

Intergenerational Solidarity for Cohesive and Sustainable Societies

Outcomes of the Slovenian Presidency Conference
Brdo, Slovenia • 28 - 29 April 2008



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General Introduction

Following the very successful conference organised by the Slovenian EU Presidency and the European Commission in Brdo on 28-29 April 2008 on Intergenerational Solidarity for Cohesive and Sustainable Societies, the conference Steering Group decided to publish a brochure on the outcomes of the conference and the way forward.

The purpose of this brochure is to encourage further work on the issue and to launch the European Day on Intergenerational Solidarity on 29 April as proposed by Minister Cotman. The brochure should also help launch the debate to prepare the 2012 - European Year on Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity proposed by Commissioner Špidla at the conference.

This publication presents a summary of the main plenary sessions and roundtables, as well as comments and recommendations from the Editorial Committee.

The document is published in English, French, German, Dutch, Slovene and Spanish and printed copies can be obtained free of charge from any of the following organisations:

AGE: info@age-platform.org

AEIP: info@aeip.net

AIM: aim.secretariat@aim-mutual.org

European Youth Forum: press@youthforum.org

A PDF file of all language versions will be available on the following websites from end of 2008:

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Slovenia:
<http://www.mddsz.gov.si/si/publikacije/>

AGE: www.age-platform.org

AEIP: www.aeip.net

AIM: www.aim-mutual.org

European Youth Forum: www.youthforum.org

With this brochure we hope to convince a growing number of EU and national policy makers and social actors to pursue the work started by the Slovenian Presidency during the first half of 2008 in order to initiate a shift in policy making to achieve a more cohesive and sustainable European society based on intergenerational solidarity.

All comments and recommendations are welcome! Please address these to the organisations mentioned above.

We wish you a pleasant reading.

The members of the Steering Group

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Message from Marjeta Cotman

Minister of Labour,
Family and Social Affairs,
Slovenia



© Brdo Conference 28-29 April 2008, Slovene Presidency, Slovenia

Marjeta Cotman

Minister of Labour, Family and Social Affairs,
Slovenia

We live in times of dynamic and significant social changes resulting from political, economic and demographic processes. With a declining birth rate and rising life expectancy, conventional relationships between generations in European societies are evolving rapidly. Accordingly, policy-makers at all levels must, in cooperation with experts and civil society, redefine those relations. In so doing, we must not neglect any of the common European values and principles which are fundamental to all democratic and developed societies. Solidarity is undoubtedly one of these values. It is an integral part of all European systems. Social protection systems, pension and sickness insurance, and health insurance systems are all based on solidarity. Solidarity should not be understood in merely financial terms. We should place equal importance on mutual cooperation, understanding and co-existence of generations. Solidarity is a matter of conscious decision-making.

Due to changed demographic structures, intergenerational solidarity is now more important than ever, given that existing solutions can no longer guarantee all citizens the appropriate health and social protection which constitute a core aspect of political and social stability in every society. New systems need to be established in Europe. We perceive that solutions can be found in a

change in the relationship between the generations, the search for new forms for interchange between them and a new responsibility that is shouldered by all generations: young, middle-aged and older people. Intergenerational solidarity must be an integral component of our talks and agreements in the future. We are convinced that solutions will not present themselves spontaneously; all key actors must be involved in finding them. The ultimate objective is to reach a new intergenerational agreement which will allow for new relations in society.

Long-term care is one example of solidarity in practice. While primarily intended for the people that urgently need it in their every day life, indirectly it gives us all security since no one knows if and when they may need it themselves. Major challenges lie ahead: how can equal access to long-term care and its universality be safeguarded, how can the organisation of long-term care be improved, how can better quality be achieved, how can the sustainability of long-term care in terms of financing and human resources be guaranteed and can family carers be better protected and supported. These issues are closely associated with the concept of

solidarity. Care for the dependent is an aspect of social protection in which social differences are most markedly highlighted and this area therefore calls for particular attention. In each society, there are individuals whose care needs are not identified and who are left without care or who receive inadequate care. Even the richest European societies have pockets of poverty, and these, unfortunately, are not decreasing.

In a consumer society, the poor remain on the margins. This impinges not only on the equality of access to and fairness of public services but also on the human dignity of each individual. Long-term care is therefore the yardstick by which every society can establish the level of its humanity and respect for human values and relations.

We need to identify a new balance and new relationships between the generations, researching innovative approaches and policies aimed at encouraging intergenerational solidarity for cohesive and sustainable societies. Sustainable social development will be feasible only with genuine contact and coexistence between all generations based on intergenerational solidarity.



Message from Vladimir Špidla

EU Commissioner for Employment,
Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities



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Vladimir Špidla,
EU Commissioner for Employment,
Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities

The ageing of the European population is no longer an abstract scenario describing a distant future. As the baby boomer cohorts born between 1945 and 1965 now are reaching retirement age we have come to a turning point in the demographic development of the European Union. As of 2008 the number of persons aged 20-59 is beginning to decline and it will drop rapidly in the two decades to come. Simultaneously, the yearly increase in the number of persons aged 60 and over has doubled between 2006 and 2008 and the aggregate number in this age group will continue to increase until 2025.

Will this trend lead to increasing tensions between the generations as fewer people of working age will have to support an increasing number of older people? Many conjure up a bleak image of conflict between the generations and see ageing as a threat. Yet, there is no need to be afraid of demographic change if we start looking at the opportunities it represents. Longer, healthier lives mean that people can stay active longer and the smaller number of children allows us to invest more in their education and personal development.

In fact, I am convinced that demographic change provides us with the opportunity for strengthening the solidarity between generations. But I don't expect this to happen by itself. Efforts are needed in the following areas:

- Our societies will have to make better use of the potential of all generations and to provide chances for all to develop their full potential. To do so, social policies have to be modernised, as sketched out in the Commission's *Renewed social agenda: Opportunities, access and solidarity in 21st century Europe* of July 2008.
- The perception of people aged above 50, 60 or 70 needs to change: Ageing is still too often perceived as a problem because the potential of older people for society is overlooked. Longer, healthier lives mean that people can stay active longer. Right now, most of the baby boomers are still fit and healthy. They are better educated and trained than previous cohorts. In short, they represent a resourceful and large group in our societies. We must ensure that this enormous potential is not wasted.
- The older a society becomes, the more important it is to invest in youth. The success of the young generation determines a society's its ability to support those older people who depend on the help of others. The problems of high youth unemployment, too many early school-leavers, and job insecurity faced by younger people have to be tackled.
- We also need to pay special attention to the intermediate ('sandwich') generation which takes care of the youngest and oldest members of society. These caring obligations can represent a considerable burden, mostly shouldered by women. The quality of life of all generations depends on the availability of quality care services for children and dependent older people.

