



Mark your diary: 29 April 2009

1st European Day on Solidarity and cooperation between generations

Join the campaign to mark the European Day!

Dear members,

On 28-29 April 2008, the Slovene Presidency organised a EU Presidency conference in Brdo (Slovenia) on "*Intergenerational Solidarity for Cohesive and Sustainable Societies*".

The conference, which was organised in cooperation with the European Commission and a few NGOs (including AGE, the European Youth Forum, AIM and AEIP) focused on seeking to reinforce social links between generations as well as to initiate a shift in policy-making to promote greater solidarity between generations.

Demographic ageing is strongly affecting the relationships among generations and the way European societies function. The political debate has often focused on the negative challenges of ageing, such as its impact on the increased pension and health care expenditure or on the shrinking labour force.

Yet, the demographic reality should instead be looked at as an opportunity, which requires a new assessment and reworking of several economic and social policies within society. Intergenerational solidarity is an integral part of the European economic and social system, and is therefore crucial in this debate.

Solidarity and creating links between young, middle and older generations should not be limited to strict financial concepts but to a broader view of the promotion of mutual cooperation and interchanges between the generations as well as a better understanding and new forms of co-existence.

29 April - European Day on Solidarity and Cooperation between Generations

Following the successful outcomes of the conference, the Slovenian EU Presidency decided to launch 29 April as the “*European Day on Solidarity and Cooperation between Generations*”, as proposed by their Minister of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Marjeta Cotman, to raise awareness about the need to promote greater intergenerational solidarity.

Vladimir Špidla, EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, also announced that he will propose 2012 to be declared the ‘*EU Year on Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity*’, which should encourage discussions and exchange of good practices between the Member States.

The Commission has meanwhile decided to organise a Euroflash survey on the views of the EU citizens on intergenerational solidarity. This Euroflash will be presented in April 2009 in order to coincide with the first European Day of Intergenerational Solidarity on Wednesday 29 April 2009.

Alliance of NGOs to launch a campaign on intergenerational solidarity

The European Older People’s Platform (AGE), the European Youth Forum (YFJ), the European Women’s Lobby (EWL), Association Internationale de la Mutualité (AIM), the European Association of Paritarian Institutions of social protection (AEIP) and the European Liaison Committee for Social Housing (CECODHAS) warmly welcomed the importance attached by the European Union to the necessity of addressing the aspect of solidarity between generations in all spheres of life including areas as social protection systems, social inclusion, employment, health, transport, urban development, housing, education and volunteering.

The creation of a European Day on Intergenerational Solidarity and an EU Year on Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity will play an important part in raising awareness of the need for policy change and in creating new visions to achieve a society tailored to all ages.

It is very important for all generations – young, middle-aged and older people – to take their responsibility and to play an active role in the reflection debates on how to review our socio-economic structures and better adapt them to support the right policies based on intergenerational solidarity. Civil society initiatives play an increasing role in providing new forms of cooperation and solidarity between the generations.

We have therefore decided to prepare jointly an awareness-raising campaign to encourage our members (e.g. older people’s associations, youth groups, women networks, paritarian institutions, mutual benefit societies and other groups of civil society) to cooperate in starting planning activities to mark the first European Day of Intergenerational Solidarity in 2009. This cooperation should focus on the organisation of intergenerational activities at grass root level as well as policy debates at local, national and EU level.

With our awareness-raising campaign, we aim to attract the attention of politicians on European, national, regional and local levels who should work together with civil society groups on how to rethink and redefine the concept of solidarity between the generations, and on how to support civil society initiatives on intergenerational cooperation.

This campaign should also encourage the European policy-makers to put intergenerational solidarity high on the EU agenda and to support the proposal to make 2012 the European Year on Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity as proposed by Commissioner Špidla.

In the context of the Day, we will also issue a press package, which will collect information about our members' initiatives and actions and announce the key messages of the campaign. This information and press package shall be disseminated as widely as possible through a dedicated page on our website.

