

UNECE 2012

Ministerial Conference
on Ageing

ENSURING A SOCIETY FOR ALL AGES

Promoting quality of life and active ageing

Compilation of Abstracts



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FEDERAL MINISTRY OF
LABOUR, SOCIAL AFFAIRS AND
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Aşkın Aşan

Vice-Minister, Ministry of Family and Social Policies, Turkey

The proportion of population over 65 age to general population was 7,34% in 2011 but this proportion is expected to reach up to 22% in 2050.

Considering this fact, especially in the last decades administrative and legal regulations have been made in Turkey which are of non-discriminatory nature, aim at increasing the capacity of the elderly, target integration of families into the social system, ensure effective and productive aging and highlight social rights.

On the other hand, taking into consideration the fact that health problems increase or access to certain types of services including health services gets more difficult as one ages, we have accelerated our work on raising public awareness and creating “Age Friendly Cities” in line with the principle of “Active Ageing”.

In this respect, Ministry of Family And Social Policy develops its policy on elderly people with the contributions and opinions of elderly persons in order to ensure that ageing no longer constitutes a problem and becomes productive era of life.

László Andor

EU-Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion
“The European Year of Active Ageing 2012”

In 2012 the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations turns the spotlight on efforts to mitigate the impact of population ageing in Europe. To tackle this issue, the European Union is endeavouring to facilitate older people’s access to the labour market, encourage their participation in society and strengthen their ability to live independently for as long as they can. Rather than ending when the Year terminates, these efforts are intended to continue and intensify, for the sake of the individuals involved, their families, and society as a whole. An expanding market for products and services enabling older people to live independently will mean the economy also stands to gain from active ageing.

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Ludovica Banfi

Programme Manager Social Research, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, *Austria*

Multiple discrimination in access to and quality of healthcare in the European Union
The experiences of older people belonging to ethnic minorities

Building on the recently completed project ‘Inequalities and multiple discrimination in access to healthcare’, FRA’s contribution will explore the barriers, the needs and the multiple forms of discrimination experienced by older people belonging to ethnic minorities when accessing the health system. The research is based on qualitative interviews conducted with more than 300 healthcare users and healthcare professionals in 5 Member States (Austria, Czech Republic, Italy, Sweden and the United Kingdom). The findings contribute to the debate on the ‘horizontal directive’ proposed by the European Commission. Such a directive would extend protection against discrimination beyond employment to other grounds, including age.

Daniela Bas

Director, Division for Social Policy and Development, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA)

The Global Aging Picture

It gives me great pleasure to represent the Division for Social Policy and Development of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs at this second ECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing for review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the Regional Implementation Strategy.

Age discrimination, mobility and accessibility limitations are raised as a major concern in relation to older persons and employment. Social protection systems are still relatively weak or under development. Very few countries have free universal health coverage for older persons and some have turned to insurance models requiring individual and government co-funding. Few countries have instituted policies to help older persons remain in their own homes in terms of housing, but about half do provide community and residential services. Standards for residential care are usually enforced by legislation or regulations, but accreditation systems are generally lacking. Only a limited number of Member States have specific legislation to guard against elder abuse. Significant gaps exist in mainstreaming ageing into wider national development frameworks and away from a welfare approach.

There are a number of structural obstacles to the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action in most member countries. Obstacles include a poor knowledge of current approaches to the issues of older persons as per the Madrid International Plan of Action and the formulation, implementation, follow-up and evaluation of policies for them; as well as the lack of accurate, reliable, timely and comparable data on older persons, disaggregated by gender, place of residence (rural or urban areas), age group (to account for differences in needs and challenges facing the “young old” (60-79 years old) and “the oldest old” (80 years and above)), and social, economic and family situation;

In conclusion, yes, in general, we can celebrate the success of increasing longevity and healthier lives. At the same time, many societies are not able to provide decent living conditions, opportunities and basic rights to their older members.

Under these circumstances, the rapidly increasing numbers of older persons in both developed and developing countries is daunting. For that reason, it is particularly timely that initiatives to improve the prospects of the older persons of the future be implemented now.

As we approach the 2015 deadline of the United Nations Millennium Development Goals and embark on the formulation of a development agenda for the coming era, we must envision a new development paradigm that aligns demographic ageing with development and economic and social growth.

Lidia Bratanova

Director Statistics Division, UNECE

Regional Cooperation in Supporting Evidence-informed Policies on Ageing

Why is it important to have evidence-based policy-making? The intervention will provide examples from the four priority themes of the Ministerial Conference, illustrating how evidence regarding labour markets, participation of older persons in society, health and independence in older age and intergenerational solidarity can be translated into efficient policies. Examples are highlighted from UNECE member States and from the regional cooperation within UNECE. While data availability has improved at country-level during the past years, capacities need to be further developed to translate research into policy-recommendations. The UNECE will need to be further strengthened as a platform for regional exchange of research outcomes and their implications for appropriate evidence-based policy decisions.

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Valentina Buliga

Minister of Labour, Social Protection and Family, *Republic of Moldova*

By joining the Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002 (MIPAA), Republic of Moldova had assumed the responsibility to undertake actions for settling issues related to population aging and integration of elderly in national policies. The Regional Strategy Plan determines as well the main priorities emphasizing the need to promote measures for extending the participation of elderly people in the economic and social life, strengthening the relations between generations as a priority.

Undoubtedly, the framework policy approach should include the analysis of demographic aging subjects, both in terms of the impact on the social protection of the population system, as well as relating difficulties specific to aging. In the new vision of demographic changes, there is the need to bring the issues related to poverty of elderly people to the forefront, as a consequence of low level of income and pensions, failure of specialized medical services and lack of cheaper drugs for the elderly people, as well as a considerable decrease in the degree of their social integration, increased level of their isolation and withdrawal from community activities.

Given the country sustainable development priorities and the tendency for EU accession, in the best interest of the country, has been assumed the priority for demographic development and promotion of policies aimed at eliminating risks in human development areas. The policies include the strategic vision, highlighting the need to coordinate economic development related to dynamics, number and age structure of the population, which at the moment, unfortunately, is not denoting favorable characteristics for Moldova.

Without effective promotion of demographic policies, the recovery in the birth rate and changing the migration flows, experts are predicting significant changes in population structure, having an impact on the strategic and economic development, raising new demands and problems, in the view of adjusting to a more matured society.

Thus, for solving the problems caused by negative demographic trends in the country, by Government Decision nr.768 of 12 October 2011, has been approved the National Strategic Program in the field of Demographic Security of the Republic of Moldova (2011-2025). The Program outlines the actions aimed to ensure the demographic security, based on viable principles of sustainability and economic security, social cohesion and solidarity among generations.

It has been taken into consideration the fact that the adjustment to demographic aging societies, supposing the understanding by the society, that the increase in the share of the elderly population will create, firstly, a growing pressure on the social security systems and health care security schemes, on the offer on the labor market and the home care system, etc.

In this context, at the request of the Government and the initiative of the Ministry of Labor, Social Protection and Family, with the support of the UN (UNECE) Economic Commission for Europe, has been developed and published a Road Map for integrating aging policy in the development policies of the Republic of Moldova. In the process of elaboration and national consultations, the document has been coordinated with national counterparts and correlated to overall development policies, includ-

ing the objectives of the National Strategic Program in the field of Demographic Security. The Road Map on aging includes the in depth assessment of the aging situation in the country, both in terms of conditions and the opportunities of the elderly people, as well as reflecting their problems in the existing policies. The assessment is realized in a participatory manner, involving consultation with a range of stakeholders, supplemented with the conclusions made through field missions, for a better knowledge of the reality, policies, institutions, data and existing researches.

This evaluation places Republic of Moldova in a unique position, undertaking a deep assessment and a contended analysis of the necessary measures to be included in plans for sustainable periods.

Certainly, through the implementation of the Road Map, will be increased the awareness raising (sensitized) of the entire society on the needs of the elderly people, being aware of the fact that an aging society requires the preparation for such kind of conditions, same as the conceptualization and reorientation of the future plans concerning population.

The purpose achieved through the Road Map is aimed at elaborating recommendations for the improvement of compliance with the ten MIPAA commitments, which resume themselves for the insurance of the organic coverage of the aging issues in all political spheres, for the harmonization of the society and the economy in line with the demographic changes, for the development of an accessible society for all ages.

Thus, the aging topic will take a more solid based place on the strategy agenda for social and economic development and governance, as there is the political will for solving the demographic problems and the acquisition of aging problems. The list of operational documents concerning social areas, as pensions and health, confirm the fact that the Government is engaged to reduce poverty among old people and take care for their further social protection.

At the level of functional framework of governance, it will be introduced as well the normative act on institutionalization of the Road Map, in the view of implementation of the UNECE recommendations on policy guidelines on aging issues, which is planned to be approved by Government in 2012.

