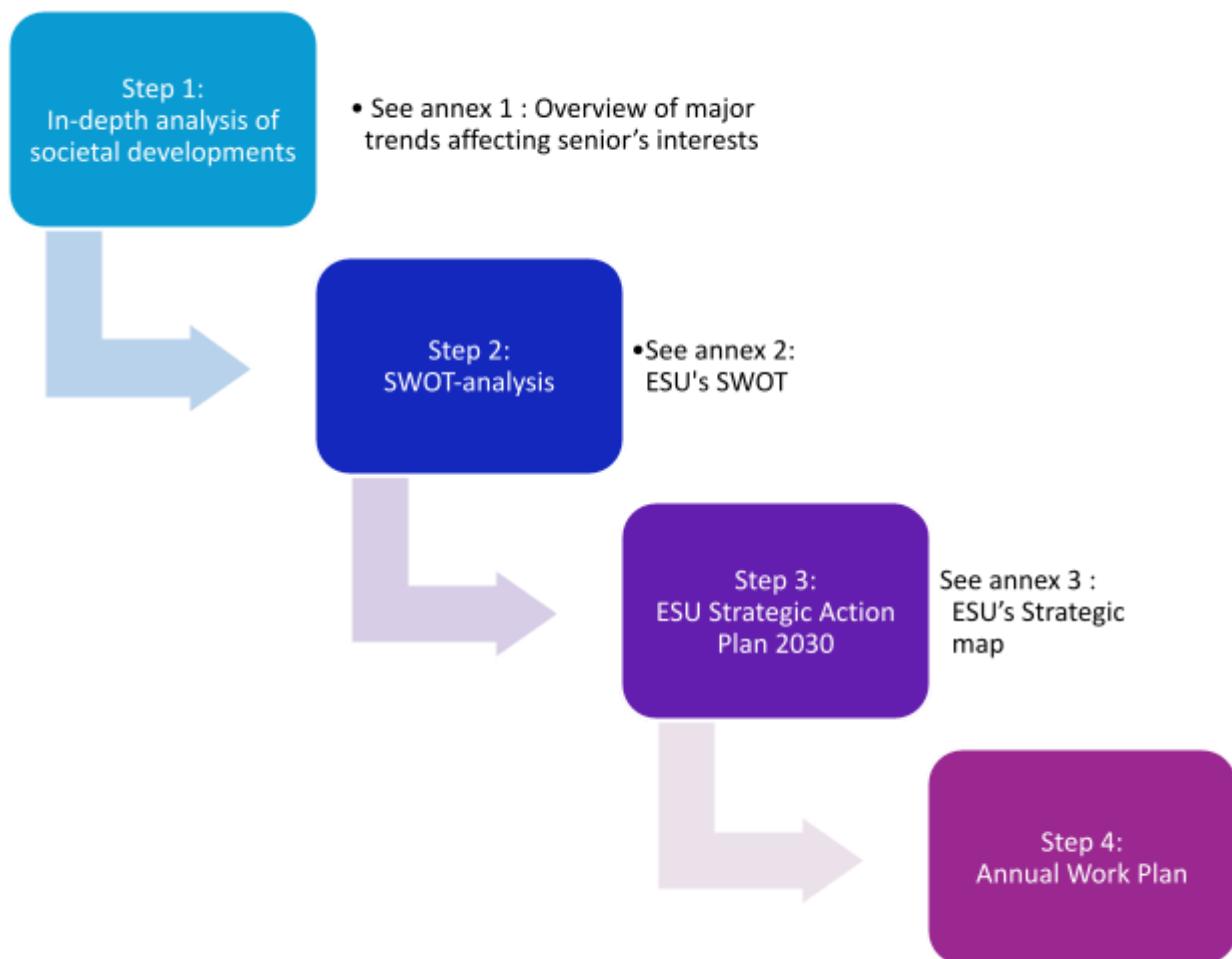
1. Visibility and Positive Image of Active Ageing
2. Active Senior Citizenship
3. Lifelong Learning and Inclusive Participation
4. Intergenerational Solidarity
5. Health and Long-Term Care
6. Media, Digital, AI and Financial Literacy

Each focus area contributes to the UN Sustainable Development Goals and a fairer, more connected Europe.



## QUESTION MARK PART 2: How was the Strategic Action Plan 2030 developed?

The approach is outlined below in a clear step-by-step plan.



**Step 1: an in-depth analysis of societal developments affecting older people in European societies — recognising changing demographics, evolving work and family patterns, digital transitions, mobility, inter-generational dynamics and the need for dignity, inclusion and participation.**

The in-depth analysis is based on the shared work and spirit of the ESU Congress in Leuven (2024), the Autumn Conference in Helsinki (2024), the Spring Conference in Bratislava (2025), the Summer Academy in Bruges (2025) and enriched with interviews featuring prominent figures' visions of the future.

