

AGE – Work Programme May 2005 – April 2006

1. Introduction

Last year, in response to the Call for Proposals VP/2003/007 for the support of umbrella European-level NGOs, AGE adopted a three-year Strategic Plan, which was approved by the European Commission. The Strategic Plan outlines our goals and objectives and indicates how progress will be measured for the period May 2004-April 2007. This second year's work programme has thus been developed in that framework.

Our budget presents our estimated expenses for the second year based on the activities identified as necessary to achieve our objectives. The budget covers only the expenses related to our core activities, i.e. the costs involved in coordinating our network at EU level and enabling our members from all over the EU to meet on a regular basis to ensure a true European dimension to our work. This year's budget is very similar to last year's and takes on board the request of the Commission to increase our share of the co-funding by 1% per year.

Our second year work programme will continue to aim at making the European Union a place free from all forms of discrimination and at promoting opportunities for all.

This year's work programme will be implemented in the framework of new EU processes of key importance to us, in particular the **Commission's Communication on Equality and Non discrimination** due in May, the **feasibility study** which will be launched soon, the **Green Paper on Demographic Change and Intergenerational Solidarity**, and the follow-up to the **Green Paper on an EU Approach to Managing Economic Migration**.

In line with the new strategic approach of the Commission to combat discrimination, AGE and its members will continue to campaign in support of the PROGRESS proposal. The preparation of the **European Year on Mobility (2006)** and the **European Year on Equal Opportunities for All (2007)**, as well as the concrete implementation of the **Social Agenda** will also be key items of our work programme.

When drafting this work programme, we tried as much as possible to anticipate the policy developments which will be forthcoming and are aware that some slight adjustments might be needed to ensure that our work remains in step with the Commission's work following the Spring Summit and the Council's decision regarding the Social Agenda and the financial perspective.

We will continue to focus our activities on developing the capacity of our network, both at EU and national level, to reinforce the EU action to address and combat

discrimination on all grounds and in particular on the ground of age and to promote equal opportunities for all. Special attention will continue to be paid to the gender dimension and the issue of multiple discrimination in close cooperation with other non-discrimination NGOs. Huge progress in terms of capacity building has been achieved already in the first year of our Strategic Plan and we want to build on our experience to continue to boost the capacity of our members to play their role as civil society at national and local level, especially in the new Member States, acceding countries and in some of the EU15 countries where extra support is needed to empower older citizens' organisations.

2. AGE's Main Activities for the period May 2005-April 2006

The range of activities we need to implement this year to achieve our strategic goals are the continuation of the work started last year (for more information, see enclosed annual report 2004. Please note that the annual report also includes information about activities funded under other projects or by sponsors). Thanks to the training we received last year from our external consultant, we have a clearer vision of how to report on these activities and how to ensure the best outcome for each. As last year, for reasons of clarity, we have grouped our activities per type and for each type we have indicated to which objective(s) of our Strategic Plan it relates as well as the expected outcomes. The estimated calendar, venue and target audience for each activity can be found in the summary table at the end of the document.

2.1 AGE Structural Activities for the period May 2005-April 2006

Relate to Strategic Goals 2, 3 and 4 of our Strategic Plan

In order to ensure the full participation of our members in our work programme and to guarantee the representativity of AGE as the voice of the 50+ in the European Union, our Statutes and Internal Rules require that we organise a series of meetings of our governing and consultative structures (General Assembly, Council, Executive Committee and Working Groups), in addition to keeping a strong and efficient Secretariat in Brussels.

2.1.1 Annual General Assembly

Composition: As requested by Belgian Law, our General Assembly is the governing body of the organisation. All Full members are represented at the General Assembly and have the right to vote (one member, one vote).

Role: The General Assembly has to meet at least once a year to decide on:

- a) proposed amendments to the Statutes;

- b) the election of the President, who shall be a member of the Council. The President shall be a full member of a full member organisation of, or directly representing older and/or retired people;
- c) the programme of activities and the budget for the forthcoming financial year;
- d) the approval of the audited annual accounts submitted by the Council and on the quitus of the Council;
- e) the admission and expulsion of members;
- f) the nomination of the auditor or auditors of the accounts;
- g) if necessary, the winding up of the Association and the reimbursement of the Association fund.