The main principle of these policies is based on the acceptance of the fact, that a state having a lot of old people does not mean a society composed of inactive people, consuming only the resources, but on the contrary, there is the need to reconsider the manpower of old people, to value their professional life and experience, both, for their families and for economic activity or/and the community. Consistently, it is needed to be created such conditions, which could allow the removal of all obstacles that bring to isolation and discrimination of old people.

Sotiroula Charalambous

Minister of Labour and social insurance, Cyprus (EU presidency)

Population ageing has a profound impact on societies and has become more pronounced over the last decade. It affects labour markets, health care, social security, long-term care, education, social protection and social inclusion, as well as the relationship between generations. Increasing longevity and decreasing birth rates have created a considerable number of challenges.

Population ageing presents an opportunity to address and ensure intergenerational reciprocity and promote solidarity between generations. It also presents an opportunity to promote societal participation, strengthen social cohesion and prevent discrimination, as well as integrate persons in vulnerable situations into society.

Consolidated efforts can be undertaken in the following areas: (1) Fostering productive working and retirement lives and promoting life-long learning through active policies which keep seniors active while investing in young people as well; (2) promotion of non-discrimination policies which encourage cooperation, including measures to eliminate stereotypes about the role of each generation in society; (3) reconciliation of work, family and private life through "family friendly"; (4) actively promoting innovative assistive technologies and services that can help the elderly live independent, healthy and physically active lives; (5) taking into account the gender perspective when designing policies. We must ensure that policy measures and actions at both national and global level are consistent and mutually supportive, always taking into account that population ageing directly and indirectly affects people of all ages and both sexes.

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Patricia Čular

State Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, *Slovenia*

Stimulating intergenerational dialogue and solidarity between the generations; a shared responsibility

The idea of strengthening the Intergenerational solidarity and Inter-generational dialogue was re-exposed in 2005 in the Green Paper of the European Commission, dedicated to demographic change. The ideas in this book had a significant impact on the development of Slovenian Ageing Strategy in 2006, which had a subtitle: solidarity, harmony and quality aging. On the basis of this Strategy our Government established the Council for solidarity, good intergenerational relations and quality ageing of the population in Slovenia. The Council was composed of representatives of government, NGOs, social partners and science. The president of the Council was the representative of older people.

The experience with the work of this Council helped to improve our understanding of intergenerational relations. In particular, we have seen that the issue of intergenerational solidarity, is much broader than just the issue of relations within the family. Nor does it include only younger and older generations but increasingly the so called middle- sandwich - generation. When talking about solidarity between the generations, we must be aware that this is an issue that is crucial in connecting the entire societies in a variety of areas: in Social Work, Family Policy, Education, Environment, Housing and Urban Development, Transportation and Mobility, Employment and Quality Working Life, Pension Systems, Health and Long term Care ...

We find that intergenerational cooperation and solidarity represent a glue in the society, which connects different parts, and significantly contributes to the balance of the society. Solidarity between generations, between different parts of society, between regions and countries is the basis for the modern Europe.

A frequent obstacle in this area are prejudices that lead to ignorance of other generations and hence fear between generations. Promoting intergenerational solidarity it is the obligation of all stakeholders in the society, especially government bodies.

I am convinced that as we are talking a long time about mainstreaming ageing and we also have to start talking about mainstreaming the intergenerational solidarity.

Slovenia is currently faced with a challenge of adopting several legislative acts in the social protection area that will have long term effects on all generations. The government is aware of the importance of a dialogue and integration of all generations in the long-term decisions and search for a consensus.

In the process of preparation of the new legislative acts, the principles of cooperation and solidarity between generations will be promoted.

Jane Falkingham

Professor of Demography and International Social Policy
University of Southampton, UK

Harmonizing population ageing with economic and social development: Which approaches work?

Europe's population is ageing, with both an increase in the proportion of older people and more people surviving longer. The extension of life expectancy is one of society's greatest achievements but also presents one of its major challenges. Reconciling population ageing with continuing economic and social development demands a shift in policy thinking, both in terms of how 'age' is defined and how welfare systems interact with individuals and families to promote well-being across the life course. Economic development depends on a productive and active labour force; social development requires opportunities for life long learning, volunteering and healthy active ageing as well as support structures for when health falters. Balancing the two at the macro level necessitates institutional arrangements that support individuals in balancing the demands of paid and unpaid work and other activities (such as learning and leisure) at different stages of the life course. This presentation begins by examining the evidence for an ageing population and asks what happens if we move the imperative away from a purely demographic definition of age. It then turns to examining the policy options that would support both economic development, such as changing the age of retirement and fostering higher labour force participation; and social development, including the promotion of social participation within and beyond the family. The presentation will argue that it is timely for European policy makers to think about life course sensitive policies that maximise the economic contribution of older people as workers, consumers, and citizens and that activity support intergenerational exchange and solidarity - promoting work-life balance and protecting entitlements.

Recommendations include:

1. Move from a chronological definition of age defined simply by birthdays towards a multi-dimensional conceptualisation reflecting biological, economic and social functioning and abilities;
2. Support policies that extend working lives and increase labour force participation rates at ages above 50;
3. Promote life-long learning and training, supporting older workers in a rapidly changing technological work
4. Facilitate work-life balance policies and practices, enabling workers to combine paid work with family commitments across the life course
5. Promote systems of social protection that recognise contributions in both paid and unpaid work

Oscar Franklin

International Programme Manager HelpAge International

Older Citizens' Monitoring - Developing services that improve both older people's lives and the policy response to societal ageing.

Social inclusion takes many forms. Some are outlined here. Older people have much to contribute as volunteers, and volunteering for older people has many benefits to the volunteers, their clients, civil society, and society at larger. Adequate income is important for dignified old age, giving older people agency and status in the family and in society. Non-contributory pensions are an easy way to achieve this, and are affordable. Age-friendly services delivered by the voluntary sector are vital to maintaining older people's independence, dignity, and wellbeing. Information and advice services that are tailored towards older people help with keeping older people independent. Evidence can be generated by the services or by propagating specific approaches such as Older Citizen's monitoring. National networks of organisations that are in touch with the daily reality of older people's lives can provide good-quality evidence, quickly, about the effects or the unintended consequences of new policies, the implementation of programmes of work that affect older people, and the views of older people on proposed changes or reorganisations of services.

Recommendations:

- Provide or facilitate the development of meaningful volunteering opportunities for older people, providing services that are in demand and that improve older people's independence, well-being, and social inclusion.
- Provide information, advice and services that are tailored for older people, and that are equipped to both improve their lives and capture data on issues affecting older people.
- Use the above services to gather information and evidence on the trends affecting older people, and the consequences of policies and programme delivery.

Robert Gal

Senior Researcher TÁRKI Social Research Institute, Hungary

The best way to promote participation and guarantee non-discrimination of older persons is to increase the typical age-limit beyond which this promotion and guarantee becomes necessary. In other words, policies should aim at preserving the competitiveness of people in higher ages.

Ageing is a two-fold process, biological as well as social. Physical and intellectual capabilities decrease, social, in particular labour market, skills become outdated and obsolete. The two processes can and should be tackled separately. Societies can do more in the latter front by opening up their education system to middle aged people and providing them with ever changing general, non-specific skills that allow them to learn into new, more promising professions or acquire further job-specific skills and keep up with developments in their old profession.

Ageing of a cohort is affected by the age-composition of society. When UNECE countries prepare their elderly population for an ever older social environment the global context should be kept in mind. Efforts to promote participation and guarantee non-discrimination in an ageing society, which compete with other societies that age later or more slowly, could face more severe constraints than one may think.

Vitalija Gaučaitė-Wittich

Chief, Population Unit, UNECE

Overview of the ageing situation in the UNECE region: summary of findings from the national reports on the implementation of UNECE RIS/MIPAA

Over the last ten years, the ageing of population was a dominant feature across all UNECE countries. And in the coming decades, the extent and pace of ageing in the region is not expected to abate: the median age of the region's population will move up from 37.6 years presently to 41.8 years by 2030.

The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) and its Regional Implementation Strategy (RIS), both adopted in 2002, provide the main policy framework to direct the response to population ageing among UNECE member States. It also requires reviewing every five years the progress made in implementing MIPAA/RIS commitments in ten key areas including health and well-being, employment, social participation and intergenerational solidarity.

In the present review and appraisal of the developments since MIPAA/RIS was adopted, and in particular during its second implementation cycle (2007-2012), most UNECE member States reported major progress in policy areas such as *mainstreaming ageing, reforming social protection systems, and further developing health and care systems*. However, they also indicated that main challenges remain in these same areas and identified new emerging issues that must be addressed in an inter-generationally balanced way in the coming years. It was noted that implementation of the MIPAA/RIS in the UNECE region during the second cycle occurred in an environment of a financial crisis that was accompanied by economic, social and political instability in some parts of the region.