The analysis can be found in annex 1.

**Step 2: a clear examination of our own strengths and weaknesses as ESU** — acknowledging where the ESU stands strong, where we must evolve, how we can better represent, engage and empower our members, and how we can leverage our collective voice in Europe (see annex 2).

**Step 3: developing our ESU Strategic Action Plan 2030;** the Presidency and the Executive Committee were closely involved in defining a Strategic Document and Action Plan 2030. These were fruitful discussions shaping the long-term vision of the ESU and defining the concrete steps by which we will continue to strengthen the voice of seniors within the EPP family and European institutions. Our aim was to ensure that our proposals are ambitious, realistic, and persuasive for decision-makers at both the European and national levels.

The strategic action plan will now serve as a roadmap for our work, a platform for dialogue with the EPP, and a contribution to shaping the broader European agenda, namely through AGE Platform Europe.

**Step 4: A firm basis for the development of our annual work plans through to 2030** — this Strategy is not static: it is the umbrella under which each of our national member-organisations, and this Executive Committee, will craft their own Strategic Action Plans, year by year, building momentum, measuring progress, adapting to new challenges, always guided by our shared vision.

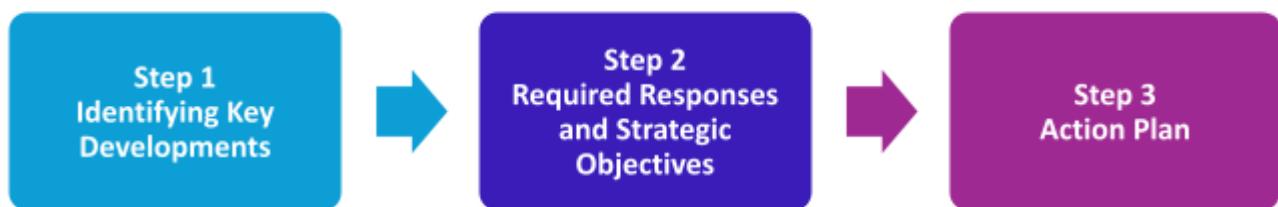
## Part 3: How to develop our strategic action plan and annual plan?

Hereafter you will find a clear script for guiding our team through the creation of a future proof strategic action plan and annual plan.

### Strategic Annual Planning – Facilitation Script

#### Purpose

Guide our team through a structured process to identify external developments, define our strategic responses, and translate them into concrete action plans.



#### Step 1 – Identifying Key Developments

##### Objective

Map the most relevant developments that influence the interests, wellbeing, and rights of seniors.

##### Facilitation Steps

1. Open a brainstorm session with a brief context: such as demographic trends, political, economic and social policies, technological changes, pension and healthcare reforms, financial and social security, societal attitudes toward ageing ... For inspiration see annex 1.
2. Use a structured brainstorm method and capture all inputs visibly on a shared board or document.
3. Combine overlapping items and cluster themes. We can then link them to the 6 focus areas:
  1. Visibility and Positive Image of Active Ageing
  2. Active Senior Citizenship
  3. Lifelong Learning and Inclusive Participation
  4. Intergenerational Solidarity
  5. Health and Long-Term Care
  6. Media, Digital, AI and Financial Literacy

##### Output

A set of external developments with direct impact on seniors.

## **Step 2 – Required Responses and Strategic Objectives**

### **Objective**

Determine what actions are required to address the developments identified in Step 1. Define priorities and what we want to achieve.

### **Facilitation Steps**

1. Translate each development into a strategic challenge.
2. Ask the team to define the desired future state for each challenge.
3. Formulate strategic objectives: concise statements describing what must change or improve.
4. For each objective, determine priority level: high, medium, or low. Consider urgency, feasibility, and expected impact.

### **Output**

A prioritised set of strategic goals and required actions.

## **Step 3 – Action Plan Development (Operationalisation)**

### **Objective**

Convert strategic objectives into actionable, measurable plans with clear ownership, timelines, and resource needs.

### **Facilitation Steps**

1. For each strategic objective, define tasks that must be executed to achieve the intended results.
2. Assign roles and responsibilities.
3. Establish a realistic timeline: milestones, deadlines, and monitoring moments.
4. Identify the required resources: financial, human, partnerships, data, tools, communication channels.
5. Determine success indicators to track progress and impact.
6. Validate feasibility and ensure alignment across teams.

### **Output**

A complete action plan containing: objectives, tasks, owners, participants, timelines, resources, success indicators

This forms the operational core of the strategic annual plan.

## Wrap-Up

Close the brainstorm session by summarising the strategic direction, confirming priorities, and outlining next steps for approval, communication, and implementation. A short follow-up meeting can be scheduled to refine details or validate resource allocation.

## **The member organizations are the foundation of the ESU**

As ESU, we form a strong learning network.  
Let's share our knowledge and experience.  
With well-founded action plans under the umbrella of ESU, we stand stronger.