Our Annual General Assembly is usually held in the spring of each year (March or April). It brings together one representative per Full Member (around 120 people) and a few observer members (at their own cost). In addition to the usual constitutional items, AGE organises a few plenary sessions with key speakers on EU policy priorities to give our members an update on the most pressing issues and enable them to make an informed decision when deciding the main objectives for the coming years. For example, the 2005 General Assembly will be opened by Commissioner Špidla and will include a presentation by Barbara Nolan - Head of Unit Anti Discrimination - on multiple discrimination. The General Assembly also gives the opportunity to new members to present themselves to the network and to develop useful contacts with fellow NGOs in other countries.

Expected outcomes for item 2.1.1:

- An annual General Assembly (Spring 2006)
- New applications for membership approved
- Approved final accounts for previous year
- Approved annual report for previous year
- Approved work programme for next year
- Approved budget for next year
- Opportunities for our member organisations to get an update on the main policy issues and ask direct question to key speakers
- First agreement on main policies and strategic goals for the period 2007-2010 (to be finalised and adopted at the following GA in March 2007), see also item 2.5 (evaluation)

2.1.2 Meetings of the Council

Composition: Our Statutes specify that all Member States have a right to be represented in the Council. In addition to geographical representation, our Council also includes representatives of European Federations and European Organisations. Two to three meetings (30 people) are foreseen, one in June, one in October/ November and one in February.

Role: The Council is responsible for the overall running of the Association, for the implementation of the programme set by the General Assembly and for making recommendations to the General Assembly on membership applications based on the evaluation of the Accreditation Committee. Between meetings, the Council plays an important role in the policy development of our network. Council members are consulted and approve all documents and position papers. They are also responsible for coordinating views between the various AGE members of their country- who have elected them to be their representative at the Council. Council members are also responsible for nominating experts who will take part in our Working Groups and for ensuring that these experts report back and liaise with all AGE members in their country. Council members and experts can be nominated to represent AGE in meetings or conferences where they have strong expertise.

National co-ordinations: In the last year, AGE has encouraged the setting up of strong national co-ordinations in countries where we have several members. In France, the United Kingdom and the Netherlands, regular meetings are now organised prior to AGE Council meetings to co-ordinate the views of all AGE members. These strong national co-ordinations have greatly enhanced the capacity of our members to act jointly on campaigns and to become more visible to their respective national authorities. AGE will continue to promote national co-ordinations and will encourage synergies with national anti-discrimination NGOs from other sectors.

With its 29 members in the UK, the AGE UK coordination is playing a crucial role in the preparation of the future UK Presidency ensuring that age discrimination and older people's issues are well taken on board. The coordinator, Stephanie Harland (Age Concern England) drafted a work programme for this year, which will cover at least three meetings (see enclosed letter).

In other countries AGE will continue to provide support to its member organisations for the organisation of national events on age discrimination as these have proved to be excellent opportunities to establish lasting synergies between civil society organisations fighting discrimination.

EU Presidencies: In the framework of the EU Presidency, Council members of the countries represented in the Troïka are requested to help AGE establish contacts with their relevant Ministries. Their role is to ensure older citizens' concerns and expectations are taken on board by EU Presidencies and NGOs are involved in EU Presidency events (more detailed information in Policy Activities section).

Expected outcomes for item 2.1.2:

- 2-3 meetings of the Council (June, October and February)
- Setting up of strong national coordinations between AGE members of the same country

- Better synergies with anti-discrimination NGOs from other sectors at national level
- On-going policy guidance based on national feedback
- Participation of some Council members and experts with relevant expertise in EU and national conferences and seminars on behalf of AGE
- Enhanced relations with present and future EU Presidencies through our national members in Luxembourg, UK, Austria and Finland.

2.1.3 Meetings of the Executive Committee

Composition: The 2005 General Assembly is going to decide whether or not to adopt a proposal of the Council to amend the Statutes to extend the Executive Committee by two seats. If this is adopted the Executive Committee will be composed of a President, two Vice-Presidents, a Treasurer, a Secretary and two Ordinary Members. The President, Steen Langebaek (DK), was re-elected by the General Assembly last year. The mandate of all other Executive Committee members will come to an end in June 2005 and the Council will have to elect a new Executive Committee on June 20th. The purpose of amending the Statutes is to adapt to the enlargement of the EU and to try to achieve better geographical and gender balance within the Executive Committee. Candidatures from Southern and Eastern Member States will be encouraged.

Role: The Executive Committee is responsible for day-to-day political guidance and management. It prepares the meetings of the General Assembly and the Council, ensures that the Internal Rules are adhered to and represents AGE in relevant meetings and events.

To fulfil its role, the Executive Committee will meet 5 times (about once every two months) usually in the AGE office in Brussels.