The UNECE countries will be entering into the third cycle of implementation of MIPAA/RIS (2013-2017) with distinct awareness of the enduring demographic change and with an increasing recognition of both challenges and opportunities that population ageing generates in the region. The recent economic downturn in many parts of UNECE region will likely to have a lasting impact on social and economic environment in which the MIPAA/RIS commitments will be carried out.

Bjørn Halvorsen

Norwegian Ministry of Labour

In this very brief contribution I'll like to focus on *the transition from work to retirement* among seniors aged between app. 50-70 years of age. What seems to be the *main exit routes*, the main drivers, barriers and factors behind this transitions – and for whom? What are the main policy strategies and measures to prevent and reduce the size and speed of this transition in socially acceptable ways? And what seems to be the achievements, outcomes and challenges so far?

All this very briefly as an *input for discussions and exchange of experiences*. My starting point is that from a Nordic country, and especially *Norway*.

My starting point of value is also that I think that (paid) work and high labour force participation is good for most people, for enterprises and for the society as well. We should try to develop “*win-win-win*” solutions for individuals, enterprises and society, I think.

I think I'll list up *six main exit routes and factors for seniors on the labour market*, namely:

- (1) The Workplace Environment approach
- (2) The Reduced Health and Disability route
- (3) The (long term) Unemployment route
- (4) The Flexible Retirement route
- (5) The Formal Barriers (age limits etc)
- (6) The Informal Barriers (uncertainty, attitudes, discrimination)

These routes and drivers and factors are also reflected in many of the 10 UNECE Commitments – especially the commitments no 3-6 (economic growth, social protection systems, labour market responds and policies, and life-long learning and training. They are also reflected in the draft “Vienna Ministerial Declaration” part I “Longer working life...”

Doing this I also think it is adequate to nuance and divide between some main approaches like

- The supply side and the demand side factors on the labour market
- Keeping or withholding a job, changing a job or seeking a job and recruitment
- The Gender aspects – differences between men`s and women`s life-span
- A resource view versus a “problem” view on seniors

Now some further comments and a few words to each of those mentioned six exit routes and exit factors, trying to keep these four main approaches in mind:

Workplace Environment Approaches

Almost everybody find it important to be well estimated – from colleagues, friends and leaders. For seniors this may even be decisive whether they want to keep on working or not – especially if and when they are in a position that they can choose if they want to retire or not. With extended access to flexible and good pension arrangements more and more seniors aged 60+ can say: "If the job don't need me, I don't need the job" To be seen and estimated as an individual, according to their competences and experiences seems to be one of the most important and decisive factors behind retirement or not. This is simply about good leadership and good colleagues and good working environment. So easy and so difficult!

In the Nordic countries there are traditions for *tripartite cooperation* between the social partners on both the employee side *and* the employer side *and* the government on labour market and wage setting questions – both on national level, on branches levels and on enterprise level as well. *In Norway* we have such a tripartite agreement and cooperation on *labour market inclusion policies*, aimed at (i) reduced sickness absence, (ii) inclusion of people with reduced health or handicap and (iii) of seniors and elderly. All three goals are relevant for seniors, although the third one is explicitly aimed at seniors. This might be one factor behind the rather high and slightly increasing labour force participation and real retirement age among Norwegian seniors.

(1) The reduced Health and Disability route

This is the main exit route from the labour market for Norwegian seniors in their 50-ies. The prevalence of disability pensioners is very high in Norway: About 20 per cent of the population aged between 55-59 years old and about 30 per cent of the population between 60-64 years old are receiving a disability pension in Norway. About 2/3 of all economically inactive / retired persons between 50-64 years old in Norway say that their economic inactivity is due to sickness / permanently reduced health or disability. This is something of a paradox, all the time the general health situation in Norway is quite good for most people, and that the average life expectancy is high. But there are important social and regional aspects and differences here. The medical and vocational rehabilitation is a bit fragmented, with quite weak outcomes. Behind these high disability figures there are also important elements of structural and long term unemployment hidden. How to prevent and reduce the inflow to disability pensions in socially acceptable ways is being put high on the Norwegian political agenda, and has been so for several years. But without substantial achievements so far.

I am glad that the draft Ministerial Declaration highlights both the transition from work to retirement as well as health and work environment factors. These should be better combined.

(2) The (long term) unemployment route

The unemployment rates are low in Norway, and especially among seniors. Seniors are over-represented among the long-term unemployed, however. And as mentioned above, structural unemployment is an important element behind the inflow to disability pensions in Norway. It is not easy at all to get a new job for a 55 years old, unemployed industry- or construction worker. I think maybe we should to some extent (re)consider our mix of universal and targeted or tailored labour market measures and employment services. The Nordic countries use to have quite a universal profile on their labour market measures and services. Everyone should be treated as individuals, regardless of age, gender etc. But it might not be so easy for a 55 years old unemployed person to join job-seeker clubs etc together with 20-25 years old school dropouts etc. Maybe some more tailoring, senior-network approaches etc might help? What are the experiences and outcomes in other countries?

(3) The Flexible Retirement route

Recent Pension reforms use to have widened the access to flexible pension arrangements: More individual possibilities of choice about when to take out your old age pension and by how much: Graded pensions and part-time work have been more accessible and popular, especially among seniors between 60-70 years of age. What are- and could be the future opportunities for seniors to have part-time jobs, time-limited engagements, self-employment etc? How to stimulate this in proper ways? What are the social gradients? Most age-flexible old age pension solutions are cost neutral. The earlier you take out your pension, the smaller the pension amount per year, and vice versa. What about those with low wage incomes and abrupt working carriers? A lot of them may not have a real opportunity to such a flexibility; their pension will simply be too low for them retiring early. Poverty fosters poverty! How to prevent the egalitarian and gender-equal principles of social security?

(4) Formal Barriers – Age limits etc

The formal and general age-limit in Norway is 70 years. From this age you can be dismissed from job without any other reason than age alone. The flexible pension arrangements allow and stimulate you to continue to work and acquire additional pension rights up to the age of 75. This opportunity will then in reality be limited to people in liberal occupations or self-employed persons. There are discussions about increasing the age limits also, and there are arguments for and against such a change. What are the situation, the policies and experiences in other countries? What are the good strategies and practices here?

There are also specific and lower age limits for different occupations and branches, such as policemen, firemen, chauffeurs, pilots etc. The reasons are both special demands to the type of work, including demands to safety for third persons etc. Not seldom such age limits are the age limit results of negotiations between the social partners, and often they have historical origins. What are the good political approaches, solutions and practices here, and what are the evidences and experiences?

(5) Informal Barriers – Attitudes and Age Discrimination

There are also often lack of knowledge, uncertainty, prejudice and discrimination about seniors and older person's workability and productivity etc. There are of course anti-discrimination legislation and Ombud institutions and so on. In Norway the social partners also have an important role here – especially as a part of the tripartite Inclusive Workplace Agreement and cooperation. A special agency in Norway – *Center for Senior Policy* – provide the government and the social partners with information and influence on these issues, both on national-, regional-, branches- and enterprise levels. I think this is a kind of good practice example. This is also in line with the draft *Ministerial Declaration point I (c)* “creating evidence-based labour market policies.... etc and... “Promoting positive attitudes towards senior employees as transmitters of knowledge and experience to younger workers and combating age discrimination in the labour market.” < Check the quoting >

Werner Haug

Director, UNFPA Eastern Europe and Central Asia Regional Office

Population ageing has become one of the most significant demographic processes of modern times. Many countries, as an inevitable consequence of the demographic transition and the shift to lower fertility and reduced mortality, are facing unprecedented numbers and proportions of older persons.

But from an individual perspective ageing is not linked to a specific calendar age be it 60 or 65. A healthy lifestyle throughout life is of critical importance to reach old age in good health and well-being. If we look at ageing from the perspective of building and maintaining capabilities throughout the life course, of equitable intergenerational relations and quality of life in dignity and independence, we can develop models of ageing that consider older persons as active participants and a resource for a society where all ages can prosper.

The 1994 Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing of 2002 developed a comprehensive agenda to guide governments, the private sector and civil society to face the challenges and fulfill the potential of population ageing. Critical to the success of the Madrid Plan is the promotion of human rights of older persons an essential foundation for the delivery of “a society for all ages”.

International agreements also call upon data collection and research for the identification of the needs of older persons, quality of life measures and risk factor assessments and they all stress the importance of the better coordination of programmes and services for older persons among national and local governments, NGOs and the private sector.