The strength of the ESU lies in the commitment and experience of its members. By working together, we can ensure that seniors' perspectives are fully integrated into Europe's future direction and that the ESU continues to play a leading role within our political family.

Thank you for your cooperation.

**Together, we make it happen!  
Together, we make ageing a source of hope.**

- / Annex 1 : Overview of major trends affecting senior's interests and rights in Europe, and actions to put in place
- / Annex 2 : ESU – SWOT analysis
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Major trends and key developments	Our aims to achieve	Actions 2025 - 2030
<p>Europe faces an <b>irreversible demographic shift</b> driven by population ageing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Today, <b>21.3% of EU residents are aged 65+..</b></li> <li>By 2050, <b>one in three EU citizens will be over 60.</b></li> <li>An ageing society is reshaping <b>political, economic, financial, and social policies</b>, leading to reforms that carry both opportunities and risks for seniors' interests and rights.</li> <li>Within the 65+ group, there are <b>distinct age segments</b> (65–75, 75–85, 85+), each with different needs, questions, and requirements.</li> <li><b>Ageing is not uniform:</b> cultural backgrounds, social identities, and life trajectories (e.g. class, migration history, LGBTQ+ identity) deeply influence ageing experiences. This shift requires moving from <b>“one-size-fits-all” approaches to plural, tailored policies</b> — many paths to wellbeing and flourishing.</li> <li>A key insight: <b>“the older person” does not exist.</b> Baby boomers, now entering old age, bring with them new demands for <b>freedom, dignity, and autonomy.</b></li> </ul>	<p><b>ESU FOCUS 1 VISIBILITY AND POSITIVE VIEW ON ACTIVE AGEING:</b> lead a dignified and meaningful life:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Seniors as active contributors:</b> economically, socially, and politically with much to offer through their experience, values, and forward-looking perspectives.</li> <li><b>Co-responsible for the development of society:</b> seniors are a source of wisdom; with intelligence and political will co-create a Europe where ageing is embraced with dignity, purpose, and security.</li> <li><b>Recognize seniors as guardians of memory, tradition, and wisdom,</b> while also serving as parents, teachers, and community builders.</li> <li><b>Tailored responses:</b> policies and advocacy must reflect the real and diverse needs of seniors across regions and backgrounds.</li> <li><b>Positive narratives of ageing are essential:</b> ageing should be seen not as a burden, but as a valuable life stage enriched by contribution.</li> <li><b>Create spaces for contribution —</b> volunteering, mentoring, and civic engagement — that keep seniors connected and empowered.</li> <li><b>Combat ageism</b> by fostering realistic and empowering portrayals of older people in society and media.</li> </ul> <p><b>Priorities:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>ESU as co-creators of our future. Active ageing strengthens Europe.</b></li> <li><b>Diversity in ageing requires diversity in policy.</b></li> <li><b>Ageism must end. Respect and dignity are fundamental human rights.</b></li> </ol>	<p>NEW actions:</p> <p><b>Build frameworks for rights and solidarity to give seniors a stronger voice in Europe's future:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop an <b>EU Action Plan to Combat Ageism</b> as part of a broader <b>Intergenerational Fairness Strategy</b></li> <li>Leverage tools such as the <b>EU Toolbox on Ageing</b> (developed by Commissioner Šuica).</li> <li>Underpin advocacy with global frameworks like the <b>UN Convention on Human Rights and Ageism</b>, or explore a <b>Council of Europe Convention</b>.</li> <li>Engage in dialogue regarding the elaboration of a UN convention on ageing</li> </ul> <p>To continue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Strengthen the voice and role of seniors</b> in shaping Europe's future, ensuring millions who feel invisible are heard.</li> <li>Bring inspiring messages and encouragement for <b>senior involvement in society</b>, addressing challenges such as demographic change, active ageing, and intergenerational solidarity.</li> <li>Contribute substantively to Europe's <b>social and democratic future</b>, with seniors as key actors.</li> <li>Promote <b>non-discrimination and positive narratives</b>, combating stereotypes and showcasing inspiring senior role models.</li> <li><b>Share best practices</b> at EU and local levels to make change tangible and effective.</li> <li>Support <b>active and healthy lifestyles, digital inclusion, and social participation</b> for seniors.</li> <li>Highlight and spread <b>examples of active ageing practices</b> that inspire and demonstrate impact.</li> </ul>