Expected outcomes for item 2.1.3:

- 5 meetings of Executive Committee
- Improved geographical and gender balance within Executive Committee
- Representation of AGE network in relevant EU meetings
- On-going management and political guidance

2.1.4 Secretariat

Composition: Our permanent Secretariat is composed of the Director (full time), a Policy Officer dealing with Anti Discrimination and Social Protection issues (full time), a Policy Officer dealing with Social Inclusion and membership issues (full time), an Information Officer (4 days/week), a European Parliament Officer (one day/week), and an Administrative Officer (30h/week).

Role: During this second year of our Strategic Plan, the Secretariat will continue to monitor EU policy developments, inform our members, gather feedback from members on issues of concern, and draft responses in close consultation with our membership. The Secretariat is also responsible for coordinating the network and promoting synergies between member organisations on issues of common interest.

The Director and Officers are all expected to participate in relevant conferences and national meetings organised by our members or other stakeholders. The Director and/or Policy Officers also represent AGE in various fora where we raise awareness of discrimination faced by citizens on the ground of age: European Pensions Forum set up by DG EMPL, the European Health Forum set up by DG SANCO, the High Level Group on Construction set up by DG Research, the Social Platform Working Group on Fundamental Rights. Together with the European Disability Forum, AGE is also regularly consulted by the Commission and other EU stakeholders (Confédération européenne des Chemins de Fer, Association Européenne d'Interopérabilité des Chemins de Fer) on discrimination faced by people with reduced mobility in public transport.

Capacity building: Following the recommendations drawn from the external evaluation undertaken in 2003, training opportunities will continue to be offered to our staff. Further training on performance reporting will be provided to the Director and Officers based on our first year's experience, as well as language courses and IT training.

Expected outcomes for item 2.1.4:

- On-going management of the network
- Director participation in key EU and national events
- Staff participation in relevant national and EU events
- 4 training courses for staff

2.1.5 AGE Working Groups

Composition: To make the best use of the expertise available within our network and help develop common strategies on issues of concern to the 50+, AGE set up five Working Groups on Anti-Discrimination, Social Protection (Pensions), Employment, Social Inclusion and Health issues. All Working Groups are composed of representatives nominated by our membership. While the Working Groups on Anti Discrimination and Social Protection are aiming at achieving geographical representation and hold regular meetings, for budget reasons the other working groups are more virtual groups bringing together expertise available in the network on these issues and only small meetings of a few experts are foreseen for them.

Role: All Working Groups are consulted on policies related to their dossier. This means that several Working Groups can be consulted on the same issue (e.g. on

active ageing issues, the Anti Discrimination, Employment and Social Protection groups are consulted). All Working Groups will be consulted on the major processes launched by the Commission in 2005, among others:

- the Communication on Equality and Non Discrimination
- the feasibility study on future EU initiatives the field of anti discrimination
- the Green Paper on Demographic Change and Intergenerational solidarity
- the Green Paper on an EU Approach to Managing Economic Migration
- Implementation of the new Social Agenda 2006-2010

Expected outcomes for item 2.1.5:

- 3 meetings of Anti Discrimination Working Group
- 3 meetings of the Social Protection Working Group
- 3 (smaller) meetings of the virtual Working Groups on Employment, Social Inclusion and Health (18p. in total to be shared among these 3 groups according to need)

2.1.6 The AGE Network

Composition: All Full Members are European, national or regional associations of or working for and with people aged 50+ in the European Union. Observer members are those who support AGE's work and wish to participate in this work but who do not fulfil the criteria to become full members.

Role: the member associations are the AGE network, informing all policy positions of the association and ensuring that AGE fulfils its mandate of voicing and defending the real interests of people aged 50+ in the EU. Through the General Assembly and the principle of one member, one vote all full member associations have an equal right to direct the future of the association.

Capacity Building: Between May 2004 and March 2005, AGE was pleased to welcome representatives from nine new Member States. AGE will continue its work to develop its membership in these countries and also notably in Latvia where 15 associations are working towards a national network, which aims to join AGE. AGE will then complete its aim of having its official network spread to all 25 EU Member States. Rumania and Bulgaria are already Accession Members. We have received an application from Turkey and Norway has been involved in our network since last year. Work will also continue to find new partners and also new members by consolidating existing contacts and encouraging associations that already co-operate with AGE to join the network. Further work will aim at developing the capacity of AGE members in all countries by providing tools and information to individual associations and also by encouraging national and European networking. Efforts will be stepped up this year to develop co-operation and partnerships with associations from the EFTA and accession countries.

