

STATEMENT ON BEHALF OF EAPS

1. The European Association for Population Studies is a scientific association which members (from all over Europe and beyond) are scientists from a variety of disciplines who are actively engaged in the study of European population trends and future prospects.

EAPS is the major inter- and multidisciplinary forum for European population studies and for discussion on the most relevant demographic issues.

EAPS plays a key role in building European research space in population studies.

One of the basic aims of EAPS is to stimulate the interest in population issues among governments, international and national organisations and general public.

As a scientific association we are convinced that a sound solid knowledge base is indispensable for better understanding the complex interrelationships between population, society, and economics; we strongly believe that population-related policies have to be firmly knowledge-based.

EAPS provides such knowledge through stimulation of scientific interdisciplinary debate on societal and policy implications of population dynamics.

The European Association for Population Studies does not have any political or policy priorities but acts for high-quality research, results of which may be useful to policies.

2. The activities of EAPS cover a broad spectrum of population issues, including fertility and family; living arrangements and households; health morbidity and mortality; internal and international migration; population aging; population projections; population and development; historical, theoretical and methodological issues.

EAPS regularly organises conferences such as the European Population Conference (every two years), seminars, workshops and working groups meetings.

The last European Population Conference, was held in August 2003 in Warsaw, Poland, under the general title: “European Population: Challenges and Opportunities”. The particular scope of the EPC 2003 was “the new demography”

of Europe, including both the European demographic situation after the second demographic transition, implications of the enlargement of the European Union, and consequences of political transformation of Europe.

3. The unprecedented demographic changes in Europe create unprecedented policy challenges. Proper responses to them can be formulated only by using outcomes of research – although sometimes it may be difficult for policy makers to accept scientific results which de-mystify various ideologies.

Demographic research should be a basis for validation of current policies, their adaptation and reformulation as well as for defining new policy instruments.

4. Newly emerging population changes in Europe are complex phenomena on themselves – both for research and policy reasons. At the same time, demographic processes are strongly interrelated and dependent on social, cultural and economic contexts.

In order to define best policy responses to demographic challenges, simultaneous scientific and policy consideration of population issues is required.

Consequently, an integrated approach both in research and policies is indispensable.

Population research can and should bring relevant, scientifically grounded information and knowledge to policymakers.

As I stated before, this knowledge should be integrated into, and used for policymaking.

A good dialogue between the research and policy communities is needed.

For this to materialise, policymakers should be aware of the most recent demographic trends, their determinants and consequences, as well as possible future developments.

EAPS wishes to contribute to raising population awareness among policymakers and politicians and recently started a Committee on Population Awareness in Policy Making to come up with proposals.

One objective will be to “translate” the outcomes of demographic research to policy, especially at the European level.

Of course, we hope that more awareness will yield more understanding and mutual respect.

5. We believe that for integrated demographic research as the basis for coherent population-related policies the activity of reliable and comparable data is of particular importance.

It has to be emphasized that international Europe-wide surveys providing standardized cross-national comparable data are vital for adequate description and understanding of demographic dynamics in Europe.

Survey micro-data supplemented with contextual macro-data can give a proper basis for monitoring and forecasting population trends as well as for the evaluation of policy instruments.

6. As a scientific association EAPS welcomes an open dialogue with policymakers. The European Population Forum 2004 which gave an opportunity of exchanging views between representatives of academia and other non-scientific communities as well as with policy makers, on the most important issues of demographic developments in Europe, is a good example of such debate.

We hope that this good practice will become a regular standard in the years to come.