Major trends and key developments	Our aims to achieve	Actions 2025 - 2030
<p>Challenges in political policies and decisions with an impact on the rights of seniors:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Policy reforms</b> in pensions, labor markets, retirement, social security, health, and care directly impact seniors' rights and protection.</li> <li>▪ Rising populism and polarization put <b>democratic values under pressure</b>, reducing space for inclusive policymaking</li> <li>▪ <b>Budget priorities</b> shifting toward defense can <b>undermine social investment</b> in ageing and care.</li> <li>▪ Overall risk of <b>rights erosion</b> in a changing political and financial context.</li> </ul>	<p><b>ESU FOCUS 2 ACTIVE SENIOR CITIZENSHIP:</b> seniors with active voices in decision-making in political life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Influence reform policies shaping senior's rights and safeguard the rights of seniors</b> (pensions, healthcare, long term care, digital inclusion and inequalities across regions and social groups): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>/ Secure stronger recognition of ageing as a <b>cross-sectoral policy challenge</b> across all EU areas.</li> <li>/ <b>Elevate demographics in policymaking</b>, embedding an "all-ages check" in EU initiatives.</li> <li>/ <b>Strive for inclusive ageing policies and rights-based approaches</b> (non-discrimination, inclusion) in EU and national policies</li> <li>/ <b>Institutionalize intergenerational fairness</b> through dialogue, democracy, and participation.</li> <li>/ <b>Influence EU reforms</b> to ensure a <b>dignified life for citizens of all ages</b>.</li> <li>/ <b>Strengthen the political voice of seniors</b> at local, national, and European levels.</li> <li>/ <b>Strengthen seniors' political participation</b> through advisory councils and mechanisms to ensure representation in EU policymaking.</li> <li>/ <b>Shift the policy debate from cost-saving to rights and inclusion.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>ESU Leadership:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>/ <b>Strengthen ESU's policy capacity and influence</b> in European politics.</li> <li>/ <b>Position ESU as a leading voice in European policy making in ageing challenges.</b></li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ <b>Partnerships &amp; Networks:</b></li> </ul>	<p>NEW actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Contribute to the <b>Council of Europe 'New Pact on Democracy</b> 'through an intergenerational perspective</li> <li>▪ Advocate systematic integration of <b>demographic considerations into all EU policies</b>; promote an <b>intergenerational impact assessments</b> for EU proposals;</li> <li>▪ Reflect on the <b>United Nations</b> theme: "<i>Older Persons Driving Local and Global Action: Our Aspirations, Our Well-Being and Our Rights.</i>"</li> <li>▪ <b>Deepen involvement in the European People's Party (EPP)</b> to create greater impact: work with the Political Assembly of the EPP, the Congress, and the political groups in the European Parliament and the Parliamentary Assembly (see 'Bratislava Principles' regarding the role of the Vice-Presidents)</li> <li>▪ <b>Promote Digital Citizenship Education</b> in close cooperation (Year of Digital Citizenship 2025).</li> <li>▪ <b>Broaden ESU membership within and beyond the European Union</b></li> <li>▪ Deepen our ties with <b>AGE Platform Europe</b> at both the structural level, through participation in the General Assembly and Council, and within the specific Task Forces created by AGE.</li> <li>▪ <b>Co-organizing events</b> (e.g. with our key partner Wilfried Martens Centre for European Studies (WMCES), Robert Schuman Institute with a joint intergenerational conference in Budapest in April 2026).</li> <li>▪ <b>Engage strategically with EU institutions</b> to ensure senior's themes are priorities in all relevant directives and funding programs</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>/ <b>Enhance commitment of member organizations across Europe.</b></li> <li>/ <b>Deepen ties with longstanding partners</b> and expand strategic cooperation networks crucial to our visibility and impact.</li> <li>/ <b>Broaden membership beyond EU borders</b>, promoting shared values and tackling common ageing challenges.</li> </ul> <p><b>Priorities:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Inclusive Ageing Policies with rights-based approaches, non-discrimination and all-ages check in policies.</b></li> <li>2. <b>ESU leadership in representation and advocacy.</b></li> <li>3. <b>ESU leadership in building networks and creating partnerships.</b></li> </ol>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Mobilize cohesion funds and innovation tools</b> to support regions in demographic decline.</li> <li>▪ <b>Organise each year events</b> e.g. Spring conference, Summer academy and Autumn conference to provide accurate, evidence-based data and facts to support policy decisions and long-term planning.</li> <li>▪ <b>Build a strong reputation / voice in the media</b> through ESU opinions and statements.</li> </ul> <p>To continue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Representation &amp; Advocacy:</b> act as the united voice of seniors in Europe towards EU institutions, policymakers, member states, and partner organizations.</li> <li>▪ <b>Strengthen ESU's policy capacity and political influence</b> to shape debates on demographic change with structured input from seniors</li> <li>▪ <b>Influence EU and national decision-makers</b>, building coalitions, and pushing for rights-based, inclusive policies for seniors' interests</li> <li>▪ <b>Champion rights</b>, and push for real change at <b>every level, EU and national level</b>.</li> <li>▪ <b>Reach out to new senior organizations</b>, particularly those affiliated with the EPP family, not only within the EU Member States but also in neighboring countries.</li> <li>▪ <b>Representing ESU in other platforms</b> (e.g. SG's new role on the Council of AGE) to voice our concerns and contribute to shared policy goals.</li> <li>▪ <b>Collaborate with academic institutions / researchers for joint studies and producing meaningful outputs</b> (e.g. Seniors' Summer Academy) to deepen our intellectual contribution to explore issues like demography, ageing, intergenerational fairness, lifelong</li> </ul>
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		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>learning, and the future of social cohesion in Europe. providing accurate, evidence-based data to support policy decisions</li> <li>▪ <b>Value out network</b> from the <b>Wilfried Martens Centre</b> and <b>Konrad Adenauer Foundation</b> to the <b>Robert Schuman Institute</b> and <b>Robert Schuman Foundation, EZA, and EUCDW</b></li> </ul>
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Major trends and key developments	Our aims to achieve	Actions 2025 - 2030
<p>Challenges in economic and financial decisions (public budgets):</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Age-related public spending is rising sharply</b> (pensions, healthcare, long-term care), projected to grow substantially through 2070.</li> <li>▪ This growth puts <b>pressure on public budgets</b>, social protection, health and care systems, requiring structural reforms.</li> <li>▪ <b>Rights are at risk</b> due to budget cuts, conditional changes, or reduced adequacy of pensions and benefits.</li> <li>▪ Governments face <b>difficult trade-offs</b>: safeguarding pension adequacy versus containing public spending, leading to reforms (e.g. indexation rules, flexible retirement options).</li> <li>▪ <b>Labor market flexibility</b> and retirement reforms are reshaping work and ageing.</li> </ul>	<p><b>ESU FOCUS 3 LIFELONG ACTIVE AGEING AND INCLUSIVE PARTICIPATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Economic sustainability</b>: recognize older citizens as a resource; active labor market participation, flexible retirement, and lifelong learning opportunities strengthen both individual wellbeing and silver economic growth.</li> <li>▪ <b>Silver economy potential</b>: stimulate investment and innovation in goods and services for older people, turning demographic change into opportunities for growth.</li> <li>▪ <b>Active ageing start at work</b>: encourage policies that allow people to continue working after retirement (by choice), supporting both supplement pension income and social participation.</li> <li>▪ <b>Workplace innovation</b>: promote intergenerational collaboration in the workplace, it contributes to knowledge sharing, increase creativity and innovation.</li> <li>▪ <b>Lifelong learning &amp; knowledge transfer</b>: a basis for active participation, empowerment and</li> </ul>	<p>New actions:</p> <p>To continue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cooperate with the Conference of INGOS of the Council of Europe</li> <li>▪ Cooperate with the Parliamentary Assembly of the Council of Europe, EC and EP and the Local and Regional authorities</li> <li>▪ ESU promotion and action for Lifelong learning for active citizenship (WMCES, Summer Academy ...)</li> <li>▪ <i>Promoting examples of good practices that inspire intergenerational collaboration</i></li> <li>▪ <i>ILO?</i></li> <li>▪ <i>OECD?</i></li> </ul>