In many countries of the region UNFPA is engaged in supporting governments and civil society to implement international agreements on ageing through comprehensive policies and programmes that support intergenerational solidarity, foster healthy lifestyles and enable older persons to live independently and in full respect for their skills and human rights.

Hilde Hawlicek

Austrian Council of Senior Citizens Organisations

Stimulating intergenerational dialogue and solidarity between the generations: a shared responsibility

I'm speaking for the Austrian Senior Council, a legally based umbrella organisation of Austrian Senior Organisations. We are working for the interests of older people and are integrated in the negotiations with the government concerning issues of elderly people like pension-system, social and health services, matters of consumers and more.

The Austrian Senior Council has claimed and worked out together with the Social Ministry and other Ministries "The Federal Plan for Senior Citizens" 2012, that is based on the analysis of scientific and empirical studies. The primary objective is to minimise inequalities and to develop and raise the quality of life of Senior Citizens. The plan is linked with a long term implementation concept in form of a plan.

Since the Madrid Conference a change has taken place. We are no longer discussing the catastrophe or danger of longer life expectancy. We are now discussing the demographic challenge and how to ensure a society for all ages and we see a significant progress made by many Member States. Especially the European Union is an important partner:

The EU has designated 2012 as European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations and not to forget the European Day of Solidarity between Generations since 2009 on the 29 April.

Eurostat made it public: 90% of EU 27 citizens don't see old people as a burden of society.

Only in "The Medias" are communicated still wrong prejudices. Older people are presented in a negative way, as a problem and a burden of society. It is necessary to win the Medias as cooperation partners for a change in perception.

Intergenerational dialogue and solidarity between the generations:

My statement is based on my long experience of working in Youth and Senior Organisations and on results of the Austrian Senior Plan 2012 and the Statistical Portrait of the EU 2012 from Eurostat.

In the existing controversy about intergenerational solidarity, I'm on the side of the optimists, who consider a high level of societal solidarity and great support for the welfare system.

Welfare states with a sustainable and safe pension system, adequate social security and health care and access to information and education for both generations are a precondition for solidarity. With this basis there is less potential conflict between generations over the distribution of resources.

- National budgets show no strain of youth and family subsidies because of pension system raises. Sustainable and safe pension systems are not crowding out investments in youth, they are insuring also later the pension for the younger

- No competition on labour market: longer working old people are not causing less occupation of the younger
- Generation contracts are a balance between the needs of old and young people
- Family is a sustainable solidarity system with a high level of consensus. Solidarity, help and financial transfers are taking place. In Austria and also in EU 27 90% of parents and grandparents transfer money for the younger (in Austria 250 € per month. and 50% are involved in child care and care for older people
- **But** outside the families there is a poor density of intergenerational contacts. 2/3 are claiming few opportunities for older and younger people to meet, to exchange ideas or work together. They wish that governments, schools or local authorities should promote better understanding.

But social contacts inside families are o.k.: only 10% persons aged 65 and over felt left out of society (loneliness and social isolation).

NGO's work: is therefore necessary. Implementing of intergenerational initiatives and projects

- Researches concerning the situation of older people followed by actions
- Researches and campaigns concerning an accurate image of old people in Medias
- Competition and price for a senior friendly villages („Seniorenfreundliche Gemeinde“, a yearly action of the Senior Council)
- „Generation dialogue“ political youth and senior organisation are discussing together to strengthen solidarity, confidence and understanding (started 2012 inside PVÖ)
- Cooperation between youth and senior organisations
- Special projects in Austria: OMY Old meets Young – Project in kindergardens, Story-Telling and to read out in kindergardens, “Grandmother picture”, “Grandmother cooking”, Singing and painting together;

Learning together: Older are helping with school exercises. Younger people help older with new technologies. These projects in adult Education Centers and Senior Organisations are a great success

Eurostat: considerable growth of Silverserver's: in the last five years the number of elderly internet users is grown from 10 to 25%. LLL is possible!!

Difficult, but really necessary would be more actions against discrimination of very old women and migrants.

Activities like these can help to promote quality of life, active ageing and solidarity between generations.

Renate Hornung-Draus

Vice-President of the International Organisation of Employers and Managing Director of the Confederation of German Employers (BDA)

Promoting longer working life and maintaining work ability

Many countries in Europe are facing significant demographic changes. In contrast to many other regions, birth rates in most European countries are falling, while life expectancy is increasing. In the light of these challenges it is important to review and adapt existing policies on international, European and national level. The UNECE Regional Implementation Strategy for the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing is important and provides a good framework of commitments promoting ways how member states can meet the challenges and opportunities of population ageing.

Since the Madrid International Plan for Action on Ageing was published in 2002 fundamental changes have taken place. Due to the recent economic crisis many countries in Europe face major challenges which have sidelined the issue of coping with the demographic change. On the one hand, in many countries youth unemployment has increased drastically. Consequently, great efforts have to be made to better integrate young people into the labor market. But at the same time – while there is an immediate need to focus on the employment of young people – efforts to keep the increasing number of older people longer in active working life need to be maintained in order to meet the challenges of demographic change and the shortage of skilled labor in Europe.

In this context social partners have an important role to play in shaping the adjustment of social protection systems and enabling companies, employees and labor markets to respond to demographic change.

On international level the ILO contributes to applying the commitments of the Madrid International Plan for Action on Ageing by promoting healthy and reasonable working conditions as well as sustainable enterprises. Moreover, with its social protection floor the ILO defines a set of basic social security guarantees that shall ensure that everyone has access to essential health care and to basic income security. These strategies must be implemented on national level and take into account the different national circumstances.

Also at the level of the European Union increased efforts to meet these challenges are being undertaken. The year 2012 has been declared the “European Year for Active Ageing”. In this context the European employer organizations are conducting a project on “Age management policies in enterprises in Europe” to share best practices and identify further actions regarding age management policies. Also the flexicurity approach – supported by the European Social Partners – can play an important role in keeping older workers longer in active working life and should therefore be promoted.

Dalmer Hoskins

Director Division of Program Studies, US Social Security Administration, USA

Promoting and strengthening solidarity between generations as a key element of social and economic development

There is widespread consensus that the UNECE region will experience profound societal changes as the population structure shifts to one characterized by the increasing number of persons living 20 or more years in "retirement" after they leave the labor force. Research will be needed to analyze the transformations associated with demographic ageing and to contribute to designing appropriate policy responses. Most countries possess an abundant quantity of statistical information generated by their administration of health care, pensions, taxation and the periodic census of the population. The challenge is whether this vast store of information, often spanning several decades, is being adequately evaluated to assess the well-being of different categories of the population as they age, particularly those categories likely to be more vulnerable in old age -- women, the disabled, immigrants, low-income earners, etc. What information should be available to policy and opinion makers to assess both the strengths and weaknesses of intergenerational solidarity? What information should be provided to the public in a timely and understandable form to evaluate the financial solvency and effectiveness of health and social security systems? What lessons can the UNECE countries learn from each other with regard to better understanding the present and future conditions of their older populations?

Irene Hoskins

Immediate Past President, International Federation on Ageing (IFA)

Stimulating intergenerational dialogue and solidarity between the generations: a shared responsibility

Much has been written about the importance of the social contract and of fostering solidarity across and between generations by promoting intergenerational dialogue as well as by identifying those intergenerational factors that, instead of separating generations, firmly bind them together.

While the desire to enjoy and adhere to basic human needs and values, such as intra-family solidarity, care and love, continues to be a normal human response across families, societies and generations, the reality is often different when it comes to filling the needs of older persons where gender and age in particular plays an important role and may obstruct full participation in society.

A recent UNECE publication on Intergenerational Family Relationships in Ageing Societies (Pearl A. Dykstra, Department of Sociology, Erasmus University, Rotterdam, 2010) concluded that population ageing is not only about older persons but differentially affects people of all ages and both sexes. Ageing societies are embedded in a complex web of vertical and horizontal ties... Further, it is important to address explicitly the ways in which legal and policy arrangements constitute differential opportunities and constraints for men and women across generations in families. While it is often presumed that intergenerational solidarity is based primarily on income transfers in the form of social security and pensions from the younger generation to the older generation, there is also evidence that both economic and non-economic transfers are occurring in the reverse direction.

Against this background of both vertical and horizontal ties as well as the gender perspective, there are four areas in particular which deserve attention: (1) optimizing opportunities and fulfilling the needs of different generations, including continuing education (life-long learning); (2) access to paid work without age discrimination as well as access to satisfying volunteer opportunities; (3) the rights, needs, and opportunities for older workers; and (4) intergenerational family relationships, voluntarism, and caregiving within and across generations. All of these areas are particularly sensitive to gender implications and it is necessary to apply both a gender lens and age lens when thinking about policies to address opportunities for older men and women across the generations.

