



SENIOR INTERNATIONAL

News from the European Senior Citizens' Union (ESCU)

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Prof. Gert Poettering

received a telegram from ESCU President, Dr. Worms, to congratulate him on his election as President of the European Parliament. He had previously successfully chaired the EPP/European Democrats parliamentary group and supported our Union.

“Old and young together - guaranteeing the future of Europe”

is the theme for the VI Congress of the ESCU which takes place from 29th September to 2nd October 2007 in Pulheim near Cologne in Germany. Member organisations and parties have already received details about the Congress Programme.

Alongside Brussels (General Secretariat office as of 1st March) and the office in Berlin

(at the office of the CDU Seniors' Union and staffed by Mrs. Ute Elias), the ESCU will be based: in Vienna (ESCU registered office in accordance with Austrian legislation and Treasurer's office) and in Luxembourg (headquarters of the “Helmut Kohl – Golden Badge of Honour”).

The Europe-wide “Alliance for Families”

- a project of the current German EU Presidency – is supported by the ESCU. Dr. Hermann Berié is a member of the Working Party and will take part in an international conference on demographic change in mid-April in Berlin.

The “Alliance for Action against Violence, Right-Wing Extremism and Xenophobia”

in the German State of Brandenburg has received an official offer of support by decision of the ESCU President. Our Union has already given support to its concerns in 2005 and 2006. It will participate with an information stand and discussion at “Democrats' Day” to be held in Halbe, southeast of Berlin, where a battle of encirclement with heavy loss of life raged at the end of the war. The ESCU ensured that right-wing extremists were refused a “Commemoration of Heroes” in front of the Waldfriedhof [woodland cemetery].

“European Year of Equal Opportunity for All”

A conference is to be held on this theme in the Czech Republic at which the ESCU will be present. At the instigation of the President, Dr. Dagmar Koutska, a member of the Board, held initial highly promising contact discussions in Prague.

Key demands of Austrian senior citizens

have been included in the country's legislative programme. Vice-Chancellor Molterer (Austrian People's Party) highlighted the model pension and healthcare system, the policy aimed at promoting families and children and the high employment levels – achievements that can now be built on in a coalition with the Social Democrats. With 270,000 members, the ÖSB (under the chairmanship of Dr. Andreas Khol) is the largest association in the ESCU and is heavily involved in national politics.

The EPP has awarded a Europe Medal

to Ulrich Winz, a member of the Board and editor of this Newsletter. At the instigation of the Senior Citizens' Union for North Rhine-Westphalia (chaired by Leonhard Kuckart), the award was presented by the chairman of the CDU Seniors' Union, Prof. Dr. Wulff, in Berlin on 14th December. Also present were ESCU President Dr. Worms and the boards of the CDU and CSU Seniors' Union. .

Prof. Dr. Weckerle, Chairman of the CSU Seniors' Union (Bavaria)

explained that he was keen to bring about the long-awaited meetings between the Passau district association and Czech senior citizens' association (KDU/CSL and the Freedom Union).