

Joint Meeting of the Task Force  
Monitoring RIS and the Expert  
Group for the UNECE Conference  
on Ageing

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Mainstreaming ageing in EU countries (Commitment I)

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**Five years after the II World Assembly on Ageing, the global approach towards a society for all ages is still pending**

Only a few themes or perspectives, for different reasons, has become specially prominent:

- Control of the impact of ageing on public expenditure.
- Need to increase employment levels, particularly of women and older persons.

## **EU: Weak progress of social dimension affecting an integrated approach to ageing**

- Priorities on growth and employment after the revised Lisbon Strategy had had an impact on social objectives.
- Failure on consensus around the European Constitution has stopped some advances on social rights.
- Complexities associated to the process of expansion of the EU.

## **Social cohesion role as a productive factor tend to be forgotten**

- Investing on participation, integration, social protection and the fight against discrimination, contributes to create growth and stability (i.e. expansion of the service sector in the social field).
- Social investment is also a key element of citizens' legitimation.

# Approaches to ageing by the EU

- Renewed Lisbon Strategy.
- OMC on social protection and social inclusion.
- Actions on ageing Discrimination.
- European Forum on demographic changes.

# Lisbon strategy guide EU priorities

- Ageing is seen as a challenge for growth.
- Addressing ageing challenges require a strategy of:
  - Reducing public debt ratio
  - Controlling increase of public expenditure for social protection.
  - Extending working lives by increasing employment rates of older workers.
  - Reform social protection systems.

## EU: Open method of coordination on social protection and social inclusion

- **Objective 1:** *“Promote social cohesion and equal opportunities for all through adequate, accessible, financially sustainable, adaptable and efficient social protection systems and social inclusion policies”*

*An objective fully compatible with building a society for all ages.*

Objective 2: Interact closely with the Lisbon objectives on achieving economic growth and more and better jobs and with the EU's sustainable development strategy.

- Social protection has to contribute to improve employment.
- Social inclusion policies should focus on transition to work.
- Fiscal and benefit systems would be revised taking into account active labour market policies.
- Pension system reforms should strengthen incentives to work longer, restrict early exits from the labour markets and tighten the links between contributions and benefits.
- Labour markets would be open to older workers.
- Integration of migrants a key emergent challenge
- Balance between informal care and formal care affects labour supply, particularly of women. Health and long-term care sectors will expand in the future and will demand human resources

# Ageing and Social Protection Systems: Key issues

- Give incentives to extension of working lives.
- Promote full contribution careers.
- Ensure adequacy of benefits (two levels: reduction of poverty risks, standard of living).
- Reinforce gender and age antidiscrimination legislative framework.
- Coordinate more Social Security with active employment policies, training and health policies and active ageing strategies.

### **Objective 3: Strengthen governance, transparency, and the involvement of stakeholders in the design, implementation, and monitoring of policy**

- NAPs need to create structures to involve civil society in their social policy planning.
- Pension reforms need to be built on consensus. Commitments to automatic or regular review mechanisms help citizens to plan.
- The interface between health provider and care providers, as well as among central, regional and local levels is crucial for effective coordination.

# EU Age Discrimination framework

- 2000 of the Treaty opened european competences on age discrimination.
- Age discrimination is the ground of less developed regarding current EU directives.

# The recent European Commission Communication on “The demographic future of Europe – from challenge to opportunity”

## Main elements

- **The challenge is not insurmountable** if we make good use of the current brief period of “demographic bonus”.
- **Need for an overall strategy** in dealing with ageing.
- The source of the problem is not higher life expectancy, rather the inability of current policies to adapt to the new demographic order and the **reluctance of businesses and citizens to change their expectations and attitudes.**
- Member States are facing a **problem of retirement rather than a problem of ageing.**

# European Commission Communication on the demographic future

## 5 core policy directions

- Promoting demographic renewal in Europe.
- Promoting employment in Europe: more jobs and longer working life of better quality.
- A more productive and competitive Europe.
- Receiving and integrating immigrants in Europe.
- Sustainable public finances in Europe: guaranteeing adequate social security and equity between generations.

# Ageing is more than a demographic change

- New initiatives and discussions around the European Forum on demographic changes and the demographic future of Europe need to be expanded towards this approach

# Initiative by the German Presidency

- Resolución del Consejo EPPSCO sobre la contribución de las personas de mayor edad al desarrollo económico y social.s

***“To mainstream ageing in all policy fields with the purpose of bringing societies and economies into harmony with demographic changes and achieve a society for all ages.”***

***RIS: Commitment I***

- *A holistic approach*
- *A participatory, non discriminatory and inclusive one.*
- *A lifecycle, gender sensitive and intergenerational perspective*
- *Acting through coordinated and integrated policies*
- *Gathering evidence based support to those policies*
- *The development of appropriate policy tools*
- *A sharing endeavour for different actors in society*

## EU countries reality on mainstreaming ageing: An issue to be assessed

- . Ageing challenges are on the agenda.
- . Holistic approach is called but it is not clear it is really happening.
- . Discrimination remains a big issue.
- . Active and inclusive approaches are encouraged but also responsibilities are transferred sometimes.
- . Evidence based gathering has progressed strongly but somewhat unbalanced.
- . Integrated and coordinated policies or a summing up of different sectorial actions???
- . Mechanisms and tools for ensuring mainstreaming of ageing perspective are not present in many members States
- . Stakeholders and civil society involvement has increased but mainly from consultative status or voluntary basis.

# Suggestions for the review

- Address answers to ageing challenges and opportunities from a broad social cohesion perspective.
  - Only a broad perspective can ensure a global and integrated approach.
  - Focus on mechanisms used for mainstreaming ageing at national level.
- Revise how the “multigenerational life-cycle approach” is being applied in relevant public policies:
    - **Salaries.**
    - **Education and training**
    - **Inclusion**
    - **Health**
    - **Housing.**
    - **Taxation.**

# Concluding remarks

- Ageing is more than an economic issue.
- More emphasis is needed on a change of culture about ageing.
- Those societies that will change earlier will be more cohesive and will progress further.