Susanne Iwarrson

Professor at the Lund University, Sweden

Member of the EU-Programme "Futurage: A roadmap for European Ageing Research"

Creating an Enabling Environment for Health, Independence and Ageing in Dignity

Traditionally, we mainly focus on the ageing individual and population – much less on environments and even less on the interaction between the person and the environment. Independence in daily functioning and the well-being of older European citizens in the future will be significantly enhanced through an improved understanding of the interrelations between ageing persons and their environments in areas such as home and out-of-home environments, intertwined with the impact of technology and products. In order to ensure full integration and participation of older people in society, the societal infrastructure must be accessible and enable activity and participation in areas such as housing, public facilities and public transportation. Based on current research on person-environment interactions, there is evidence that combinations of functional limitations as related to the environmental barriers present are the major contributors to the generation of accessibility problems. Actors in physical planning need more knowledge on functional capacity and how the process of ageing interacts with physical environmental barriers in the generation of accessibility problems.

The home is the major place for ageing and thereby also an important arena for the provision of social services and health care. While objective aspects of housing such as housing standard and accessibility are important, based on current research on home and health we know that perceived aspects of housing are crucial for activity, participation and health. There is a complex interplay between objective and perceived aspects of housing and health, with marked differences among sub-groups of older people. While our knowledge on such dynamics is insufficient, there is a need for more individualized housing counseling and housing provision. With this follows needs for the development of evidence-based social services and health care that can be provided in different forms of housing, carefully adapted to the individual situation.

Against the strong research evidence of the positive effects of physical and mental activity to support active and healthy ageing, there is an urge for foresighted health promotion and preventive strategies, going beyond those of housing and care provision. Most important, mobility is often compromised by functional decline. Assistive technology that supports mobility and physical activity has seen much development, but in several European countries there is low awareness of what the use of mobility devices would add to quality of life and well-being, and the provision systems are not well developed.

Adding to the complexity of the process of ageing, with current medical advances larger proportions of the population will live for many years with chronic diseases and disabilities, coming with even larger challenges for society to create environments enabling activity, participation, independence, and ultimately - health.

Vladimir Khavinson

President, European Branch, International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics

Priority Directions of Research on Ageing in Europe

37 National Gerontological societies from 33 European countries (22 000 gerontologists) represent an important force of dedicated professionals working in the field of ageing. IAGG's Global Ageing Research Network aims to get together 500 worldwide Centres of Excellence (the majority being from Europe) dedicated to all fields of gerontology. Their experts will be involved in highlighting the importance of Gerontology. Another step to elevate the prestige and significance of gerontological science is the IAGG ER award for advances in gerontology and geriatrics in 3 disciplines (biological, clinical and socio-behavioral sciences). Of certain help for the major stakeholders and policy-maker could be the project providing an overview of the state of research in gerontology in various European countries which has been launched by the IAGG ER by publication of the special issues of the Journal Biogerontology as a first step. The consolidated experience may help to drive the changes and to use the resource of the ageing population. One of the example endeavors to slow down ageing in humans is the Programme "Prevention of age-related pathologies and enhancement of vital resource of the organism" which has been elaborated by Russian gerontologists and utilized by clinicians from the countries of the former Soviet Union. It is based on a 35-years long experience of studying the mechanisms of ageing and disclosing up-to-date views on the biological role of small peptides in humans and animals which consists in maintaining genetic stability aimed at the enhancing vital resource of the organism. It is aimed to improve health and quality of life, to extend the period of active life of elderly people, as well as to enhance the economic effectiveness of utilization of labor resources due to decreased morbidity and disability and premature death rates. Application of peptide bioregulators in humans led to a significant rehabilitation of the main physiological functions and a reliable mortality decrease in different age groups. This approach to the prevention of ageing is based not only on experimental and clinical data, but also on technological developments displaying world novelty.

Recommendations: 1. *new paradigm of healthcare systems must meet the challenges of ageing societies and provide access to the best available quality of life based on utilization of modern knowledge and technologies;* 2. *Creating effective partnership between major stakeholders: government, researchers, NGOs, private and public sectors, volunteers;* 3. *Establishing consumer-directive and preventive care;* 4. *Gradient (health-related) pension patterns;* 5. *Rethinking older generation contribution and possibility of sharing the experience.*

Irene Kloimüller

Austrian Scientist and Coordinator of the Austrian Programme “Fit for the future – maintaining workability”

Promoting longer working life and maintaining workability

I am convinced, that a multifocal approach is necessary to maintain or enhance workability and thus to make a longer working life possible:

- 1) Work reform: design work more flexible in the sense of quantity and create it qualitatively more attractive for (older) employees. Here companies need support and counselling, because many of them have not learned about needs and potentials of different age groups yet. Also the integration of people with reduced workability back to work should be achieved, by adjusting workplaces, contents, procedures etc.
- 2) Attitude reform in society: Work itself can be a potential for health, social development or recognition. Still many look on work as load and burden, which one should overcome as quickly as possible. A rigorous effort should be taken- beginning already in school - to alter the image of work.
- 3) Retirement reform: reduce the quota of early retirement pensions by creating incentive systems for employees to make working longer more attractive and by abolishing models, e.g. that allow healthy people to retire early only due to insurance years (Hacklerregelung).
- 4) Cooperation reform: maintain workability needs a coordinated harmonised inter-disciplinary and inter-ministry co-operation. Disciplines like education, health, social-policies, economics, labour etc. should pull together to be successful.

In my statement at the panel I will highlight some models of good practice in Austria especially on the work and attitude level. One example will be the Programme “Fit for the future – maintaining workability”.

Giovanni Lamura

National Institute on Health and Science of Ageing, Italy

In my contribution I will refer to some of the social and economic aspects of ageing mentioned by the “Road Map for European ageing research” produced by the Futurage project. In particular, I will highlight the core messages of the priority research areas dealing with “Inclusion and participation in the community and in the labour market” and “Guaranteeing the quality and sustainability of social protection systems”, ranging from ageism, migration, spirituality, volunteering and labour market participation, to accessibility, quality and efficiency of service provision and support to informal carers.

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Aart C. Liefbroer

Head, Social Demography Department Nederlands Interdisciplinair Demografisch Instituut, *Netherlands*

Attention to all age groups is needed for a better understanding of the conditions facilitating the solidarity between generations in the UNECE region

The potential for intergenerational solidarity is high across the UNECE region. This is reflected in high levels of social, emotional and financial support within families, in strong feelings of obligation among children towards parents and among parents towards children, and in large public transfers across age groups in societies. To better understand intergenerational solidarity, attention needs to be paid to both 'downward' transfers from older to younger generations and 'upwards' transfers from younger to older generations. In all countries, both young and old are in favour of intergenerational transfers, but societal conditions might hamper such transfers. Therefore, it is important to study which policy measures might facilitate intergenerational transfers, both within families and within society more general.

Key recommendations:

Future research on intergenerational solidarity should pay attention to both older and young adults, their potential for solidarity and the factors that hamper the realization of that potential.

Support for intergenerational solidarity is high both among older and younger adults. Policies should focus on ways to stimulate young and old to capitalize on this strong support.

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Ariela Lowenstein

Head Center for Research & Study of Ageing, University of Haifa, Israel

Active Ageing and ensuring social inclusion of older persons in the UNECE countries

It has been recommended that EU flagship policy, 2020, will include initiatives to encourage Active Aging for an intergenerational stable contract. The presentation will discuss attempts to re-engineer the meaning of ageing where factors that coincide with this include: A downward drift of the age associated with 'older people', an attempt to re-define dependency ratios, blurring of distinctions between different life course stages. Today, we witness a rejection of policy based on decline. Currently most policy makers have embraced notions of active ageing, based on critiques of ageist attitudes in health and welfare services. The focus will, thus, be on 'active aging', with its various related concepts: 'productive aging', 'healthy aging' 'successful aging'. Implications of such 'New Ageing' approaches are, at first sight, a significant improvement on previous views. The analysis though will focus also on some weaknesses: tendency to eclipse problems of poverty and the natural strategies that older adults and their families adopt. In order to balance these approaches social policy and new innovative models for social inclusion at International and EU level will be used to critically examine how definitions of older age are changing. A critical step is to focus on diverse social, familial and cultural contexts. To foster social inclusion there is a need to critically examine relationships between generational groups in the context of an ageing population. This is often nascent within a number of pressing contemporary social issues: workplace planning and reducing age-based discrimination in the work place; generational equity and health care rationing, family care and elder mistreatment.

Recommendations: The long-discussed notion of empowerment might be useful, but it requires a concrete implementation framework and evaluation. Creating an international platform to engage governments, industry, NGO's, and academia to discuss outcomes of demographic change. Smart policies and programs promoting intergenerational solidarity will be a "growth enabler" to any region. Thus, understanding, manifesting and measuring its impact and creating a new social contract are essential. Finally, usefulness of knowledge about ageing can be enhanced by multidisciplinary efforts and findings' translation into policy, practice and public awareness.

