

EUROPEAN SENIOR CITIZENS' PASS

The introduction of a European Senior Citizens' Pass has been the subject of campaigning at the European Parliament for over 20 years now and has still not reached a positive conclusion, as documented in the attached summary. As explained in the documentation, it is no longer likely that an immediate or even a final realisation of the European Senior Citizens' Pass will be achieved. Nor do we expect any change in the consistently supportive attitude of the Parliament and the Commission. As ever, it is the response of national governments which is to blame.

The creation of a European Senior Citizens' Pass would enable elderly people in all European states to participate more readily in social and cultural life. This type of pass would encourage elderly people to take up more physical and mentally stimulating activities, as it would provide travel and therefore greater access to cultural venues such as museums, exhibitions, theatres, educational centres and libraries, both at home and in other European countries.

The European Senior Citizens' Union (ESCU) would be able to organise the introduction of the Pass, as has been proposed by one of its members, the Organisation of Senior Citizen of Cyprus.

It is undeniable that an official pass, i.e. one that is backed by all responsible EU institutions and especially one sanctioned by the Council of Ministers, would carry more weight and have a better chance of being realised for senior citizens, particularly as this route would bring certain important benefits:

- The Pass would result in a huge increase in profile and respect for the ESCU within the European media which at the moment isn't always sufficiently the case.
- Internally as well within the European Senior Citizens' Union the introduction of the Pass would yield a noticeable positive impact. It would reinforce the sense of belonging among ESCU members.
- A European Senior Citizens' Pass would also serve to recognise the significance and position of European senior citizens as citizens of Europe with equal rights. And this would apply not only as the Pass comes into use as intended but also simply due to the fact that they will be carrying a "European" pass in their pockets.
- It will also be a *fait accompli* that will bring lasting pressure to bear on the relevant institutions to introduce an official pass far more effectively than all the other approaches made so far have done. This is all the more so if the various press campaigns aimed at bringing the ESCU Pass to the attention of these institutions as well as to the whole of the media are effective.

The European Senior Citizens' Pass should be designed as described below:

The text should be in English as well as in the respective national language of the local member organisation distributing the Pass. There will be no specific age limit, as this will be determined by the local situation. For reasons of cost and simplicity, there will be no pass holder's photo. Nor will any period of validity be specified for the Pass. The Pass might therefore look like this:

Front:

<p style="text-align: center;">European Senior Citizens' Union (E S C U)</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Name of local distributing member organisation/<i>Name des ausgebenden nationalen Mitgliedsverbandes</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">EPP and ESU logo</p> <p>The holder of this pass is eligible to take advantage of all concessions available to senior citizens in the EU member states.</p> <p><i>Der Inhaber dieses Ausweises ist berechtigt, alle Vergünstigungen in Anspruch zu nehmen, die in den Mitgliedstaaten der Europäischen Union Senioren eingeräumt werden.</i></p>
--

Reverse:

<p>Surname/<i>Name</i> Forename(s)/<i>Vorname(n)</i> Date of birth/<i>Geburtsdatum</i> Nationality/<i>Staatsangehörigkeit</i></p> <p style="text-align: center;">Distributing organisation's stamp/<i>Stempel des ausgebenden Verbandes</i> Date of issue/<i>Ausstellungsdatum</i></p>
--

- Size (possibly credit card format) and material to be used still to be decided. This will be based on cost comparisons.
- Furthermore, it has still to be verified whether the Pass would be printed according to the working group's design centrally, i.e. by the ESCU General Secretariat, or by local member organisations. In the case of the former, local member organisations would have to advise the General Secretariat of the text in their own languages (and where necessary any additional text which might be required). Also still to be decided is where and how the pass holder's name should be entered.

Documentation:
Campaign for the introduction of a European Senior Citizens' Pass

- The **European Parliament** already agreed 1986 in a **resolution** that a European senior citizen's pass for people aged 60 and over should be introduced (Official Journal of the EEC No. C 148 dated 16/06/1986, page 61).
- The European Commission recommended to the Member States in 1989 that the pass should be introduced at the latest by the 1st of January, 1991 (**Recommendation** 89/350 EEC dated 10/05/1989, Official Journal of the EEC No. L 144 dated 27/05/1989, page 59). The purpose of the pass is to facilitate, in all member states, senior citizens' access to concessions available for public transport and cultural events.
- The Member States have **until today not** complied with this recommendation (recommendations are not legally binding).
- When **reminded by the Commission** on the 23rd of January 1991, Germany's federal government simply replied on the 19th of July 1991 that, according to Germany's constitution, this matter is the responsibility of the individual German states and local councils. They have informed these of the Commission's recommendation and have urged its application. Whether this actually happened, and with how much conviction, is not known. However, it is clear that there has still not been a positive reaction from the German states and councils.
- Even an intervention by Germany's **Secretary of State of its Ministry of Work and Social Affairs** on the 22nd of November 1991 in favour of an immediate introduction of the senior citizen's pass was unsuccessful.
- Various efforts tied in with the **European Year of Older People and Solidarity between Generations 1993** were equally unsuccessful.
- In November 1993 the **Federal Special Commission on 'European politics' of the Senioren Union** (senior citizens in the Christian Democratic Party) made the following resolution:

"The National Board of the Senioren Union is urged to put pressure on the relevant national bodies to encourage the realisation of the European senior citizen's pass, which has been demanded for years."
- In a **resolution** adopted on the 24th of February 1994, the **European Parliament**, prompted by resolutions issued by the European Senior Citizens' Parliament, reiterated "the need for a fast application of the Commission's recommendation dated 10th of May 1989 recommending the introduction of a European senior citizen's pass".
- The **regional association of Saxony-Anhalt's Senioren Union** put forward the following motion at the 5th national delegates' convention of the Christian Democratic Party's Senioren Union in September 1994 in Bonn:

”The national delegates’ convention of the Christian Democratic Party’s Senioren Union should decide to press immediately for the introduction of a senior citizen’s pass which will be valid in all countries of the European Union.”

The matter was accepted according to the convention’s decision with the comment, that further pursuit of this topic would form part of the Senioren Union’s ongoing duties.

- On the 10th of July 1996 the **Christian Democrats’ Federal Special Commission on “European politics”** adopted the following **resolution** regarding the “senior citizen’s pass”:

Taking into account the rising numbers and growing self-assurance of older people in the EU, the member states need to make a particular effort to facilitate older citizens’ participation in social and cultural life. The senior citizen’s pass would be a useful contribution to this. Its introduction would also be a recognition of the reconstructive effort made in and for Europe by the older generation following World War II. Lastly, such a pass would finally be a visible expression of the “Europe for Citizens”, a concept that has been much praised since Maastricht but has hardly been realised. Thus the Federal Special Commission has asked the German Federation and its member states and councils to “make a positive stand in the light of the current unsatisfactory progress of the introduction of the European senior citizen’s pass, thus encouraging other member states”.

- On the 8th of May 2004 the **Cypriot senior citizens’ organisation** (Organisation of Senior Citizens of Cyprus) suggested in writing that the ESCU should issue its own senior citizen’s pass for the members of those organisations belonging to the ESCU. At the same time it issued a draft based on the Cypriot organisation’s senior citizen’s pass.