Let us also remember that bringing old and young in opposition to each other is rather short-sighted and ignores the notion of the life cycle – or the basic fact that we do not remain young forever. Moreover, where would we draw the border between old and young? This border shifts over time in the self-perception of individuals – and in the collective image as more and more people reach the age of 60 or 70 in perfect health.

The European Union cannot shape the relations between generations directly. The main instruments of intergenerational solidarity are controlled by the Member States, which are notably responsible for pension systems and the provision of adequate health and long-term care. But the European Union can encourage discussions on these common challenges and organise an exchange of good practice at European level, as is done through the Open Method of Coordination in the area of social protection and social inclusion.

The conference on *Intergenerational Solidarity for Cohesive and Sustainable Societies* organised by the Slovenian Presidency in April 2008 took a broader look at the relations between generations in ageing societies. It is my wish that this theme be further debated at the European level and that we intensify our exchanges in this area. A European Year on Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity, which could be envisaged for 2012, would be an ideal opportunity for doing so.

Rethinking intergenerational solidarity in ageing societies

Knowledge and experience, *techné* in the Ancient Greek language, played a predominant role in the development of human civilisation. Older people made a decisive contribution to the preservation of the community. Only on rare occasions, when the short-term survival of the community was at stake, were older people, despite the fact that they were the holders of knowledge and experience, sacrificed to preserve the young and the future physical existence of the community.

The first important change in this tradition was made during the Enlightenment, when the function of teaching was transferred to the state by introducing mandatory primary education. The industrial revolution brought new changes. Individuals were valued as long as they contributed to the creation of wealth and when they were no longer able to do that, they became surplus. In the first period of industrialisation, older people were dependent on the mercy and charity of others. This unsustainable situation was resolved with the creation and gradual development of the welfare state which provided state pensions based on a certain demographic balance with enough births and a life expectancy which on average did not exceed 50 years.

In the last third of the 20th century, the demographics changed completely and the so-called crisis of the pension

system is caused by the decreasing number of births and the extended average life expectancy which means that our European population is ageing rapidly. In EU Member States, there were 79 million people older than 65 in 2005. This number is expected to rise to 107 million by 2025 and to 133 million by 2050.

“Cohesion can only be achieved if it is made sustainable”

Pedro Marques, State Secretary, Ministry for Labour and Social Solidarity, Portugal



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As Professor Martin Kohli pointed out in his introductory paper, we need to rethink intergenerational solidarity within our ageing society because today's culture strengthens individualisation and the family structure is weakened with divorces, single-member families and families without children being increasingly common.

There is an increasing pressure put on the intermediate generation, in particular on women, who are forced to choose between their career and caring for their loved ones. According to Jože Ramovš, “the most important condition for the creation of a new solidarity between the generations is the acknowledgement that the human being is the major

value of society. We need to value equally the child, the working age adult and the old person whose knowledge and experience have crystallised in life wisdom.”

“Intergenerational solidarity principles have to go hand in hand with the philosophy of social protection and active social inclusion based on partnership, cooperation and respect for the values and potential of all age groups.”

Viera Tomanová, Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, Slovakia



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Today, aged parents and their adult children frequently live in immediate vicinity although not in the same household. They are emotionally close to each other, they maintain close contact and offer each other help in different forms. Financial transfers are frequent and mostly take place downwards from the parents to the

children. These transfers show that the intergenerational pact works in both directions: the working age generation pays for a secure old age of the previous generation and the older generations support the younger generations financially through legacies. But family transfers are selective and they may deepen social inequalities. Generations increasingly dislike depending on each other and the issue of wealth in families can become a source of conflict. Family caregivers can be placed under excessive pressure with a negative impact on their career.

“A lot is going on... whatever the solution is, it has to contain a large share of solidarity....”

Georg Fischer, European Commission

This is why it is beneficial to support the family in assisting its members. Public policies are necessary to enable everyone to reconcile family care giving with employment. Family friendly policies should particularly promote new solutions based on the rights of caregivers and incentives for employers, and employment policies should help strengthen the working potential of the older generation.

Why solidarity and cooperation among generations need to be reviewed and promoted to ensure a fair and sustainable society in today's context

The most important achievement of the 20th century post-industrial society is today's longer life expectancy. However this longevity is placing an increasing pressure on the solidarity between and within generations and is raising new concerns about the way we respond to the long-term care needs of our ageing population. Relations between generations are changing rapidly and we need to ensure that what is perceived as a demographic challenge today will be turned into an opportunity tomorrow.

In its Green Paper – *Confronting Demographic Change*, the European Commission highlighted in 2005 that the changing age structure of European societies should be tackled with adequate research and efforts by all stakeholders to find good solutions to ensure the long-term sustainability of our social systems. Both inter and intra-generational solidarity should be high on the EU agenda together with social cohesion and sustainable development.

Future relations among generations will be largely dependent on policies which will be dedicated to young people, families and older people. Studies carried out in the last 15 years consistently pointed to the decisive influence of social and economic policies on intergenerational exchange, both at the level of society and within the family. The longer life expectancy and low birth rate have changed the demographic structure of the family, which today stretches across three or four generations. This new structure has created the phenomenon of the 'sandwich generation'. This generation is facing numerous obligations toward their very old relatives as well as towards their children and grandchildren. Today older people are made to feel guilty about the problems faced by the younger generations owing to the welfare costs related to financing the needs of older generations. Such discussions and disputes do not address the problem correctly. They do not contribute to finding solutions because they undermine the principle of social protection and build artificial barriers between generations.