Wolfgang Lutz

Founding Director Wittgenstein Centre for Demography and Global Human Capital, *Austria*

Population ageing and future human resources in Europe

In this intervention I will make a case for not only considering the population by age and sex but also by other key characteristics such as health status and level of educational attainment. Since more educated people tend to be healthier at any given age, work longer and are more productive the challenges associated with population ageing will look quite differently when this human capital dimension is explicitly factored in. I will show examples that illustrate this point numerically for several countries.

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Francesco Marcaletti

Coordinator of the European Social Fund project “Active Ageing Lab Net”, Italy

Recent reforms (dec. 2011) have increased the statutory age for retirement in Italy, gradually shifting up to at least 67 years the threshold for the entitlement of an employment-based earning-related pension. This situation represents a challenge for the social sustainability of a familistic welfare regime as the Italian, where adult/older people (especially women, whether working or not) are burdened of the care-giving tasks to be provided to the households' very old members. Anticipating this challenge, the Active Ageing Lab Net project (AALN), with its focus on the quality of the processes of ageing at work, was established in 2009 with the support of the ESF by the Autonomous Province of Trento, with the aims of doing networking at national and transnational levels; collecting good practices in the field of active ageing and transfer them to policy makers, public authorities and social partners; supporting the local welfare institutions in fostering a new culture of growing old at work and within the community; steering the social dialogue and the implementation of tripartite agreements at local level. AALN has addressed recommendations in order to: intensify the cooperation among public institutions; train social actors; customise active ageing policies according to specific local features.



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Bernd Marin

European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, Vienna

Measures for guaranteeing well-being in old age and those for promoting active ageing. How to balance these measures?

1. There are no measures, neither collective institutional, nor individual behavioural ones, which can “guarantee well-being in old age”. There is no - and cannot be – any insurance-like “guarantee” for such multi-faceted and complex phenomena as well-being, quality of life, happiness, life satisfaction – a long, felicitous, good life. That said, there are many well-proven and time-tested institutional provisions for specific domains of well-being of older people, such as guaranteeing income security and generous pension wealth, as well as access to lifelong education, health, personal care and social welfare services, in order to best shape the opportunities increasing longevity offers. Given current chronic resource constraints, social innovation is the key to successful shaping the chances that ever longer healthy life years provide towards human development. And there are well-known philosophies, theories and practical recommendations to promote healthy and active ageing, enabling us to age better, to grow old in grace, because “older” people are “us as we age” - at all ages.

► Thus: let us raise the right queries to get the appropriate answers on well-being.

2. Jay Olshansky’s statement “the only control we have over our lives is to shorten them” is a good counterbalance against the widespread “anti-ageing” flim-flam, a fraudulent promotion of forever young dreams. But more is needed than just exposing this imposture: we actually *can* successfully try *not* to shorten our lives and even more to *upgrade* the quality of whatever is left in terms of remaining life years. This requires also a mental shift from retrospective chronological to forward-looking prospective age, from fixed age thresholds across time and space to new dynamic concepts and measures of age, to new notions of „young“, „old“ and „middle-aged“, „same ages“ etc..

► Thus: new ways of thinking and of discourse are indispensable, re-defining age, ageing and autonomy, which are adequate in 21st Century advanced, long-living societies.

3. Age is neither independent from historical time and space, nor from concepts and measures metering it, nor from subjective perceptions. But the wider public can hardly distinguish individual longevity, collective ageing and the different “ages” each of us has. Innovative demography and social science offer new dynamic and context-bound notions and measures of age, taking into account changes in health, morbidity, mortality risks, survival probabilities, physical functioning, cognitive capacity, workability, life course-rescheduling, independent living and autonomy. “Age inflation” indicates the growing gap between “nominal” and “real age” as a stage in the life cycle. Without understanding age inflation and lifetime indexing, (active) ageing cannot be understood at all. This allows to determine how “40 is the new 30”, “73 is the new 65”, “death is the new 90”, what is rebirth at age 38, 50 or 82, at what age remaining life expectancy is 15 years or less – and why our societies (e.g. the city of Vienna) are currently actually *rejuvenating* and *not ageing* - despite continuously increasing longevity.

- Thus: without re-thinking and re-measuring age and ageing in terms of “*prospective age*” (Sandersson & Scherbov), “*age variety*” (Rosenmayr’s “*Altersbuntheit*”), “*age inflation*”, “*lifetime indexing*” (Fuchs, Shoven, Marin), active ageing cannot be understood and well-being in old - and any - age cannot be enabled.
4. Most Europeans (in EU27) consider themselves being “young” till 41.8 years of chronological age, beyond the median age of 40.9 years – making a 53% majority of the population self-perceived “young”. But at this “young” age around 40, most of the remaining lifetime for men and women is spent out of paid work (and unpaid volunteering) or idle – despite the fact the overwhelming future lifetime of younger adults will be disability-free healthy life years. Today, majorities of adult resident populations are out-of-work, inactivity status has become predominant. It takes the form of “age exclusion” (Ilmarinen) or idleness of lost generations both of young adults (below 25) and middle-aged (50plus) people. 25 million unemployed and 100 million non-employed persons in EU27 only constitute the single most important social ill of our times, undermining healthy / active ageing and well-being in all ages.
- Thus: lifetime allocation has to be re-balanced towards better mixes of paid work/non-work – throughout the life course. Widespread work disincentives and negative income elasticities, depressing paid activity and labour supply, in particular in young and mature age and for women, must be eliminated.
5. What kind of well-being in old age is not determined by either genes or earliest possible childhood personality formation (set-point theory) or by economic or institutional constraints, but by chosen value orientations, attitudes and personal life choices? Findings are quite robust: career and material success as aims in life make the great majority (by definition) almost inevitably unhappy, whereas social participation, family orientation and even more so helping others (conviviality, friendship, social and political activities, help to others) as goals contribute most to happiness (DIW 2010, Heady, Muffels, Wagner 2010). Work-life-imbalances generate dissatisfaction: But being not stretched and challenged enough in work makes several times as unhappy as being overworked and stressed. Partnership choices count much: Emotional instability of the partner makes dissatisfied, though only half as much as one’s own neuroticism. But it is a chronic condition one does not get used to, it is not withering away as time goes by. Being inactive and not looking for work makes unhappy, but hardly half as unhappy (women even less so) than being unemployed, which is the greatest misery of all ills
- Thus: though strokes of fate cannot be avoided, well-being can be helped and supported, by choosing wisely (or fighting fiercely), wherever we can.
6. Well-being and life satisfaction vary very dramatically across countries – between Denmark and Ukraine, Switzerland and Greece, Norway and Bulgaria. The higher overall well-being (e.g. in Scandinavia), the better the situation of elderly 65+ (older people more likely to be satisfied than total population), and vice versa (in Eastern and Mediterranean countries). Health impairment reduces life satisfaction most significantly. Old age could be a golden age if only deterioration over time could be controlled for - or postponed. While objective conditions are

getting worse (risks of ill health, social isolation, marital dissolution, and partly also low income), old age is more of a blessing if adjusted for differences in education. Happiness depends much on marital status and is U-shaped over age at a single point in time, with highest values for those 60+.

► Thus: education, health, care and welfare provision together with a delay of biological ageing of up to seven years would postpone inevitable degenerative diseases as the price to be paid for longevity and reduce age-specific mortality, frailty and immobility risks up to half. To this extent, old age could be more of a bliss than a curse.

7. Health per se does not make happy, but ill-health, functional impairment and suffering generate misery – though less so than generally expected. The other way round, life satisfaction and well-being generate health: happy people have less too high heart rates (men only) and inflammations. They live healthier life styles, reinforced by biochemical processes supporting well-being: the very same distress produces a third less cortisol in the blood than with miserable persons – and with it less frequent diabetes, high blood pressure, immunological diseases, depressions etc. Fibrinogen as a blood clotting agent creating risks of cardiovascular diseases was found twelve times as often with people who had the rarest moments of happiness compared to satisfied persons. Accepting ones own ageing positively prolongs life up to seven and a half years, more than almost anything else.

Not only age and health impact on well-being, but well-being and happiness themselves impact on health and longevity: the “increasing mixed proportional hazard model” (Frijters, Haisen-De New et al 2005) shows that satisfied people live significantly longer. This is most relevant above the age of 74, but it determines already in young age survival probabilities varying between 35 and 90% to get older than 85 – or not. The classic nuns study (Danner et al. 2001) demonstrated a strong significant inverse relationship between positive emotional content at young age (average 22 years) and mortality risks in late life, with 250% mortality risk differentials and corresponding survival chances between ages 75 and 95 between the low and the high young positive emotion quartiles.

