

## Statement

### **1 October 2022 : FERPA and its member organisations mobilise for the rights of older people**

More than 20% of the European population is now aged 65 and over. Yet this population is particularly discriminated against in society. Older people are often misperceived, rejected, isolated and even mistreated, and are victims of many negative stereotypes that combine "ageism" and sexism: "old people are expensive", we hear too often, as if this were obvious and true.

The pandemic, which has hit the world, has worsened their situation, especially their "exclusion". They have become "invisible". Hundreds of thousands of elderly people have had no contact with their families or the outside world during this period. Yet the importance of social ties is vital for them, but also for society as a whole.

This is why FERPA (European Federation of Retired and Elderly People) and its member organisations are fully committed to the 1st of October, which since 1990 has been designated by the UN as the International Day of Older Persons. But for FERPA, more than a celebration or the memory of a day, or even a form of "good conscience", this day must be a day of struggle and mobilisation for the rights of older people, struggles and mobilisations that are necessary throughout the year.

FERPA supports this year's UN theme of "recalling the important role that older women play in addressing global challenges and contributing to their solution with resilience and courage". Too often ignored, discriminated against, even during their working lives, highlighting the vital role that older women play is essential for FERPA. However, this recognition can only be achieved if a number of fundamental rights are implemented, as FERPA demands in its Manifesto, fundamental rights for older women as well as for men.

For FERPA, the first priority is to combat poverty, which affects older people in particular, and women in particular. To this end, it is imperative that a minimum pension above the poverty line and the right to an adequate and indexed pension for women and men be established throughout Europe for all retired people, so that everyone can live in dignity.

It is also the right and access, geographically and financially, to quality health and long-term care for all, by implementing, at all levels of the Member States, sufficient means.

It is the right, especially at this time and through concrete measures, to provide adequate energy and essential services.

It is the right to quality housing that takes into account the needs of older people.

Finally, and without this list being exhaustive, it is the inclusion of older women, and more broadly of all older people, at the centre of all policies, guaranteeing gender equality and their involvement in all decisions affecting them. This also requires the development of inter-generational solidarity to avoid opposition between the generations.

FERPA rejects all forms of assistance, but demands real rights, which recognise that older people are capable of making their own decisions and citizens who should enjoy all social rights.

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FERPA and its member organisations are therefore mobilising on 1 October, in the most appropriate and relevant forms depending on the country, in order to make these demands known and to relay them to political decision-makers at all levels. For its part, FERPA will transmit them to the UN, the European Institutions and, internally, to the member organisations of the European Trade Union Confederation (ETUC).

**YES to rights for the elderly, NO to the exclusion of pensioners and elderly people.**

September 2022