Expected outcomes for item 2.1.6:

- Member associations in all 25 EU Member States and Candidate Countries
- Members or contacts in all EFTA and Accession Countries
- Increased total number of Full Member associations.

2.2 AGE Policy Activities for the period May 2005-April 2006

Relate to Strategic Goal 3 of our Strategic Plan

2.2.1 Anti-Discrimination (*Strategic goal 3.1*)

- **Commission's Communication on Equality and Non Discrimination**

For this second year, the Working Group on Anti-discrimination will play a leading role in helping AGE respond to the Commission's Communication on Equal Opportunities and Non Discrimination due in May. Our response will be based on the work we do on issues of age discrimination in employment and in access to goods and services and we hope that our work will bring a useful contribution and will complement the Feasibility Study. With the help of our member organisations, AGE will seize the opportunity of the Communication to raise awareness of the need to address age discrimination adequately. Now that the Employment Directive - which recognises that both younger and older workers have rights to age equality - is transposed in most member states, we need to monitor closely its implementation to ensure that age is not forgotten or deemed too difficult to deal with (using Article 6 as an escape route). Lessons can be learnt from the work already undertaken in some Member States where legislation, including the long list of collective agreements, is checked for unjustified age limits. AGE will also monitor closely the broader approach adopted by some Member States and draw recommendations for future action to combat discrimination.

- **The Employment Directive and the Race Directive**

We plan to develop a leaflet giving updated information on both Directives, the important role NGOs can play in supporting potential victims, the need to campaign for an efficient equality body, the importance of establishing synergies with the social partners at national level, sources of information and campaigns at EU and national level, examples of successful implementation, case law, etc. The leaflet will include updated information on the transposition and implementation process and will give guidance on what should be done to ensure the adequate implementation of existing legislation, in particular with regard to Article 6 and 16 of the Employment Directive, two areas of particular concern identified by our experts.

The leaflet, together with an update of our brochure "Towards Age Equality", will be published on December 2nd 2005 to mark the second anniversary of the deadline for transposition of the Employment Directive. As in previous years, we will organise an event at the European Parliament, in cooperation with the Intergroup on Ageing, to mark this day. AGE will report on the work done by our expert group and network and the leaflet and brochure will be presented. All documents will be distributed throughout our network and posted on our website.

Our member organisations will be invited to translate and publish these documents in their own language adding their logo to the AGE logo. Our objective is that policy documents developed by the network should become our members' own campaigning tools, something several members have done with previous documents in the last year.

The Anti-Discrimination Expert Group will also continue to work with legal experts to get a better understanding of the legal dimension of issues of concern raised by our members and to build our knowledge on case law.

Legal Expert Group: AGE will follow the work of the Legal Expert Group set up by the Commission and in particular the thematic report on age discrimination, which will look into issues of concern for both older and younger workers. When the reports are published, we will disseminate the information relevant to age discrimination throughout our network and will gather comments through our experts. In view of the very limited knowledge about age discrimination in most Member States - where it seems impossible to even find a legal expert with relevant expertise - it is in our view very important to use the work of the legal expert group to raise awareness of the complexity of age discrimination, using the experience developed in some Member States where the issue has received more attention.

Directive on gender equality in access to goods and services: The Working Group will continue to pay special attention to gender discrimination and in particular will help the Social Protection Working Group monitor the implementation of the Directive on gender equality in access to goods and services, especially with regard to its application to private pensions schemes where exceptions are allowed on the grounds of longer life expectancy of women.

In a letter to Commissioner Spidla, AGE has asked to be part of the stakeholders' group which will be set up by the Commission to evaluate the implementation of that Directive after 3 years. No response has arrived yet, but we will continue our campaign in support of full gender equality together with the European Women's Lobby and the European Disability Forum.

Multiple Discrimination

In the context of the European Commission's recent consultation on future equality actions, the issue of multiple discrimination has been highlighted strongly and will also be the subject of a discussion at the AGE General Assembly 2005.

Several of AGE members are taking action of various forms on wider equality, human rights and discrimination questions beyond the boundaries of age discrimination. The Working Group has set up a sub-group on multiple discrimination a few months ago and we plan to publish a leaflet on multiple discrimination to raise awareness of the fact that older people do not just belong to the senior section of Europe's population. They all have multi-faceted identities, being black or white, gay or heterosexual, men or woman or disabled. These different elements make up their identity, but they can also make older people the target of prejudice on more than one level.

