



AGE Platform Europe Annual Conference

13 June 2019, Brussels

Equality and participation in older age: What role for social protection and education?

Interpretation: English, French, Italian

Venue: [Thon Hotel Brussels City Centre](#), Avenue du Boulevard 17, 1210 Brussels

Context

AGE Platform Europe is happy to invite you to its Annual Conference on 13 June 2019. The event will take place at a crucial moment regarding the European and international agenda on the rights of older persons. The **European Elections in May 2019** may bring radical changes the political landscape of Europe. At international level, the **United Nations Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing** will have completed its 10th session, discussing the new topics of access to social protection and of the right to education and life-long learning of older persons; all while determining legal elements of the right to long-term care and palliative care and the right to autonomy and independence. The **Sustainable Development Goals**, setting social and environmental targets for developing *and* industrialised countries are providing another relevant framework for social progress between 2015-2030

The AGE Annual Conference 2019 will reflect on the rights of older persons in light of these changing contexts. **What could be expected from the next European legislature? How to ensure no one falls between the cracks of social protection in old age? How to ensure an effective right to education for older adults?**



Programme

08:45 – 09:30 Registrations

09:30 – 09:45 **Welcome by Ebbe Johansen, President of AGE Platform Europe**

09:45 – 10:45 **Opening Session: Enhancing equal participation of older persons in society**

Opening speeches:

Johan ten Geuzendam, Adviser 'Equal Rights', European Commission DG Justice and Consumers Dir. D on Equality and Union Citizenship

Michael O'Flaherty, Director, Fundamental Rights Agency – video message

10:45-11:15: Coffee break

11:15-12:30 **Panel session 1: Social protection in old age – for all?**

Moderator and input statement: Liz Mestheneos, 50+ Hellas, Greece

Rapporteur: Juan Camilo Zuluaga, 50&piu, Italy

Participation in society can only be possible when people have the material means to participate. Therefore, social protection is a precondition for meaningful participation. The right to social protection has been discussed at the UN Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWGA), 10th session, but further reflection is needed on how it can be guaranteed in Europe. While most older people are covered by pensions, minimum pensions or other income support schemes, there are large inequalities in income, including the gender pension gap of 37% across the EU, but also groups with no pension/income coverage at all: informal carers, persons with disabilities (including disabilities acquired during working lives), persons living in extreme poverty, older migrants. How should they benefit from the guarantees of a universal right to social protection?

- **Martin Engman**, SPF Seniorerna, Sweden
- **Michel Huisman**, Le Gang des Vieux en Colère (Belgium)
- **Ettore Marchetti**, Policy Officer on Pensions and Active Ageing, DG Employment and Social Affairs – Unit C.2 on Modernisation of social protection

Interactive discussion with the panellists and participants

12:30-14:00: Lunch break

14:00-15:30 Panel session 2: The right to education, training, life-long learning capacity-building

Moderator and input statement: Ciaran McKinney, Age & Opportunity, Ireland

Rapporteur: Laura Christ, Oudere Vrouwen Netwerk Nederlands (tbc.)

Next to the material means to participate, older persons have a right to stay included in society through learning and education. The right to education has been discussed for the first time in its application to older people at the OEWGA 10th session. While the right is operationalised via prominent framework when applied to pre-school, primary, secondary and tertiary education, it has not been conceptualised in its application in adult education, life-long learning and to older persons. At the same time, the profound changes in labour markets and societies linked to digitalisation demand the ambitious roll-out of life-long learning policies. The session will discuss how a right to education can be developed and applied to older persons in this context.

- **Gina Ebner**, European Association for Adult
- **Alana Officer**, Ageing and Life course, World Health Organisation (through video)
- **Martina Ni-Cheallaigh**, Senior Expert for Skills, VET and adult learning or employment policies, European Commission Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion

Interactive discussions with participants and panellists

15:30-16:00: Coffee break

16:00-17:00 Conclusions from the panel sessions

Moderator: Heidrun Mollenkopf, AGE Vice-President and

Bundesarbeitsgemeinschaft der Seniorenorganisationen (BAGSO), Germany

Rapporteurs of each session will present their conclusions to the audience. The panellists of both sessions will be present as to complement the findings of the rapporteurs, and the audience will be able to add some last comments and reactions.

- Rapporteur on the right to social protection



- Rapporteur on the right to education and life-long learning

Interactive discussions with participants

Reactions:

Edmundo Martinho, Chair of the Working Group on Ageing, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe / Director of Santa Casa, Portugal

Humbert de Biolley, Deputy head of the Liaison office with the EU of the Council of Europe

Katarina Ivanković-Knežević, Director for Social Affairs, European Commission Directorate-General for Employment and Social Affairs

17:00-17:15 Closing remarks by Ebbe Johansen, President of AGE Platform Europe