► Create a self-sustaining and self-reinforcing value circle of well-being, activation, health and longevity for as many people as possible.

8. The European Centre (2012) has proposed an Active Ageing Index (AAI) as measure, covering the following dimensions: paid activities (employment and job satisfaction); unpaid, non-market productive activities (volunteering, providing care to (grand) children and older adults, political participation); independent and autonomous living (physical exercise, access to services, long-term care benefits and living in institutions, financial security, physical security, adult learning); and capacity for ageing and enabling environments (remaining and healthy life expectancy at age 55, psychological well-being, use of ICT, social connectedness, educational attainment).

► Thus: countries should try to continuously improve their performance in active ageing over time and in comparison with other, best-performing avant-garde countries, in a global com-

parative perspective, as several “blue zones” of longevity and well-being are outside the UN-European Region.

9. ► Some more devices for active ageing and well-being in old age (which, for instance, the UK makes an official measure, whereas Germany thinks it cannot be measured at all): *avoid* poverty risks, material deprivation; shortages (e.g. 1 million health professionals, 20 million informal carers); crises shocks, too much income dispersions and fluctuations in retirement; ageism, age discrimination, and forced retirement - at any age; actuarially unfair (non-neutral) or gender-insensitive (gender-blind or gender-biased) pension schemes making women in transition as losers of “incomplete modernization”; “mental retirement” and other debilitating social disorders. The other way round, *provide for* “making work pay” – or valued otherwise, but sustained; multiple income streams; un-retirement, gliding, partial pensions, etc. for extending working life; gender-neutral devices protecting and enabling women to prevent “feminization of old age poverty” such as e.g. unisex life tables, equal retirement age, individualized vs. derived/joint rights, survivors benefits reformed towards mandatory family insurance, generous childcare credits; ample opportunities for shifting age boundaries through lifetime re-scheduling and social innovation; and recognizing the compensatory ingenuity of the oldest-old to protect their dignity and independence.
10. Time is not on our side, as the demographic bonus is ending, the deadline for effective and timely reforms approaching rapidly (by 2018, 2020, 2022 according to EUROCOM, WHO/Europe, WDA, UNECE) and fighting the fires and fixing the structures for future sustainability of old-age security must now be done simultaneously.

Olga Mikhailova

Executive Director, Saint Petersburg Institute of Bioregulation and Gerontology

Advocacy of research is a path to creating an enabling environment for health, independence and ageing in dignity.

Population ageing and disequilibrium between the younger and older generations are the most important consequences of the demographic transition, and must inevitably influence the strategy and implementation of national programmes. In line with the Global Commitments of the MIPAA to mainstream ageing concerns in all policy fields, the Concept of Demographic Policy of the Russian Federation for the period through 2025 is a major milestone in the field with one of its clauses to “adopt special programmes for health maintenance and expanding healthy period of life for older people, develop gerontological service...”. And it is research that underlies all transformations which becomes known to policy-makers through advocacy. Very instrumental in this respect seems to be the initiative of the Government of Saint Petersburg in collaboration with the Saint Petersburg Institute of Bioregulation and Gerontology and ExpoForum to have organized under the auspices of the Russian Ministry of Health the International Forum “Senior Generation” which provides a platform for experts from governments, research institutions, NGOs, business and civil society to exchange knowledge, experience and good practices not only at the regional and local levels but also at the national and international levels. The Forum provides unique opportunities to highlight the achievements for the elder people in the fields of education, social support and health. It does not only inform about the services available but also gives an opportunity to try some of them. The exhibition “Care, Aid and Mercy – 2012” and the Fair “Everything for Health” are also parts of the Forum. It is supposed to be a useful tool for promoting evidence-based research in various areas of ageing for its furtherance in the shape of policies.

Guy Morissette

Director, Seniors Policy, Human Resources and Skills Development, *Canada*

Promoting Longer Working Life and Maintaining Work Ability: The Canadian Experience

This presentation provides a review of Canada's experience with regard to policies and programs supporting older workers. Like many countries, Canada's population is ageing rapidly. By 2036, nearly one in four Canadians will be age 65 and over. Inevitably, population ageing in Canada will exert pressure on the labour market in the long run. In support of the Government of Canada's priorities to sustain economic growth, promote job creation, and ensure long-term prosperity, the Government has measures in place to help older workers continue to participate in the labour market. The federal government is modernizing Canada's public pensions to provide Canadians with more flexibility and options to transition from work to retirement, including rewarding longer labour market participation. The federal government is also removing barriers to employment of older workers by increasing access to opportunities and education.

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Prof. Desmond O'Neill

European Union Geriatric Medicine Society

Sourcing expertise in gerontology to inform the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing

The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) represents an important shared vision of a world which is gerontologically-attuned, reflected the aphorism of the pioneering geriatrician, Bernard Isaacs, that if you design for the old you include the young, but if you design for the young you exclude the old.

One key challenge is to ensure that the development of policies and structures to unlock the potential of the longevity dividend are guided by sound gerontological principles and practice. While this applies to all areas covered by the plan, it is particularly so for primary and secondary health care.

In the European context, the 15,000 geriatricians in Europe offer a double strength, representing both a large reservoir of gerontologists with postgraduate training in gerontology who can provide support to the overall project of developing the gerontological sciences – sociology of ageing, biology of ageing and psychology of ageing – as well as providing the nexus for the training in gerontology for primary care, as well as training and service delivery in secondary and tertiary care.

Emerging research, such as that of the striking efficacy of geriatric medicine in providing acute hospital care for older people (1) is counterbalanced by continuing deficits in the development of geriatric medicine and gerontological nursing in some European countries, as well as the under-developed nature of guidelines for medical care of older people in nursing homes, among the most vulnerable of all groups of older people.

The pan-European research agenda in healthcare needs to be more clearly focussed on the development of gerontologically-attuned, age-sensitive and effective health-care for older people if the objectives of MIPAA are to be met.

Sacramento Pinazo Hernandis

Professor in Social Psychology, Coordinator of social psychological research on ageing, Valencia University, Spain

Participation, Non-Discrimination and Social Inclusion of Older Persons Lifelong Learning and Social Participation among Seniors

Throughout the last couple of decades, lifelong learning has evolved into a key instrument for social inclusion, active participation, and personal development of older people. In the current context of demographic changes, defined by the ageing of baby boomers, and a dramatic increase of life expectancy, improving adult learning and using it to its full potential is a fundamental tool for a better integration of the increasing community of older adults.

Moreover knowledge transfer from the older to the younger generations may play a key role in fostering intergenerational understanding. Transfers from the older to the younger generations, through mentoring programs and other intergenerational exchanges may promote solidarity between generations as well as preserve older workers' skills and help retired people maintain a sense of meaning and purpose in their lives, preventing their social exclusion, loneliness and isolation.

Scientific evidence suggests that social participation and positive contact in the form of close friendship and frequent interaction between people from different age groups can become a very powerful tool in order to overcome age stereotypes. This evidence supports, and is supported by, the decision to nominate 2012 as the "European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity Between Generations". Moreover, it can promote positive images of older people showing the importance of their active role in a society for all ages.

Research has also found that involved and socially active older adults enjoy better health conditions, present lower mortality rates and lower depressive symptom levels, and have better and higher physical and cognitive functioning which in turn helps preventing disability and chronic illnesses.

Participation in social activities provides older adults with social support from informal social networks, which in turn benefits their emotional functioning, since people with adequate social relationships have a greater likelihood of survival than those with poor relationships. Hence, facilitating social activities and active participation among seniors is a promising direction for programs intended to promote successful aging among older adults –ie. university programs for older people–.

Ján Richter

Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, *Slovakia*

The presentation is focused on the approach of the Government of the Slovak Republic to the challenges and measures designed to promote quality of life and active ageing, and in particular, the coordination of all policies in order to create favorable conditions for the elderly. It examines the policies aiming to increase the participation of the older people on the labour market, to create employment opportunities for older workers, to promote intergenerational solidarity in the pension system, to ensure availability of accessible specialized social services of high quality for the elderly.

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Lloyd Russell-Moyle

Board Member of the European Youth Forum

What do all generations want? A better future, without compromising the present? Lloyd Russell-Moyle, Board Member of the European Youth Forum, puts some personal reflections as to the challenges of intergenerational solidarity. Focusing on the need to re-balance the democratic life of young people, the work, pension and economic life of all people, the service provision for those at the margins of society and all through the prism of sustainable development: fulfilling the needs of today without compromising the potential of tomorrow. Finally he reflects, that many of the concerns of the old and young are similar but that caution should be made to allow autonomy for flourish within solidarity.