Age discrimination in access to goods and services

The Working Group will continue to follow the work started by a group of AGE members and a legal expert on a draft Directive to combat age discrimination in access to goods and services and will see if this work can be used in our response to the Communication and the feasibility study.

Green Paper on Demographic Change and Intergenerational solidarity

The Working Group will contribute to AGE's response to this Green paper for all issues around age discrimination.

Mapping exercise in the new Member States

Our experts in the new Member States have been encouraged to contact the national coordinators appointed for this mapping exercise. AGE will continue to provide support to the project leader in linking with our experts. We offered also to disseminate the training manual more widely with the support of our network (provided it is made available to us).

Stop Discrimination Campaign

AGE and its working group will continue to provide support to Media Consulta for the Stop Discrimination Campaign. Many of our members have been involved in the campaign's activities and hope to continue in the future. We will remind Media Consulta of the commitment they made last year to devote one of their monthly themes to age discrimination - preferably in October each year to coincide with the International Day of Older people (1st October). We feel that such an initiative would ensure greater visibility of the age ground in the campaign. We will also disseminate information about the Journalist Award and in particular the articles on age discrimination, most of which contain very useful information and are written in plain language, making them useful tools for a wider public.

Employment Week: Last year AGE pressed Media Consulta to organise a joint stand at the Employment Week to bring together the four European anti discrimination networks. It was done in 2004, but the invitation was not repeated for the 2005 Week. We will encourage them to do it again next year (see also under Employment, item 2.2.2)

Social Agenda: the European Year on Equal Opportunities - 2007

AGE will follow closely the new strategic approach proposed by the Commission in the Social Agenda to combat discrimination and among other priorities we will start to draw recommendations for the European Year on Equal Opportunities to ensure that age discrimination is addressed adequately.

PROGRESS proposal

Our Working Group will support AGE's campaign in favour of the PROGRESS programme. In AGE's view, the PROGRESS proposal is, on the whole, well designed and should enable the EU to progress on its major social objectives.

Expected outcomes for item 2.2.1:

- 3 meetings of Expert Group
- Regular information articles on all discrimination issues, including gender discrimination in CoverAge, our monthly bulletin and on our website
- Updated leaflet and brochure on age discrimination and EU action to combat discrimination
- A leaflet on multiple discrimination
- A leaflet on gender discrimination
- A survey of transposition of the Employment Directive and analysis of problems identified in implementation of Articles 6 and 16 (December 2005)
- Data on case law collected and widely disseminated in our network
- Thematic report on age written by Legal Expert Team distributed through our network and comments collected.
- AGE participation in the stakeholders groups set up by the Commission on the Directive on equal treatment for women and men in access to goods and services and feedback information received from our national members
- Draft Directive on access to goods and services and narrative with pros and cons of such an initiative drafted
- AGE response to the Green Paper on Demographic Change from an age discrimination perspective
- Involvement of AGE members in the new Member States and Acceding countries in the mapping exercise and capacity building programme
- Age ground more visible in the Stop Discrimination campaign and better participation of our members in the campaign
- Set of recommendations for the European Year on Equal Opportunities – 2007

- PROGRESS programme is hopefully adopted on time to take over from the existing Anti Discrimination Action programme

2.2.2 Employment (strategic goal 3.2)

AGE is pleased that active ageing is one of the key priorities of the renewed Lisbon Agenda and we hope that all Member States will strengthen their efforts in fighting age discrimination preventing older workers from remaining in the labour market. Barriers to employment affecting older workers are very diverse and will not be overcome unless active labour market policies targeting that age group are implemented. Given the important role the Employment Guidelines will play in the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy at national level, AGE will do its utmost to ensure that active ageing is adequately addressed in the Integrated Guidelines and that Member States report on measures undertaken in their national report (part Two).

AGE will also seize the opportunity of the European Year on Mobility to raise awareness of the specific problems older workers face in terms of mobility. Job insecurity increases with age and unless more security is built for that age group, they will continue to be reluctant to take risk and adopt more flexible work patterns. Increased geographical mobility can be particularly problematic for older workers who are often faced with serious schooling problems for their children (not easy to move with teenaged children, especially if that implies changing language) and the need to take into account other important issues such as the impact on a partner's career, caring duties toward ageing parents, lack of transportability of various social benefits, high costs involved in moving house, etc. Unless the real barriers preventing older workers from becoming more mobile (both job and geographical mobility) are addressed, they will continue to miss opportunities to remain active in the labour market.

