

Panel discussion on Intergenerational Collaboration  
Marie Keirle

- 2 or more generations putting their strength/forces together for the benefit of 2 or more generations. All depending on fewer and fewer to support them.
- Demographic challenge: 4 generations
- It operates within families, but also within society at local and national level
- It is multidimensional: financial, emotional, social...and it impacts our everyday lives

**1. Stock taking:**

- A general feeling that intergenerational collaboration is under strain even in countries where it was traditionally very effective
- Several reasons - changes in family patterns, poverty, conflicts, social protection systems (which reduce dependency)
- Official statistics very misleading

However there is strong evidence to indicate solidarity within family exists, both financial and in kind – childcare, elderly care (for the young elderly).

Image of the elderly being a burden, especially financially still too often prevails

**2. Challenges:**

- Weakening of International collaboration means a threat to social protection systems on social cohesion, and could lead to intergenerational conflict.
- Be it that the elderly are seen as too powerful (voting wise) or are excluded (even threatened)
- Focusing on opportunities, on the contrary shows: win win approach
  - Intergenerational collaboration is vital to the adaptation of social protection systems
  - Complementarity – key word – strengthen social cohesion, avoid human waste of potential
  - We must find new ways of promoting intergenerational collaboration even if this is not easy

**3. Ways ahead:**

- Necessary global approach as too focused policy on one generation could be detrimental to the other
- Necessity for participative policy making
- Necessity for internationally coordinated approach – UNECE, EU, Council of Europe
- 6 main policy areas –
  - 1. better access to the labour market for all generations
  - 2. family friendly policies ways of reconciling family and professional lives
  - 3. social services

- 4. role of education to help awareness of all generations and also as a good field for intergenerational collaboration (from basic learning to new technologies)
- 5. Encourage intergenerational collaboration initiatives, exchange of good practices and civil society and local level government involvement
- 6. ensuring good visibility to contributions of all generations and reshaping the attitude of the media

All in view of promoting mutual respect.

All the best, Marie