Social cohesion will be one of the most important challenges brought by demographic and economic changes in the coming decades and it will force EU policy makers and citizens to change their view on the role of families and older people. Longer life expectancy should be seen as an opportunity for growth and as benefit for individual citizens and for society as a whole.

To paraphrase Spinoza, we should not cry or rejoice at our changing demographics but rather understand them to respond to this challenge adequately in the long run. The question is not whether solidarity exists at all, but what is happening with it, primarily in the relationships among generations. Globalisation and the post-industrial economy have launched a series of social dynamics which on the one hand bring the welfare state under pressure, and on the other hand has created new social groups which need assistance and support. Rapid social and welfare changes have created numerous new needs. How to tackle them? What should the European social

model be like? In the European ageing society, these changes affect all generations and this is why intergenerational solidarity and cooperation needs to be rethought, and the main subjects in this rethinking should be both welfare policies and social initiatives.

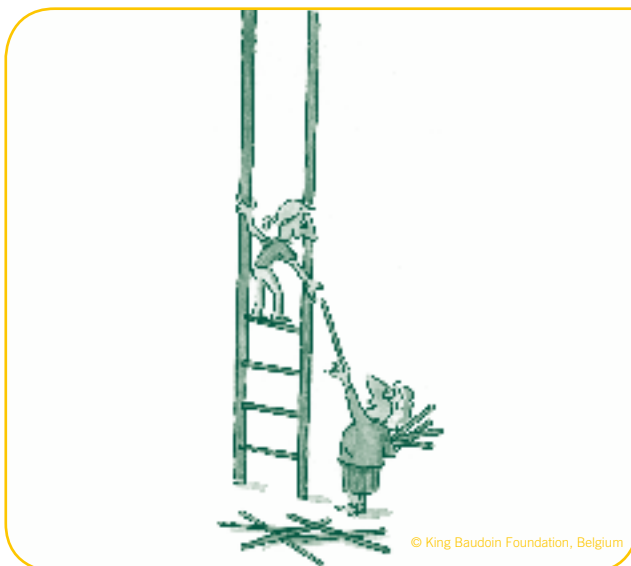
Some policy-makers have already started to reflect on this evolution. In Belgium, the King Baudouin Foundation (KBF) has fostered reflections on intergenerational solidarity and questions have included: how can we encourage the different generations to cooperate? How can we support intermediate generations to provide a link between all the generations? How can older people transmit their knowledge and competencies to the younger generations? How can we keep seniors at work for longer? How can we help older people update their competencies and make others more aware of what they can contribute? To what extent is ageing likely to affect how our societies function?

How can we support intermediate generations to provide a link between all the generations? How can older people transmit their knowledge and competencies to the younger generations? How can we keep seniors at work for longer? How can we help older people update their competencies and make others more aware of what they can contribute? To what extent is ageing likely to affect how our societies function?

These questions are often approached somewhat menacingly, evoking a scenario where systems of social protection are put at risk by the shrinking size of the working population, which will no longer be sufficient to pay for pensions and other old age allowances. As Yaël Wischnevsky (Intergenerational network of the King Baudouin Foundation) said at the conference, this is a negative vision that presents conflict between the generations as somewhat inevitable. Yet, if we wish to maintain a system of intergenerational solidarity, we must learn to transform what appears to be a risk into an opportunity. It is high time to envisage a new Social Pact, which pays

greater attention to all generations, to their needs and expectations and which will ensure the real involvement of all in society. Aging, a consequence of the demographic development of our societies, must not become a source of segregation, as was previously the case with gender and ethnic origin. Nevertheless, creating links between the generations cannot be limited only to actions that target seniors: it must necessarily include all of the generations. We need a new Intergenerational Pact based on three fundamental principles:

- Actions should be integrated and should cover all spheres of life including work, housing, mobility, social action, care, local and national politics and the voluntary sector;
- Actions should be universal and must integrate the various generations, from childhood to old age, via the young and intermediate age groups;
- Actions should not be exclusively for the benefit of one particular group, but must be based on an exchange between the generations.



In today's demographic context, informal caregiving is putting intergenerational solidarity under pressure in nearly all EU Member States and particularly in the new Member States where care is overwhelmingly provided by family members. This family care reflects solidarity within as well as between generations.

Research shows that most families would like to be able to continue to care for their dependents, generally at home and preferably supported by social services.

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Again, this is especially true in the new Member States and in southern Europe; it is a less preferred option in the Nordic countries, the Netherlands, Belgium and France. However, across Europe, there is relatively little support for more extensive development of nursing and residential care. Family care has its shortcomings as women find it difficult to reconcile their professional life with their care giving role. There is a lack of systematic initiatives for the support for employed caregivers. While many employers are trying to reconcile employment with the parenthood of their employees, when it comes to taking care of older family members, very few employers take initiatives such as special leave or flexible working hours.

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The preservation and strengthening of intergenerational solidarity will be dependent on mutual support from paid and unpaid caregivers, which requires the development of good integrated care services in local communities.

The role of the state and civil society in intergenerational solidarity and cooperation

“The European social model is not a barrier to economic objectives. It is not an obstacle to the work of building an open and dynamic market economy. It is a productive factor in achieving strong economic performance. In the European social model, social policy is economic policy.”

Anna Diamantopoulou, EU Commissioner 2000

Even if today's family is still a strong network almost everywhere in the EU, it needs special attention from public policies to be able to provide the necessary support to all its family members. One of the tasks of the state is to enable people to choose to take care of their dependent relatives (elderly parents, young children or a person with a disability) and provide them with protection and support. For example, by guaranteeing that they can keep or return to their job after taking a period of leave. The state is also responsible for preventing poverty in old age, particularly among people with an interrupted career - which is a problem that affects many women who have been faced with caring duties.

Cooperation between the state and civil society will be of crucial importance to provide all dependents with a good network of supportive services. Depending on national or local preferences, there is space for public, non-for-profit and for-profit action. But it is the responsibility of the state to ensure that all services are of good quality and accessible to those who need them. Dependent people should be provided with the purchasing power to choose the provider and type of service they need and public support is necessary when the individual's resources are inadequate. Volunteer organisations can play a key role in helping to meet the needs of the growing

number of dependent within today's context of limited resources. Many older people are prepared to work as volunteers and programmes supporting active ageing, such as the one launched by the German Federal Government to support older people's volunteering, should be encouraged.