In this second year of our strategic plan, AGE and its Employment Working Group will:

- Continue to aim at developing expertise in particular in Member States where the employment of older workers is most problematic
- Promote examples of good practice in the employment of older workers – we plan to organise a seminar on good practice in employment of older workers at the European Parliament (September 2005)
- Continue to develop relationships with social partners at EU and national levels and encourage them to be more inclusive of older workers in the framework of their campaign on diversity, including by continuing to accept invitations to speak at meetings.
- Pursue our contact with relevant EU decision-makers dealing with active ageing: European Commission, European Parliament etc.
- Monitor and comment on the Employment Guidelines, including measures proposed to develop services to dependent persons (an area of interest to us both from the worker's and user's perspective)

- Raise awareness of our network on the relevant Employment guidelines and NAPs Employment
- Raise awareness of the examples of good practice identified from EQUAL projects and provide support to our members and other stakeholders to apply to the last Call for Proposals under Article 6 of ESF (end of January 2006).
- Pursue our contact with relevant Directorates in OECD and participate in their Employment Conference in October 2005
- Try to get involved in the Employment Week 2006 (perhaps with the other EU networks on anti-discrimination)
- Produce information sheets and articles for our website on the European Employment Strategy, the NAPs Empl, the Employment Guidelines etc.
- Continue to gather older workers' views on working longer and making work pay and develop AGE's long-term strategy with regard to the employment of older workers
- Develop a brochure on active ageing (looking at why we need to bring more people to work, how that can be best achieved?, etc.) to be widely disseminated throughout our network and website.

Expected outcomes for item 2.2.2:

- 3 meetings of Expert Group (most work will be done via the internet)
- 3 new experts from new Member States and South EU
- Annual position paper on the Employment Guidelines with recommendations on active ageing;
- A brochure on active ageing (EN, FR, D)
- Briefing notes for our members on examples of good practice and what they can do to advance the interests of older workers at national level
- Compilation of articles and web pages on active ageing of interest to our members
- Compilation of media coverage of active ageing in national press.
- Examples of relationships with social partners at EU and national level on active ageing issues
- Recommendations on barriers to mobility facing older workers

2.2.3 Social Protection (*Strategic goal 3.3*)

Up until now our Social Protection Expert Group has been dealing essentially with pensions issues. During this second year of our Strategic Plan, our Working Group will need to address the following challenges:

- Continue to build capacity within the network: help our member organisations in the new Member States contribute to the expert group on pensions issues

- Develop better knowledge of the Streamlining Process among our national members and help them contribute to the process in their country through the Open Method of Coordination.
- Follow National Strategy Reports on Pensions and make AGE evaluation of NSRP
- Get involved in the evaluation of the Open Method of Coordination on social protection /inclusion
- Get involved in Social Protection Committee's consultation on those excluded from the labour market
- Follow-up peer review on pensions
- Continue involvement in Commission's Pension Forum
- Keep following the gender directive (in synergy with EWL)
- Build capacity of AGE members to undertake action on Services of General Interest
- Develop AGE position on social protection / pensions
- Pursue contacts with relevant Commission officials, social partners and other stakeholder in the area of pensions (e.g. EWI & Social Platform & others)
- Share experiences among members about pension reforms (by having presentations about national systems and reforms) and their impact on the employability of older workers
- Attend Presidency conferences on social protection issues.

Expected outcomes for item 2.2.3:

- 3 meetings of the Working Group
- 3 new experts from new Member States
- Position paper on the Open Method of Coordination
- Evaluation of the National Strategy Reports on Pensions
- Recommendations to the Social Protection Committee on those excluded from the labour market
- Participation in the Commission' Pensions Forum
- Participation in major EU conferences
- AGE takes part in the group of stakeholders set up by the Commission to monitor transposition of the gender directive on access to goods and services
- AGE position on Social Services of General Interest
- A brochure on AGE position on social protection and pensions issues
- Compilation of articles and web pages on social protection issues published by our members
- Compilation of media coverage of older people's NGOs positions on social protection issues in national press.
- Increased relations with social partners and public authorities at EU and national levels on social protection issues

2.2.4 Social Inclusion (Strategic goal 3.3)

Last year, as part of our capacity building objectives, AGE set up a virtual Working Group on Social Inclusion. This group currently brings together 11 experts from 9 member states (F, UK, E, EL, NL, PL, IE, LT, CZ) who help the Secretariat develop recommendations on social inclusion and take an active part in major EU processes and events such as the Open Method of Coordination and the Round Table on social inclusion. Over the next year work will focus on:

- Developing membership of the virtual working group
- Promoting and developing exchanges between these members
- Developing AGE's position with regard to the social exclusion of older people
- Responding to the Joint Social Protection and Social Inclusion Report
- Responding to the evaluation of the Open Method of Coordination
- Feeding into and participating at the Round Table on Social Exclusion, in particular by pushing for a well-focussed workshop on poverty and social exclusion amongst older people
- Co-operating with the European Anti-Poverty Network, including continuing AGE's role as a member of EAPN and holding a seat on its Executive Committee.