What can you do to mark the European Day 2009:

- We would strongly encourage you to organise an event or issue a position paper to mark the first "*European Day on Solidarity and Cooperation between Generations*" on Wednesday 29 April 2009.
- We would like you (e.g. older people associations, youth organisations, women's organisations, paritarian institutions, mutualities and other civil society groups) to cooperate with each other in planning actions at grass root level as well as policy debates to mark the European Day.
- We would like you to send us any kind of information about positive actions and good practice examples of intergenerational cooperation. We will use the information to build a press pack for the media.

Examples of actions to mark the European Day on Intergenerational Solidarity

Depending on the mission and normal activities of your organisation you may prefer to:

1. **Present existing or launch new intergenerational projects:** cultural/social local activities involving groups from various ages for their mutual benefit.

Examples of such activities:

- Open Door Days where other age groups are invited and play an active role in the Day;
- Intergenerational study tours: visits of good practice examples of projects involving both younger and older generations
- Intergenerational activities between young and old such as sports events, photo contests, cooking events etc.
- Organised visits or meetings within your local community: visits to a local youth centre or an older people's house
- Exchange of testimonies between young and old
- Music and Dance Festivals

2. **Policy debates:**

At national level:

Organising an open debate with representatives of various age groups and politicians as well as media to discuss a wide range of policy fields such as social protection, education, work, housing, mobility, care, volunteering, urban development, transport, or long-term care

Examples of such activities:

- Debates and meetings with local politicians
- Debates with national parliamentarians or candidates standing for the European elections
- Conferences, seminars, or reflection debates on new innovative forms of intergenerational cooperation and social cohesion

At European level:

Organisation of a debate/seminar in the Committee of Regions about all aspects of intergenerational solidarity and its impact on older people's associations, youth groups, women networks, paritarian institutions, mutual benefit societies and other groups of civil society

3. Media/Publicity

- Special (Spring) editions of your members' magazines/newsletters devoted to celebrate the European Day
- Publication of a brochure/booklet on intergenerational solidarity
- Media campaigns
- Press releases, press articles, or press conferences

List of contacts

Please find below information about the European organisations involved in the campaign and the links to the lists of their members in the EU Member States:

AGE – The European Older People's Platform

Rue Froissart 111

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www.age-platform.org

List of Members: <http://www.age-platform.org/EN/z-AGEMembers.htm>

Contact person:

Karen Vandeweghe, Communication and European Parliament Officer

Email: karen.vandeweghe@age-platform.org

Association Internationale de la Mutualité (AIM)

Rue d'Arlon 50

B – 1000 Brussels

Tel: +32 2 234 57 00

Fax : +32 2 234 57 08

<http://www.aim-mutual.org>

List of Members: <http://www.aim-mutual.org/index.php?page=12>

Contact person:
Philippe Swennen, Project Manager
E-mail : aim.secretariat@aim-mutual.org

CECODHAS –The European Liaison Committee for Social Housing

18, Square de Meeûs
B-1050 Brussels
Tel : +32 2 541 05 60
Fax : +32 2 541 05 69
www.cecodhas.org

List of members: Click on the left section on the website: "[Find out about CECODHAS members in...](#)"

Contact person :
Claire Roumet, Secretary-General
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European Association of Paritarian Institutions of social protection (AEIP)

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Fax: +32 2 282 05 69
<http://www.aeip.net/>

List of Members:
<http://www.aeip.net/index.cfm?myCatid=E597C23D-BA81-A61A-0C19B6EC43ADB403&lang=en&Parent=Members&ParentID2=E597C23D-BA81-A61A-0C19B6EC43ADB403>

Contact person :
Sibylle Reichert, Permanent Representative of AEIP in Brussels
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European Women's Lobby (EWL)

Rue Hydraulique 18
B – 1210 Brussels
Tel: +32 2 217 90 20
Fax: +32 2 219 84 51
<http://www.womenlobby.org>

Contact person:
Mary Collins, Policy Officer Social Policy
collins@womenlobby.org

YFJ - European Youth Forum

Rue Joseph II, 120
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Fax: +32 2 230 21 23
<http://www.youthforum.org/>

List of Members > under Membership

National Youth Councils: http://www.youthforum.org/Downloads/about_us/NYCwebdb.pdf

International Non-Governmental Youth Organisations:

http://www.youthforum.org/Downloads/about_us/INGYOwebdb.pdf

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