	<p>mental health to foster solidarity and social cohesion.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Inequality reduction:</b> advocate safeguards for pension sustainability, minimum pension levels, gender equality corrections, and targeted protective measures.</li> <li>▪ <b>Intergenerational fairness:</b> ensure equitable policies that balance the needs and contributions of all age groups.</li> </ul> <p><b>Priorities:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Deploy Silver Economy potential</b></li> <li>2. <b>Lifelong learning as a basis for active participation</b></li> <li>3. <b>Secure and Fair Pensions, measures to reduce inequalities</b></li> </ol>	
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Major trends and key developments	Our aims to achieve	Actions 2025 - 2030
<p>Challenges in social and societal policies, and decisions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Social rights, protection, and security are under pressure</b>, threatening seniors' wellbeing.</li> <li>▪ <b>Rising social risks</b>: poverty, exclusion, and ageism disproportionately affect older citizens.</li> <li>▪ <b>Cost of living pressures</b> — inflation, housing, and energy costs hit retirees hardest, increasing vulnerability.</li> <li>▪ <b>Financial insecurity</b> undermines living standards, with knock-on effects on health, independence, and social participation.</li> <li>▪ <b>Ageism and social exclusion</b> compound inequalities and weaken solidarity.</li> <li>▪ <b>Human rights, social cohesion, sustainability, and justice</b> are at risk in the current climate</li> </ul>	<p><b>ESU FOCUS 4 INTERGENERATIONAL SOLIDARITY</b> : strengthens the fabric of our society</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>European cooperation &amp; solidarity</b>: strengthen cross-border collaboration between senior organizations to foster mutual respect and shared responsibility across Europe.</li> <li>▪ <b>Intergenerational fairness</b>: promote dialogue and cooperation across age groups to break down divides and build stronger social cohesion.</li> <li>▪ <b>Dignity in later life</b>: ensure equal access, innovation, and sustainable financing of social security, healthcare, and long-term care.</li> </ul>	<p>NEW actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Anchor collaboration in <b>European Pact on Intergenerational Solidarity</b></li> <li>▪ Organise seminar on Housing in Norway (Bergen, November 2026)</li> </ul> <p>To continue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ ESU active partner in Civil Society</li> <li>▪ Celebrate special moments: e.g. World Elder Abuse Awareness Day, EU Day for Cooperation between Generations, UN International Day of Older Persons etc.</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Intergenerational solidarity:</b> value and benefit from the experiences, expectations, and contributions of all generations, strengthening inclusion and justice.</li> <li>▪ <b>Age-friendly communities:</b> design equitable and inclusive communities where all generations can flourish.</li> </ul> <p><b>Priorities:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Strengthen Intergenerational Solidarity.</b></li> <li>2. <b>Safeguard Dignity and Equal Access in Later Life</b></li> <li>3. <b>Attention to Age-Friendly Communities</b></li> </ol>	
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Major trends and key developments	Our aims to achieve	Actions 2025 - 2030
<p>Challenges in health care and long term care:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Ageing populations put pressure</b> on healthcare and care systems, services, and budgets.</li> <li>▪ Combined with a <b>shortage of healthcare professionals</b>, governments are pushed to reform healthcare, making recruitment and retention critical.</li> <li>▪ <b>Sustainability in healthcare and care</b> is no longer optional but an expectation.</li> <li>▪ Seniors increasingly call for <b>privacy, intimacy, and meaning</b> in later life.</li> <li>▪ <b>Loneliness among seniors</b> is a growing challenge that demands urgent attention.</li> <li>▪ <b>Housing solutions</b> — including new residential models — are essential to support autonomy and self-development.</li> <li>▪ <b>Healthcare staff shortages drive digitalization</b> in care, creating both opportunities and challenges, including the need for improved <b>digital literacy among seniors</b> (see focus 6 – digital inclusion).</li> </ul>	<p><b>ESU FOCUS 5 HEALTH CARE AND LONG TERM CARE</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Decent standard of living:</b> while people live longer, healthcare and long-term care systems must adapt to ensure dignity, autonomy, and quality of life.</li> <li>▪ <b>Safeguard access to healthcare and long-term care</b> as a basic right for all seniors across the EU.</li> <li>▪ <b>Ensure inclusive and affordable care systems:</b> accessible, high-quality long-term care, better support for caregivers and families.</li> <li>▪ <b>Holistic and integrated approaches:</b> shift towards preventive healthcare and integrated care models tailored to senior's needs.</li> <li>▪ <b>Innovation in healthcare and long-term care systems, infrastructure, workfloor organisation, skilled professionals:</b> bridging the gap between seniors' needs and the capacity of healthcare systems, with a view to secure sustainable financing and engaged care professionals.</li> <li>▪ <b>Promote active and healthy ageing:</b> strengthen prevention, reduce loneliness, and foster mental and physical well-being.</li> <li>▪ <b>Age-friendly environments:</b> design public spaces, transport, services, and housing policies that prioritize affordability, accessibility, and independent living (community circles, co-housing).</li> <li>▪ <b>Special attention to Human dignity for the most vulnerable or frail situations</b> (e.g. physical decline, psychological problems such as memory problems, dementia, gloominess, and social factors such as loneliness)</li> </ul> <p><b>Priorities:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Safeguard healthcare and long-term care as basic rights; guarantee access to inclusive and affordable care systems.</b></li> </ol>	<p>New actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Support "the New European Care Strategy"</li> <li>▪ ESU contribute to the Care Strategy Resolution</li> <li>▪ World Health Organisation ?</li> </ul> <p>To continue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Enhance long-term care policies and better integration of health and social services across EU member states.</li> <li>▪ Promote healthy ageing initiatives.</li> <li>▪ Undertake and promote playful, awareness-raising initiatives e.g. "Walk of Love" to raise awareness about senior issues. OPREPO</li> </ul>