- Following and contributing to the development of the common objectives for social protection and social inclusion
- Developing contacts with the Social Inclusion Unit of DG EMPL

Expected outcomes for item 2.2.4 on Social Inclusion:

- Consolidation of the working group (up to 3 small meetings with limited number of participants might be organised depending on needs and budget availability) with more members and more structured exchanges.
- Develop a background document (leaflet) informing AGE's policy position on the field of social inclusion, including the effect of age-based discrimination on social exclusion and poverty of older people.
- Participation in the Round Table on poverty and social exclusion.
- A workshop on older people's issues at the Round Table, which AGE and its working group will contribute actively to.
- Response to the questionnaire on the evaluation of the OMC
- Response to the Joint Social Protection and Social Inclusion Report.
- Participation in meetings of the European Organisations within membership of the EAPN
- Participation in meetings of the Executive Committee of EAPN
- Participation in relevant task force meetings of EAPN
- Participation in meetings with the Social Inclusion Unit of DG EMPL.

- Participation in the Luxembourg Presidency conference on the future of the Social Inclusion Process 12-14 June 2005

2.2.5 Health (Strategic Goal 3.3)

Among AGE's guiding principles is that a change of attitudes is needed to achieve a society for all ages, seeking solidarity between generations in a way that recognizes older people's contributions to society. We believe this holds true for health related issues.

AGE is committed to combating age discrimination in all areas of life and aims to monitor and influence the implementation of the various EU initiatives in this area. In the area of health as in any other fields, AGE advances the right of older people to be treated equally in health promotion and access to health resources. Equal access to health is covered by the large scope approach adopted by some member states when transposing the two non-discrimination Directives. AGE rejects chronological age as a reason to deny access to medical treatment or services and feels that older people should be empowered to have a say in the kind of care and services they would like to receive. AGE campaigns for healthy lifestyles to enable older people to continue to participate fully in society. We promote a positive and integrated approach to health that addresses a range of social, economic, housing, planning, transport and other relevant policies, all areas where older citizens face discrimination.

Only a very small budget is available for our Working Group on Health. Therefore, AGE's health group will also mainly be virtual.

AGE's main objective in the health field will be to monitor all relevant EU policy developments and build capacity of our members to promote healthy ageing, including better health and safety measures in the workplace for all workers (in our view, a pre-condition to healthy ageing). The Working Group will help the Secretariat develop a leaflet on the importance of healthy lifestyles for all ages (addressing lifestyle determinants such as working conditions, physical activity, diet, socio-determinants of health) and the responsibility of civil society organisations in promoting good health in older age (end 2005).

AGE will also continue to respond to policy consultation at EU level (for example within the European Health Policy Forum set up by the Commission) and to monitor the implementation of the Open Method of Coordination on Health care and Long-term care. AGE has been invited to participate in two Luxembourg Presidency Conferences, one on Access to Healthcare in an Internal Market and one on Long-Term Care for Older People. AGE's contribution to both conferences will be prepared in consultation with both our Social Protection and Health Working groups.

Expected outcomes for item 2.2.5 on Health:

- Increased knowledge about discrimination faced by older people in access to healthcare
- Position paper on healthy lifestyles and safe workplaces for older workers
- Leaflet with major recommendations on healthy ageing and safe working conditions for all
- Continued participation in the Commission's Health Policy Forum
- AGE members involvement in the OMC on Health
- AGE participates in relevant EU conferences

2.3 Enhancing older citizens' active citizenship

Relates to Strategic goal 3.4

2.3.1 AGE Campaign to support the new Constitution

AGE produced an analysis of the new Constitution which is now published on our website in 4 languages (EN, F, D, S). Some of our members are translating the document into their own language and will use it for their own campaign.

AGE will continue to support its member organisations in their campaign to raise the awareness of older citizens of the added value of the new Constitution and encourage them to vote. Very few people are aware that in addition to the Charter of Fundamental Rights, the Constitution includes a horizontal article on non-discrimination in addition to the former Article 13 TEC.