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José Manuel Salazar-Xirinachs

Executive Director of the Employment Sector, International Labour Organisation

The increase in life expectancy is a major achievement of the last decades. However, increased life expectancy combined with declining fertility rates is changing the world's population structure. Ageing differs substantially in countries and regions. Population in UNECE countries are relatively old and will continue to age. Demographic changes and labour force trends have driven major increases in old age dependency leading to important socio-economic and policy implications. Policy-makers in ageing societies face important challenges related to the financial viability of pension systems; public sector budgets; implications for health care systems and the risk of growing numbers of older people becoming socially excluded and marginalized. Promoting full and productive employment is key to meet the ageing challenge and mitigate the effects of ageing on social protection schemes. Policies and strategies that create conditions for economic growth and job creation are of utmost importance. This is so, more than ever, in the context of countries experiencing low growth or recession -success or failure in promoting growth and jobs today will set the course of economic and social progress tomorrow. The ILO approach to meet the demographic challenge underscores the importance of a life cycle and intergenerational perspective. Youth, adulthood and old age are but different stages of life which influence and interact with each other.

Extending working lives and increasing employment rates of older workers is high on the policy agendas. A prolongation of working life, however, may not be appropriate for everyone. To work longer, an individual must be in good health, be receptive to the idea and have the opportunity to do so. There is an array of policy measures that can contribute to extend working lives and the keynote intervention focusses on four key categories: addressing prejudice and age discrimination; activation measures; skill development; and working time and work organization.

Since its inception the ILO and its tripartite constituency has shown concern about these issues. The first instruments on the matter were adopted in the 1930s. In 1980 the International Labour Conference (ILC) adopted a comprehensive instrument: the Older Workers Recommendation, 1980 (No. 162). Recently, tripartite constituents decided to include the issue of demographic change and its implications for employment and social protection in the agenda of the 2013 ILC. The ILO and its tripartite constituents can play a key role in developing innovative strategies to meet the above-mentioned challenges and to take advantage of the opportunities of an older workforce.

Eric Schmitt

Generativity as a Route to Active Ageing

Executive Summary

Taking an individual perspective, maintaining activity in later years is linked to established indicators of successful ageing, whereas from a societal perspective promoting active ageing is an imperative, particularly in times of demographic change but also more basically substantiated in an ethics of responsibility, intergenerational solidarity and generation equity.

Significance of social integration, participation, and joint responsibility for a positive attitude towards life is not restricted to younger ages. Therefore, old age is considered in a cross-generational context, namely in the sense of taking responsibility for younger generations (generativity). Results of own research in different countries shows (1.) that generativity is more a lifelong concern than a life stage-specific developmental task and (2.) that generativity can be substantially improved by practical projects which offer opportunities to engage in intergenerational dialogue (3.) Age stereotypes have sustainable impact on generativity.

Recommendations:

- (I) To initiate more differentiated discourses on old age and ageing, stronger focus on old age productivity
- (II) Critical appraisal and flexibilization of age limits
- (III) To open new possibilities for intergenerational encounters in communal contexts, to support and develop further existing possibilities (e.g. in community centers)

Oksana V. Sinyavskaya

Deputy Director Independent Institute for Social Policy, *Russian Federation*

Intergenerational solidarity and gender roles in the ageing Russia

Demographic, social and economic context of ageing in Russia has several particular features, including: (1) unaccomplished demographic modernization (very low life expectancy, particularly of men; low motherhood age); (2) incomplete social and economic modernization (more conservative, comparing to Western societies, attitudes toward gender roles and intergenerational relations; higher proportion of multigenerational households; (forced) strong interfamily mutual assistance); (3) dramatically changing role of the state in social policy during social and economic transformation.

Under the circumstances it is crucial to raise employment of active population since resources of pension age increase are limited. It is equally important to make gender division of housework and care more egalitarian. The presentation discusses possible directions of employment and social policies reforms, aimed at strengthening intergenerational solidarity and reducing gender inequality in the ageing Russian society.

One of the prerequisite for evidence informed social policies reforms in this country includes the necessity of improving the data bases (both statistics and surveys) and increasing support of comprehensive research on intergenerational relations and ageing. More active participation of Russia in international research on this topic, like Generations and Gender Programme, will help to improve the quality of the data and research.

Clemens Tesch-Römer

Director, German Centre of Gerontology, Berlin, Member of the German Federal Government's Committee on the Life Situation of Older Persons in Germany

Promoting Participation, Non-Discrimination and Social Inclusion of Older Persons

Population ageing has a profound impact on societies. It affects educational institutions, labour markets, social security, health care, long-term care and the relationship between generations. Active ageing is a central political concept that takes in not only the challenges, but also the opportunities of long-living societies. This includes opportunities for older people to continue working, to stay healthy longer and to contribute to society, for example through volunteering. Active ageing should also promote societal participation, enhance social inclusion and prevent discrimination of older people.

Societal and individual goals for active ageing may change across the life course. In middle adulthood active ageing may be equated with continuous labour market participation of older workers, while for older people in retirement active ageing might be better described as productive volunteering and active participation in political, social and community life. Highly important throughout the life course – and gaining relevance with approaching very old age – is non-discriminatory access to social and health services for older persons.

Policies on active ageing intending to improve both individual quality of life and societal welfare might use different conceptual and practical tools to improve the opportunities for active ageing. First, societal discourse might reflect the multidimensionality of ageing processes, emphasizing not only risks, but also opportunities for active ageing. Media play an important role in this context and should be encouraged to cover the diversity of old age and ageing. Life expectancy increases for both genders, possibly narrowing the gender gap in life span duration. This may induce a change in distribution of tasks over the life span (e.g. increasing labour force participation of women; increasing domestic labour force participation of men). Educational processes concerning life-long development starting early in life yield positive effects which will be visible throughout the life course. But also in middle and late adulthood interventions for active ageing are effective (e.g. changing health behaviour, stimulating volunteer activities). Intervention studies demonstrate that an increase in volunteering activities may lead to positive changes in health and social integration.

Active ageing needs a secure base. Health, integration, and participation in late life can be fostered by social policies. Results from comparative surveys show that the extent of welfare state support – through social security systems like unemployment protection, pension system, health care system, and long-term care system – seems to be connected to opportunities for active ageing. Although the instruments for building social security differ between societies, governments may provide regulation for the combined effects of different stakeholders. Promoting participation and social inclusion of older citizens might also help to increase their chances to take an active part in society.

Joseph Troisi

Director International Institute on Ageing, *United Nations-Malta*

“Participation, non-discrimination and social inclusion of older persons”

Has there been a true democratisation of longevity? Do we really have an equal opportunity to a healthy longevity? Are we fooling ourselves when we speak of A SOCIETY FOR ALL AGES?

In the past a number of countries, in so far as meeting the needs of their older citizens were concerned, were more preoccupied with meeting their "humanitarian" needs and issues. The welfare programmes adopted by various governments were aimed more at protecting and caring for the older members.

To counteract this, there is an urgent need for a radical change of perspective breaking the policy of segregation of older persons and replacing it with a strategy of participation and involvement. The central focus of policy must be the integration of older persons into society. They want an increasing say in their lives. They want to be empowered to solve their own problems. Older persons must be enabled to participate in society to the greatest extent possible.

It is imperative to promote policies and programmes that support active ageing. These are essential for the active participation of older persons in all aspects of life and for the creation of A SOCIETY FOR ALL AGES.

However important the role of the State and that of Non-Governmental Organisations, it is equally important that older persons themselves actively participate and contribute to the very developmental progress of their country.

Although the social involvement of older persons is a matter of personal choice, obstacles exist which could reduce their inclination to participate. Attempts need to be made to foster such participation and to remove any obstacles preventing it.

Successful ageing will only occur when an older person's personal dignity, sense of belonging and self worth are maximised.

Koen Vleminckx

Counsellor General Federal Public Service, Social Security, *Belgium*

Scientific tools allow us to ex-ante evaluate the impact of population ageing and other social and economic trends. Economic models can give us a well-informed idea of the effects of these trends in a longer time perspective. Thanks to these tools policy makers are not entirely blind as far as the impact of these trends is concerned, albeit within a ceteris paribus policy context. However, these tools can also be used for an ex-ante evaluation of policy reforms.

Many European member states have developed such models, particularly to simulate the impact of population ageing and pension reforms on the sustainability of their public finances. However, it is also needed to develop tools to assess ex-ante the impact of reforms on the social situation of the population.

In recent years micro-simulation models have gained popularity in the assessment of social security systems, specifically pension policy, in terms of the adequacy they provide in a longer time-perspective. The development of these tools was promoted during the Belgian Presidency of the European Union in 2010.

Nevertheless we should keep in mind the limitations of these tools. They tend to focus on what is already known to us or predictable. Both policy analysts and policy makers should be aware of the potential loss of peripheral vision.



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