We must keep in mind that we will not cope with the demographic challenge if we only focus our work on the elderly. One of the goals of social protection is to promote a strong solidarity between and within generations. If people live longer and if they are in good health, they can work a little longer than before to avoid overburdening the younger generations. If we wish to achieve our goal of a more cohesive society, we need to launch a dialogue at all levels - local, national and international - and it should involve all generations and all social groups.



“In Finland, in the late 1990s, an intergenerational debate was held to discuss whether people should work longer. Following this discussion, Finland launched a national programme to promote the employment of older workers, whereby particular attention was devoted to improving the working and functional capacities of older workers. This programme prepared the reform of the pension system that entered into force in 2005. Without this preparatory action, reform would not have been feasible. A forum was established whereby all social partners and non-governmental organisations could consider the need for crucial changes. The purpose of the pension reform was to balance the future development of the society so that younger generations would not have to bear unreasonably high proportion of the costs of ageing. Everyone agreed that the most important goal was to extend the period of employment for 2-3 years and adjust the pension schemes to the new life expectancy. Pension scheme reform was carried out in cooperation with social partners and all participants were extremely committed. In spring 2008, the Finnish Government established the National Pension Forum dealing with current issues of pension scheme policy, in particular with regard to demographic changes. This enables a constructive dialogue and builds support for the necessary reforms.”

Terttu Savolainen, Ministry of Social Affairs, Finland



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“Let us free our imagination”

as a participant said

Volunteering: Young and old as promoters of social change

Negative stereotypes about ageing, including in the media, present older people as seriously ill, dependent on others and costly to society. Similar negative stereotypes pervade our culture about young people who are presented as unreliable, inexperienced and selfish. This does not pay justice the huge contribution that both young and older volunteers bring to society and how influential they are in promoting social change through their volunteer activities. Most volunteering activities promote intergenerational solidarity and cooperation either as an objective per se or by naturally bringing different age groups together. When several generations work together and share the same goal, this leads to a better understanding between generations and a more constructive coexistence.

Voluntary work is the fastest and the most practical way one can contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of all generations and to the development of a more cohesive and caring society.

According to the media, there is an increasing demand from citizens of all ages to get involved in volunteer activities, including from people who are in full employment. Reasons often cited are: the wish to do something useful for society, to meet others who share a similar vision of life, to help others who are less fortunate, etc. Voluntary work is the fastest and the most practical way one can contribute to the improvement of the quality of life of all generations and to the development of a more cohesive and caring society.

Through their volunteer activities, young people usually get very useful hands-on experience and develop their inter-personal skills. Older people learn new skills and feel valued as they transmit their knowledge and experience to younger generations. All this learning and sharing contribute to the valorisation of our human capital and directly benefit the whole society.

"I like to be treated as an equal by the elderly... we are together to do work."

Karen Sheldon, 19 years old volunteer, British Red Cross



Intergenerational solidarity in modern forms of the family

Although in most Member States the family continues to be the primary source of solidarity between generations, today's new social trends are conflicting with the traditional role of the family. The higher participation of women in the labour force, the increasing mobility of workers and new forms of family (the higher number of single parent families, divorces, recomposed families, etc.) create new challenges for intergenerational solidarity within the family.

As family carers are mainly women and people aged 50+, increasing their employment rate will require new policies and resources to enable them to reconcile work and family life and promote intergenerational solidarity within today's families.

To limit the impact of ageing on public spending, all Member States tend to “rediscover” the value of family and its solidarity potentials. At the same time, governments try to attract more women to the labour market and “encourage” older workers to stay in employment for longer. As family carers are mainly women and people aged 50+, increasing their employment rate will require new policies and resources to enable them to reconcile work and family life and promote intergenerational solidarity within today's families. Family-friendly policies are needed to respond to the needs of single parent and dual earning families with young children. For example, in a few Member States, parental care leave is extended to grand-parents. Another example is the carer leave that workers can take to care for a seriously ill relative. But such initiatives are still an exception and most families, in particular women, are left with the burden of caring for their dependent relatives. Despite thirty years of gender equality legislation, the issue of care and solidarity

between family members is considered a “gender” issue. If we truly wish to increase equal opportunities for women in today's circumstances, care responsibilities should be better shared between both partners within the family and this new balance should be supported by new family policies based on active citizenship and equal participation of all. Providing adequate care for dependents is not just a technical, financial and organisational issue. It also raises important ethical questions. The European Women's Lobby launched a campaign entitled “Who Cares”¹ to raise awareness of the huge difficulties faced by millions of women of all ages who still provide the large bulk of informal care. Although there are cultural differences between Member States as regards the role of the family, Member States and social actors should be careful, when considering these differences, to propose new approaches to ensure that women will no longer be forced to take over the main part of care responsibilities – to their own detriment.

COFACE,² the European Confederation of Family Organisations, is campaigning for a better recognition at European level of the role of families in strengthening solidarity between generations and to raise awareness of the needs of modern families. The European Alliance for Families³ is a new European initiative which should help identify good practice and innovative policies supporting new forms of families.

¹ European Women's Lobby Campaign: http://www.womenlobby.org/site/1actions.asp?DocID=1836&v1ID=&RevID=&namePage=&pageParent=&DocID_sousmenu=

² Confederation of Family Organisations in the EU: <http://www.coface-eu.org>

³ European Alliance for Families: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/families/european-alliance-for-families_en.html

Innovation forms and good practice of intergenerational solidarity and cooperation

Numerous new inter-generational programs are developing in several countries and there is an increasing interest from young and older people to get involved in such activities.

As mentioned earlier, demographic and social change among European societies challenges the traditional forms of intergenerational solidarity in the family. Civil society is playing an increasing role in sustaining the social cohesion of local communities in our ageing European societies and in providing alternative arenas for intergenerational solidarity. In various countries intergenerational programmes and projects have evolved from catering for the needs of socially excluded and isolated people to projects involving both young and older generations in mutually benefiting activities. Numerous new inter-generational programs are developing in several countries and there is an increasing interest from young and older people to get involved in such activities. These new forms of solidarity in the local community, however, need the provision of space in local centres in which the generations can meet. They also need some financial support to cover the running costs such as personnel and transport costs of the volunteers, etc. The participation of local authorities is therefore very important for the realisation of such projects. Political and community support is necessary to make such projects sustainable in the longer term.