	<b>2. Innovate and build Inclusive and Sustainable Health care and long-term care Systems</b> <b>3. Promote Prevention and Healthy Ageing</b>	
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Major trends and key developments	Our aims to achieve	Actions 2025 - 2030
<p>Challenges in technological and digital developments:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Digital exclusion means social exclusion</b> : living in an increasingly digital society, unfortunately, too many seniors are left behind.</li> <li>▪ <b>Accelerating digital transformation creates new risks</b>: lack of user-friendly digital tools, inequitable access to services, disinformation, cybercrime, automate data processing ...</li> <li>▪ <b>Digital transformation affects multiple rights</b>: access to services (administrative justice), data protection, non-discrimination and participation</li> <li>▪ <b>Digital exclusion and the opacity of algorithms</b> threaten access to public services and exacerbate the disadvantage of seniors.</li> </ul>	<p><b>ESU FOCUS 6 MEDIA DIGITAL AND AI LITERACY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>Rights-based approach</b>: guarantee non-discrimination, multi-channel access to services, and protection of fundamental rights in the digital sphere.</li> <li>▪ <b>Safeguard accessibility for essential services</b>: maintain in-person and telephone access for essential services alongside digital solutions.</li> <li>▪ <b>Digital inclusion</b>: bridging the digital divide is vital for seniors to safeguard access to services, stay informed, connect and participate in public and social life, take up civic engagement.</li> <li>▪ <b>Inclusive design of digital technology and tools</b>: require accessibility audits, plain language, and digital tools tailored to seniors' needs (e.g. healthcare, telecare, social contacts, civic participation).</li> <li>▪ <b>Digital literacy as part of lifelong learning</b>: push for EU-level initiatives funding senior-friendly digital education, intergenerational learning projects, and accessible platforms.</li> <li>▪ <b>Address digital challenges that makes older people vulnerable</b>: from AI and data protection to online disinformation and cybercrime.</li> <li>▪ <b>Promote empowerment</b>: engage seniors in the digital transition, ensuring they remain informed, empowered, and central to political and civic life.</li> </ul> <p><b>Priorities:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Protection of fundamental rights in the digital sphere</b></li> <li>2. <b>Digital inclusion and safeguard accessibility for essential services</b></li> <li>3. <b>Develop literacy as part of lifelong learning</b></li> </ol>	<p>New actions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promote ESU statement on Digital Inclusion</li> <li>▪ Cooperate on Digital Citizenship Education</li> </ul> <p>To continue:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Promote report on Media and Information literacy on age-related challenges (Council of Europe)</li> <li>▪ Promote Microsoft white paper</li> <li>▪ Cooperate with business partners and SMEs to raise awareness for multi-channel service design, accessibility audits and pilots on inclusive digital services.</li> </ul>