Expected outcomes for item 2.3.1:

- AGE members campaign at national level to raise awareness and understanding of the new Constitution
- AGE analysis of the new Constitution is translated into more languages

2.3.2 AGE and the European Parliament

Thanks to the campaign we ran last year, the Intergroup on Ageing was successfully re-established and we look forward to working together with the European Parliament to advance the rights of older citizens at EU level. AGE will continue to help its members establish lasting relationships with their MEPs to increase understanding of older citizens' expectations among the MEPs.

As we have done in the previous years, we plan to organise a major event on age discrimination in December with the support of the Intergroup on Ageing where the work we will have done on the transposition and implementation of the Directive will be presented together with our analysis of the pros and cons of a wider approach (large scope directive on access to goods and services).

Other seminars or events will be organised on major EU policy issues with the support of the co-Chairs of the Intergroup, including an event on good practice in employment of older workers, one on good practice in long-term care, one on multiple discrimination (together with the Intergroup against Racism and Xenophobia) and one on the Green paper on Demographic Change.

Expected outcomes for item 2.3.2:

- Increased participation of MEPs in Intergroup meetings
- Increased relationship of AGE members with MEPs
- Participation of AGE in Intergroup meetings
- A few events organised with the support of the Intergroup on age discrimination, active ageing, multiple discrimination and good practice in long-term care, Green Paper on Demographic Change<

2.4 Information and communication activities

Relates to Strategic Goals 2,3 and 4

As reported in the Ernst Young synthesis report, the evaluation of the activities of EU core funded networks has confirmed “the legitimacy and effectiveness of such networks in representing members to the European institutions, supporting lobbying at national level, coordinating projects, programmes, actions and initiatives and fostering the continual exchange of information”. All this can only be achieved through a strong communication strategy aimed at informing older people, their organisations and other interested organisations of relevant EU developments in order to raise awareness of and facilitate their involvement in EU policymaking and implementation. Our information is also targeting key policy makers: EU institutions, MEPs, national policy makers, academics.

All Officers received training last year to be able to update the website directly. Our information activities cover issues such as policies on anti-discrimination, social protection, social inclusion, employment, research, the new Constitution, the European Parliament, healthcare, European programmes of relevance to older people, updates on projects in which AGE is participating, etc. Our information and communication tools include a website (including a well developed “Members section”), a monthly magazine, an annual report, position papers, brochures and leaflets. Our website has developed quite significantly and the number of visitors rose from 4.000 in April 2004 to 10.000 in December 2004; This figure continues to rise and for that reason we plan to devote effort to making it more user friendly. The site contains so many pages, that we need to reorganise both the public and Members’ sections to facilitate consultation by users.

Expected outcomes for item 2.4:

- Further development of our website and improved accessibility of Public and Members' sections (as assessed by number of visitors and questionnaire)
- 11 issues of monthly bulletin in 5 languages (EN, F, I, D, E)
- Newsflashes on developments, which require urgent action, such as consultations on urgent political action, calls for proposals etc. (at least once a month throughout the year)
- Information on statistics, initiatives and good practice in Member States (throughout the year)

2.5 Evaluation procedure

Relates to *Strategic Goal 4.5*

Following on the work started last year, we plan to fine-tune our performance management system to ensure feasibility and sustainability, continue the work on performance reporting (half and full-year reports) and carry out a survey of the membership to inform the development of the next strategic plan. As recommended by our external consultant we will review our logic framework to streamline and limit the number of performance indicators based on our experience during the first year. This will be done in the course of the summer with the support of Transform Agency who provided us last year with training on "Reporting on performance". Our external evaluator will attend the 2005 General Assembly and will present the on-going evaluation process we have developed with his support. Drawing lessons from our first year experience in using a logic framework to assess progress toward our strategic goals, our consultant will help us fine-tune our methodology and develop a long-term evaluation strategy. This process will include a survey of the membership to be undertaken in September / October 2005 to evaluate AGE's performance in meeting its members' expectations and needs. The result of the survey and recommendations for the future will be presented and discussed at the Council in October 2005 and the final set of recommendations agreed by the Council will be presented to the General Assembly 2006 for formal approval.

For more details on our plans, please refer to the enclosed working plan drafted by Transform Agency.

Expected outcomes for item 2.5:

- A tailor-made performance management system that meets the Commission requirements and AGE's needs
- A workable and sustainable methodology that will enable us to develop future Strategic Plans meeting the needs and expectations of both our funders and members

- Interim and final reports by external evaluator
- Survey of membership assessing progress made in last two years