“It takes a whole village to educate a child.”

African proverb



© Fédération des seniors, Carmine Hollens, Belgium

Citizens of all ages make contributions to society in a variety of ways: through paid employment as well as through volunteer activities and caring for others. Innovative measures are implemented to support cooperation between generations including the recognition of voluntary work, financial support through tax relief and the promotion of solutions that are mutually beneficial such as intergenerational housing projects or student/elderly pairing.

Innovative measures also include projects which aim at adapting the build environment and town-planning to the needs of all age groups to promote the independent living of the elderly and active cohabitation and mutual support between generations.

“The “Live and Live Together” project is an alternative housing programme which help young university students to find accommodation in the homes of lonely elderly people in need of company. It was established in 1996 as a test in a neighbourhood of Barcelona, and today it is consolidated across Spain, operating in 27 cities in 6 autonomous communities and 31 university centres. The programme promotes exchange between elderly individuals willing to take students into their homes during the academic year in return for company and personal help agreed upon by the student. Under the name Viure I Conviure, this intergenerational home share programme meets both the needs for companionship of isolated elderly and the need of students in search of a pleasant yet cheap place to live. The development of values such as solidarity, tolerance and respect are some of the key elements of the programme which, together with the exchanges of culture, nationality, religion and political opinion that emerge during the time spent together, bring to life an experience which can create bonds as strong as those that are formed in natural family units.”

Josep Solans, Viure I Conviure , Barcelona, Spain

Employment for all ages and flexicurity

The European Employment Strategy rightly aims at extending working lives. In other words, Member States are asked to do their utmost to help young people enter the labour market faster and older workers to remain involved in employment for a few more years. This is considered today as key to ensuring the long term sustainability of our social protection models. Whether Member States achieve the objective of longer working lives will play a key role in future solidarity and social cohesion.

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Research has shown that both young and older workers face common challenges such as age discrimination in recruitment and difficulties to reconcile work and family life.

“Research has shown that both young and older workers face common challenges such as age discrimination in recruitment and difficulties in reconciling work and family life. Both age groups are equally concerned with health and safety issues. Bad working conditions affect all age groups and influence the ability of workers to remain active in the labour market.”

Bettina Scharzmayr, European Youth Forum

The whole debate on flexicurity should take a horizontal approach and deal not only with employment policy, but also with social services, infrastructure, economy, education policy and training.

The flexicurity approach should be based on intergenerational solidarity and should address the needs of all age groups, enabling them to mutually support each other.

All age groups need more security as well as flexibility and the phrase ‘getting more people into good jobs’ should be the objective for all. Many fear however that the concept of flexicurity could lead to conflict of interest where flexibility for the employers will tend to prevail over security for workers and flexicurity policy could even lead to deregulation. While there seems to be a general consensus on the principle, there are serious problems in practice, in particular in some Member States. The solution could be found in a good combination between more flexibility and more security supported by a social consensus developed in close consultation with civil society and social partners.



Long-term care (LTC): New challenge for societies and a new paradigm of care

"Dare I become old? Yes if:

- *I am seen as an individual.*
- *I am not discriminated against.*
- *My dignity is retained.*
- *My self-determination is respected - do not talk over my head and involve me in the decisions which concern me.*
- *My family is taught how to deal with my needs - if I am demented, how to interpret my wishes; if I need technical means, how to use them.*
- *I can choose where to live - at home or in a nursing home where there is company and security.*
- *I will meet competent staff - the education of all professionals involved in the care of the elderly should contain geriatrics and gerontology.*
- *I will meet empathic staff - people who can read my thoughts and wishes, people who are able "to put themselves in my shoes".*
- *I only get the medicines which are good for me - the doses should be adjusted to my renal function and I should not get those which are contraindicated for use by old people. Nor should I get combinations of medicines which increase the risk of dangerous interactions.*
- *I get my teeth cared for so I do not risk bad breath. I want to be able to kiss my grandchildren.*
- *I do not have to lie with dirty diapers.*
- *I can get physical exercise so I can retain my ability to go to the loo myself.*
- *I will get tasty food and eat it in pleasant company with others.*
- *My days are filled with social content.*
- *I can listen to the music I like.*
- *I do not have to be afraid of abuse and neglect.*
- *I am sure that my self-determination is respected, also during my last days of life - medicine today can do so much but I may not want to have my life prolonged at the cost of more suffering."*

Barbro Westerholm, Chair Health Expert Group, AGE and Member of the Swedish Parliament

Long-term care is a social risk which must be met by a collective response. However, it is an issue raising many difficult questions. It is an area where it is not possible

to expect the individual citizens to provide an efficient answer. The conference organised by the Luxembourg Presidency in 2005 noted already that if EU Member

States did not want to burden many individuals with risks with which they could not cope, they would have to search for comprehensive solutions to respond to the needs for long-term care and admit that dependency is a social risk that should be covered as the fifth branch of social protection - a term used by many Member States - requiring systematic public intervention in this field.

Making trade-offs more transparent and developing synergies between different policies help to secure adequate social protection against health care and long-term care risks. Promoting healthy and active lifestyles, health and safety at work, and more preventive care, as well as taking account of health concerns in all policies is a win-win strategy.

If EU Member States do not want to burden many individuals with risks with which they could not cope, they would have to search for comprehensive solutions to respond to the needs for long-term care and admit that dependency is a social risk that should be covered as the fifth branch of social protection - a term used by many Member States - requiring systematic public intervention in this field.

There is a general and welcome trend to help older people live in their own home and community for as long as possible. This approach meets both the preference of most elderly people and helps save costs as institutional care is more expensive than home or community care. However, the infrastructure of community based services is still insufficient in many countries and this lack of community based services results in an overburdening of the middle age and “youngest” older generations. This is a situation which no Member State can afford to ignore.