<p><b>Annex 2 : ESU – SWOT analysis</b></p>	<p><b>Strengths (internal)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Results achieved</b> over the past 30 years</li> <li>2. <b>Institutional access</b> through EPP</li> <li>3. <b>Access to a broad EU networks</b></li> <li>4. <b>Commitment of member organizations</b> across EU</li> <li>5. <b>Active substantive contribution</b> (ESU statement on Digital Inclusion, Academy, conferences, events, publications, newsletters, website, social media)</li> <li>6. <b>Dedicated voluntary team, committed volunteers + 12 VP's</b></li> </ol>	<p><b>Weaknesses (internal)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Fragmented visibility</b> outside EPP network (acquaintance with a political party may limit partnerships)</li> <li>2. <b>Limited public reach</b></li> <li>3. <b>Capacity gap</b> (extent of the workload, no professional staff, limited financial resources, governance and internal cohesion)</li> </ol>
<p><b>Opportunities (external)</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Impact of <b>ageing population</b> is <b>on the EU agenda</b></li> <li>2. <b>Extensive network of active senior organizations</b> (research, influencing policy, content creation, events, ...)</li> <li>3. <b>Current relevance of future-oriented topics that attract public opinion</b> (e.g. active ageing, ageism, sustainability of pensions, access to health care and long-term care, intergenerational solidarity, digital developments and inclusion, benefits of lifelong learning, well-being...)</li> </ol>	<p>Combination of external opportunities and our strong position. Actions to take advantage of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A1: Drafting a <b>policy document</b> for the EU Commission and Parliament (translating insights into actions)</li> <li>▪ A2: <b>Representing ESU in other platforms</b> (AGE, UN...)</li> <li>▪ A3: Participating in <b>Intergenerational Fairness Strategy</b></li> <li>▪ A4: Anchor collaboration in <b>European Pact on Intergenerational Solidarity</b></li> <li>▪ A5: Supporting "the <b>New European Care Strategy</b>"</li> <li>▪ A6: Operationalizing <b>Bratislava Presidency Principles</b> (striving for openness, dialogue and solidarity) + visibility and policy impact of ESU</li> <li>▪ A7: Strengthen close ties with the <b>EPP to have a greater impact on policy</b> with our substantive narrative and to integrate our narrative more fully into our partnerships (Age, etc.).</li> <li>▪ A8: <b>Broaden our memberships, deepen our discussions</b> on subject matters and emphasis our <b>representation through all channels</b></li> </ul>	<p>Combination of external opportunities and our weak position. Actions to defend ourselves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ <b>A1: Expanding a strong network of cooperation</b> with strategic partnerships crucial to our visibility and impact</li> <li>▪ <b>A2: Deepen our relationship with longstanding partners</b></li> <li>▪ <b>A3: reaching out to new senior organizations</b></li> <li>▪ <b>A4: building a strong reputation / voice</b> in the <b>media / public opinion</b> through <b>ESU opinions and statements</b></li> </ul>