As Vito Flaker highlighted, “across Europe, the concept of integrated care is developing and tries to build the necessary bridges between healthcare and social services, including education, etc. Today, the concept of care is based on the individual’s needs and wishes rather than the diagnosis of his/her condition. The resources provided

are not based on the employment record or income of the individual, but on the services that the person needs. In several Member States, an important novelty has been introduced and dependent people receive an allowance and can decide themselves what services they need or wish to receive. The old paradigm privileged service providers. It transferred the resources to them and thereby made the people in need of these services dependent on service providers and maintained a culture of patronage.”

This new approach raises a series of very practical social and economic issues which should be dealt with in a way which is fair for all generations. The basic premise is that care is nothing special. It does not concern only a small number of people. It is a general issue and everyone is concerned. We will all have to accept care at some stage in our lives and we are, hopefully, also all able to provide care to others. Care is an integral part of our everyday life, which means we should train for it and plan it. It can come suddenly upon any of us, without planning. Therefore unlike preparation for motherhood and parenthood – which are both usually planned and welcome – the care of a dependent relative is often something unexpected, for which we did not prepare.

In 2007, as part of the Open Method of Coordination on Social Protection and Social Inclusion, the Member States agreed that they have to provide “accessible, high-quality and sustainable healthcare and long-term care”.

Such rights are also mentioned in the Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union⁴ and in the European Social Charter⁵ of the Council of Europe (particularly Article 23 on the “right of the elderly to social protection”).

⁴Charter of Fundamental Rights of the European Union:
<http://eur-lex.europa.eu/LexUriServ/LexUriServ.do?uri=OJ:C:2007:303:0001:0016:EN:PDF>

⁵ Revised European Social Charter of 1996:
<http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/Commun/QueVoulezVous.asp?NT=163&CM=7&DF=26/10/2008&CL=ENG>

“In Middle and Southern Europe, care for the dependent is mainly a task performed by family members, women in particular. The provision of long hours of care means a tiring physical, psychological and financial burden for the family carers. In these countries, there is also a great lack of public services to support family care. Therefore the people in need of care and the people providing care in such conditions are among the most vulnerable groups in society. If we look at the range of services provided by the public sector and private suppliers, we can only establish that there is a substantial shortage. Long-term care is not considered to be a specific social risk. It is placed somewhere in between healthcare and social protection, which frequently leads to difficulties in terms of funding. Fragmentation is also caused by the division of competences, since many countries have been through decentralisation, during which obligations have been transferred to the lower territorial units, but the funding of these services did not follow.

So can the situation be improved? Long-term care should be acknowledged as a social risk, rather than as a private, individual risk as is the case today in these countries. To this end, more lobbying, more public discussion involving all relevant actors, and more public visibility is needed. Furthermore, technical and organisational structure should be constructed, new approaches and practices should be developed. Finally, the issue of resources should be discussed and agreed, since a broad agreement has been created on the need for long-term care provision, but there is a great deal less consent on providing resources to achieve this goal.”

August Österle, Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration, Austria

How to make long-term care sustainable and fair for all generations

The long term sustainability of their LTC systems is one of the major challenges that lie ahead of all Member States. If one generation is expected to carry most of the burden of caring for the other generations, this will give rise to intergenerational conflicts. The question is how to balance the burden of LTC between the state, the private sector and the family. There is no one-size-fits-all solution and the answer will vary from country to country depending on their citizens' expectations and cultural/legal framework. But there are some good practices which are worth considering, like making LTC a separate social security risk which needs to be covered by the social protection system.

Intergenerational solidarity and solidarity between the healthy and the sick, the poor and the rich, are vital to ensure a cohesive society and avoid shifting the cost of poor health and dependency to the individual citizens and their families. LTC services must be focussed on the dependent person and the need for a humane approach should not get lost in the search for financial soundness.

The recognition that it is more appropriate for the very old to stay in their accustomed environment as long as possible means that in the future special attention should be devoted not only to the affected elderly people but also to those supporting the elderly, that is to say their relatives and those close to them. Such examples of adequate services include:

- Services targeting the “50 to 70” age group that ease and organise the transition from employment to active inclusion in community life after retirement;
- Services that enable the elderly to remain included in the community by supporting their activities at home and in activity centres, intergenerational centres, counselling centres;
- Services that enable the elderly and their relatives to develop self-help and mutual assistance at home, residential communities, counselling regarding adaptation of the home environment to the needs of the elderly;
- Services for health prevention and monitoring of the elderly at home (gerontology, geriatric departments, vaccination) ;
- Services enabling the elderly to compensate more easily for their physical or other (functional) handicaps, counselling regarding care and healthcare, organisation of transport, food supply and meals at home services;
- Services enabling extended home care (“home hospital”).

In the area of institutional care:

- Adequate and affordable retirement homes;
- Services for acute hospital treatment of the elderly;
- Services for respite care, nursing departments in hospitals for short stays to relieve family carers;
- Good palliative care supporting dignified dying, psychological and spiritual care.

Quality long-term care for dependents of all ages

Ensuring that everyone has access to high-quality accessible and sustainable health care is an essential element of the European social model. To achieve and maintain high quality LTC, Member States use a variety of tools: quality standards, e.g. minimum structural and procedural requirements for providers (guidelines) or adapted housing standards, accreditation or certification of providers, quality monitoring systems.

A user-centred approach of care is needed to improve quality and ensure user’s satisfaction. That means tailor-made services and ensuring user’s rights, freedom of choice and involvement in decision-making. New information and communication technologies (ICT), as well as adapted housing conditions can also help ensure independent living at home and more user-oriented services.

Dependency does not only concern older people as there are individuals in other age group who need special care. However, the fact remains that ageing increases the probability for an individual to become dependent on others, if dependency is defined as a need for help with basic needs and occupations of daily life over an extended period. Statistics show that in 2004, there were 12.6 million dependent people in Europe, that 17 percent of the population aged 65 and over had a disability with huge national differences: 15 percent in Austria and Sweden and more than 30 percent in the United Kingdom; more women are affected than men, probably due to the shorter life expectancy of men who enjoy their partner’s support for a longer period of time. The future is unclear. The increasing life expectancy and rise in single-member households are expected to

result in an increase demand for LTC services. However, the general health status of European populations is improving; since the life expectancy of men is increasing slightly faster than that of women, the period during which they can provide support to each other will increase as well. Finally, new forms of living together are becoming popular among the elderly, such as residential communities and new forms of neighbourhood help. A new approach to social policy needs to be developed to provide new forms of support, help, care, housing and social services adapted to these emerging needs.