<p><b>Threats (external)</b></p> <p>1. <b>Demographic shift</b> &gt; major challenges in various areas &gt; reshaping political, economic, financial and social policies and decisions &gt; leads to <b>reforms with significant impact / new risks for senior's interests and rights</b>.</p> <p>2. <b>Keeping up with overwhelming rapid changes</b></p> <p>3. <b>Pressure on democratic values, human rights, welfare, defense, social cohesion, ...</b></p>	<p>These are threats, but we are strong. Actions to strengthen us:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A1: Create an <b>EU Action Plan to Combat Ageism</b>, embedded in the Intergenerational Fairness Strategy</li> <li>▪ A2: Contribute to the <b>New Pact on Democracy of the Council of Europe</b></li> </ul>	<p>These are threats, and unfortunately, we are in a weak position. Actions for change or withdrawal:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ A1: <b>secure more stable and sufficient resources</b> in order to grow, reach out and deliver more impact</li> <li>▪ A2: <b>strengthen the involvement of Vice-Presidents</b> in both representational and substantive roles <b>to act more collectively and strategically</b> as a team</li> <li>▪ A3: <b>building expertise and resources</b> through collaboration with a <b>strong network of strategic partnerships, academic institutions / researchers</b> crucial to our visibility and impact</li> </ul>
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## Annex 3 : HORIZON 2030 – ESU's Strategic map

### Concerns of Seniors: *Ageing with Dignity, Security, and Joy*

# Autonomy and participation # Affordable care and housing # Safety, mobility, and independence # Intergenerational solidarity # Multicultural connection # Fighting ageism

### Our Vision: *Seniors as Full and Valued Participants in Society*

### Our Mission: *Together, we build a Europe of peace, prosperity, solidarity, and care — for seniors and future generations.*

### Our Aim: *ESU with greater impact. Strengthen the voice and role of seniors in shaping Europe's future*

- Broaden our membership.
- Deepen our discussions on subject matters
- Emphasis our representation through all channels and in political bodies - at all levels - to defend our rights and interests in European debates.
- Strive that senior citizens are formally represented in political decision-making bodies.
- Be a source of inspiration — promoting democratic values, inclusion, and human dignity.

### Our Strategic Objectives: *Voice > Visibility > Growth*

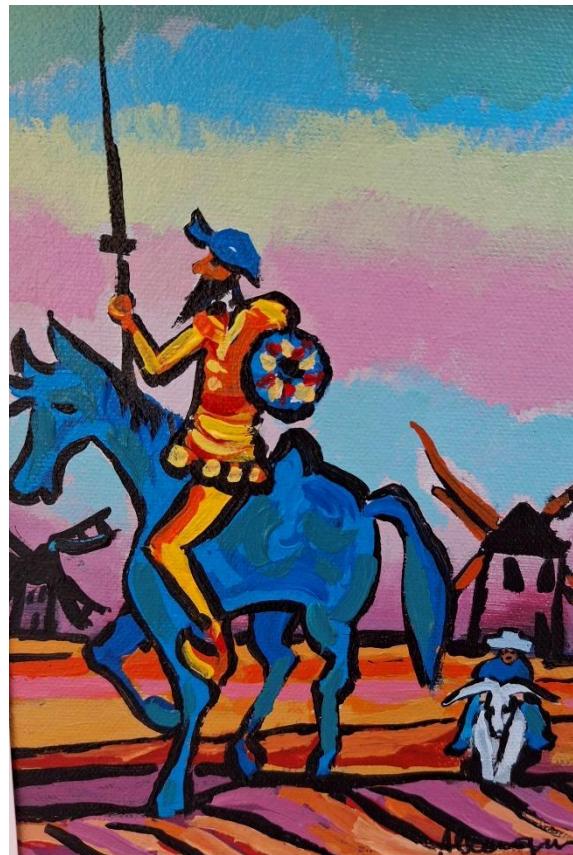
- Visibility and Representation
- Awareness and Advocacy
- Expertise and Knowledge-Sharing
- Cooperation and Bridge-Building
- Policy Capacity and Influence

### Our Focus Areas: *Building on Strong Foundations*

- ◉ Visibility and Positive Image of Active Ageing
- ◉ Active Senior Citizenship
- ◉ Lifelong Learning and Inclusive Participation
- ◉ Intergenerational Solidarity
- ◉ Health and Long-Term Care
- ◉ Media, Digital, AI and Financial Literacy

### Our Core Values

**#Respect #Fairness #Dignity #Solidarity #Equal Rights**



Inspired by the spirit of La Mancha,  
we are not fighting windmills like Don Quixote,  
but addressing the real and pressing challenges  
that millions of seniors face every day.



The ESU is a member association of the EPP.

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