The German Charter of Rights for People in Need of Long-Term Care and Assistance is such an example. It deals with the rights of anyone who has become dependent and needs help. Article 1 on self-decision and self-help, speaks of the right of the dependent to get appropriate support to be able to live independently as long as possible. The Charter also deals with the right to psychological and mental integrity, freedom and safety (Article 2), to privacy (Article 3), care, support and treatment (Article 4), information, counselling and explanation (Article 5), communication, respect and participation in social life (Article 6), right to religious

and cultural life and to belief (Article 7) and to dignified dying and death (Article 8). This Charter is very concrete and execution-oriented and suitable to be transferred to other EU Members. This document is especially worth attention because it emphasises the quality of home care services for dependent people.

Services related to long-term care are becoming an important market at the European Union level. To our belief, these are not ordinary services but services of general interest. These services are more and more specialised and enable the users to stay at home and live a more independent life. Whether the care is provided in an institutional, community or home setting, it is crucial to ensure that human values and dignity are guaranteed and promoted. LTC beneficiaries must be empowered and dependency should be reduced and prevented. This requires adequate and pro-active training of the staff and effective quality management. The present staff shortages in this field calls for better coordinated and associated services where technology could play an increasingly important role if used with a view to improve services (and not only to reduce costs).



Employment for all ages and flexicurity

A major cause of restricted access to quality care is the lack of qualified personnel. This phenomenon affects all Member States and results in a trend to push back the responsibility of caring for the dependent to the family. Today, even in the most advanced Member States, the bulk of care for the dependent is still provided by family carers. It is therefore essential to enable family carers to achieve a quality of life on a par with other members of society. Eurocarers published ten guiding principles to clarify the needs of informal carers which, when met, should alter the landscape of long-term care provision in favour of carers. According to these ten guiding principles, informal carers require: recognition, social inclusion, equal opportunities, choice, information, guidance, advocacy and training, support, time off, compatibility of care and employment, health promotion and protection, and financial security (including compensation).

“To meet Europe’s demographic challenge, we will need to use all human resources available. From the doorman to the doctor, all have a contribution to make to safeguarding our welfare.”

Fritz Tjadens, Vilans – Institute for Long Term Care, the Netherlands

To meet Europe’s demographic challenge, we will need to use all human resources available. From the doorman to the doctor, all have a contribution to make to safeguarding our welfare. All those involved in the provision of care need to better communicate with each other. The professionalisation and changes in the care sector require new skills and competences of management, including organising other skill mixes and becoming client-centered. Redeveloping work also implies redeveloping education, both at a basic level and in terms of

continued learning. We will need to focus more on the lower level of care workers because we tend to forget their lack of career perspectives or job satisfaction. Too often, their jobs are dead-end jobs, without opportunities for personal or professional growth. These people, providing the bulk of long-term care, are often poorly trained although very devoted and experienced. We need to take this into account if we want to retain them and attract young people to work in the care professions.



The Way Forward

Valérie Létard

State Secretary for Solidarity
France



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Valérie Létard,
State Secretary for Solidarity, France

“We need to review the way we look at young people, the role of women and seniors in our society. We also need to ensure the long term financial sustainability of our social protection and pensions systems.”

Valérie Létard, State Secretary for Solidarity, France

The conference has shown that intergenerational solidarity is an essential element of the Social Europe we are building together. Europe experiences social change which affects the nature of the relations between generations due to a greater mobility and changing family patterns.

We need to review the way we look at young people, the role of women and seniors in our society. We also need to ensure the long term financial sustainability of our social protection and pensions systems.

We need to acknowledge the huge contribution that older people make to society, caring for their grandchildren and their very old parents, maintaining the solidarity within the family. We need to help them remain actively involved in our society and to age in good health. We need to provide them with the necessary services to live independently in their own environment as long as possible.

Furthermore, when they become too dependent, we need to offer them quality professional care, either in their own homes and in the community or in formal residential care. This is why we need to train more care professionals and to attract and retain skilled workers in the care sector.

To meet the challenge of longer life expectancy and meet the needs of the growing number of dependent people, France is envisaging to introduce a new risk in our social protection system.

The French Presidency will also organise a conference on Alzheimer's disease and we will propose that the issue of demographic challenge and active ageing should remain on the EU agenda for the coming years.

I would like to highlight the coherence between the priorities set with the other presidencies of the trio, France, the Czech Republic and Sweden. This continuity is in my view essential to help us meet this long term challenge which will require a coordinated response.

This is why I would like to congratulate Minister Cotman for having made intergenerational solidarity a key priority of the Slovenian Presidency. The next trio is committed to take over and continue to work to improve the lives of older people and promote their well being. We are also very pleased with the proposal to declare 2012 as the European Year on Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity.



The Way Forward

Marjeta Cotman

Minister of Labour, Family and Social Affairs
Slovenian Presidency of the European Union 2008



© Brdo Conference 28-29 April 2008, Slovene Presidency, Slovenia

Marjeta Cotman,
Minister for Labour and Social Affairs, Slovenia

“Every citizen in the EU who needs help should have the right to suitable, affordable quality long-term care. This is why we should work together to develop a European Charter of Rights of people in need of long-term care to promote a greater solidarity and cooperation between generations.”

Marjeta Cotman, Minister for Labour and Social Affairs, Slovenia

The main message of the conference was that we can not expect a successful and balanced development of our societies without intergenerational solidarity and cohabitation of young, middle and old generations. The Slovene Presidency hopes that the debate on intergenerational solidarity will continue and will be taken over by the next Presidency trio.

We should not just wait and observe how the changes occur; we need to act together. Intergenerational change requires changing of our structures and the way our society is organised. All generations and stakeholders should be involved in this debate on our future. When searching for new answers, the new role of family, state, formal and non-formal sector, division of labour between genders and the division of society welfare should be redefined.

Some might think that such an approach is in opposition with the Lisbon Strategy which focuses on economic growth and increased employment. But we think that the promotion of greater social cohesion is as important as the economic objectives and is essential for the future stability of our societies.

At the same time the increasing demands for long term care require more of our attention if we are to cope with the demographic changes in a fair and sustainable way. The experts, civil society and policy makers should work together to develop the adequate responses.

The added value of working together on long term care issues at EU level should help all Member States

modernise their LTC services and strengthen the quality and accessibility for all. Every citizen in the EU who needs help should have the right to suitable, affordable quality LTC. This is why we should work together to develop a European Charter of rights of people in need of long term care to promote greater solidarity and cooperation between generations. A working group should be established and it should include the relevant actors.

We need to raise awareness about the need to promote greater solidarity and cooperation between generations and for that reason I propose to declare the 29th of April the European Day of Intergenerational Solidarity and Cooperation.



Main conclusions of the conference

- Intergenerational solidarity should be mainstreamed into the flexicurity principles adopted at EU level and implemented in each of its four components (flexible and reliable contractual arrangements, lifelong learning strategies, effective active labour market policies and modern social security systems): this implies a new approach to labour law and reform of social protection systems which should look at the impact of such reforms on all generations.
- Intergenerational solidarity should be an integral part of the Renewed Social Agenda: the social agenda package should include a proposal to hold a European event on intergenerational solidarity in 2009 to ensure that the work done on demography at EU level deals adequately with this important objective.
- The Renewed Social Agenda should include the proposal to declare 2012 as the European Year of Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity as proposed by Commissioner Špidla and supported by the Slovene and French Presidencies.
- 29 April should be declared the European Day of Intergenerational Solidarity and Cooperation and all actors from the European to the national and local levels should start planning activities to mark this European Day in 2009. This should involve intergenerational activities at grass root level as well as policy debates at local, national and EU level.
- Following the Communication on the Internal Market, which the Commission issued in November 2007, the Renewed Social Agenda should include a proposal to start working on the issue of the quality of long-term care services and the dignity of dependents. This should include the creation of a multi-stakeholder forum to prepare guidelines on quality principles in the field of long-term care services which would be promoted at European level.
- The issue of elder abuse also requires that concrete action be taken at EU level to help Member States detect as well as prevent such abuse and guarantee a dignified end of life to all across the EU.

Conference Programme

28-29 April 2008

- **Opening session**

Chair: Valentina Hlebec, Faculty of Social Sciences, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia

- *Marjeta Cotman*, Minister of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Slovenia
- *Vladimir Špidla*, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal opportunities, European Commission
- *Pedro Marques*, Secretary of State for Social Security, Portugal
- *Viera Tomanová*, Minister of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, Slovakia

- **Rethinking intergenerational solidarity in aging societies**

- *Martin Kohli*, European University Institute, Italy

- **Creating new intergenerational solidarity in Europe today and tomorrow**

- *Jože Ramovš*, Anton Trstenjak Institute, Slovenia

- **Round tables: Intergenerational solidarity**

- **Why solidarity and cooperation among generation need to be reviewed and promoted to ensure a fair and sustainable society in today's context?**

Moderator: Marjan Sedmak, Association of Slovenian Pensioner Organisations and AGE –

European Older People's Platform, Slovenia

- *Claudine Attias* - Donfut, National Old Age Pension Fund (CNAV), France
- *Yaël Wischnevsky*, Intergenerational network of the King Baudouin, Belgium
- *Robert Anderson*, European for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions

Rapporteur: Louise Richardson, AGE - European Older People's Platform and Older Women's Network

- **The role of the state and civil society in intergenerational solidarity and cooperation**

Moderator: Rainer Münz, Austria

- *Georg Cremer*, Caritas, Germany
- *Robert Gal*, TARKI Social Research Institute, Hungary
- *Terttu Savolainen*, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health, Finland

Rapporteur: Reijo Vanne, The Finnish Pension Alliance - TELA, Finland

- **Volunteering: Young and old as promoters of social change**

Moderator: Jaakko Weuro, European Youth Forum

- *Karen Sheldon*, British Red Cross, United Kingdom
- *Marian Harkin*, European Parliament
- *Ana Krajnc*, The Slovenian Third Age University, Slovenia
- *Matej Cepin*, National Youth Council of Slovenia

Rapporteur: Alix Masson, European Youth Forum

- **Intergenerational solidarity in modern forms of the family**

Moderator: Davor Dominkuš, Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Slovenia

- *Bernard H. Casey*, Institute for Employment Research, University of Warwick, United Kingdom
- *Yves Roland - Gosselin*, COFACE – Confederation of Family Organisations in the European Union
- *Myria Vassiliadou*, European Women's Lobby

Rapporteur: Sonja Lokar, European Women's Lobby

- **Innovation forms and good practice of intergenerational solidarity and cooperation**

Moderator: Božidar Voljč, Anton Trstenjak Institute, Slovenia

- *Andreas Hoff*, Oxford Institute of aging, United Kingdom
- *Ksenija Ramovš*, Anton Trstenjak Institute, Slovenia
- *Josep Solans*, »Viure i Conviure« , Spain

Rapporteur: Ralf Jacob, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, European Commission

- **Employment for all ages and flexicurity**

Moderator: Bettina Schwarzmayr, European Youth Forum

- *Vladimira Drbalova*, BUSINESSEUROPE
- *Aurelia Curaj*, Geron , Romania
- *Ruud Muffels*, Tilburg University, the Netherlands

Rapporteur: Magda Zupančič, Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Slovenia

- **Plenary session**

Chair: Eleonora Hostasch, European High Level Expert Group on Demographic Issues, European Commission

- **Reaction from key stakeholders**

- *Anna Záborská*, Committee on Women's Rights and Gender Equality, European Parliament
- *Agnieszka Chlon Dominiczak*, Social Protection Committee (SPC)

- **Plenary session Long-term care**

Chair: Elise Willame, Social Protection Committee (SPC)

- **Long-term care: New challenge for societies and a new paradigm of care**

- *Vito Flaker*, Faculty of Social Work, University of Ljubljana, Slovenia
- *Maureen O'Neill*, European Economic and Social Committee
- *August Österle*, Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration, Austria
- *Barbro Westerholm*, Parliament of the Kingdom of Sweden and AGE – European Older People's Platform
- *Georg Fischer*, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, European Commission

- **Round tables on long-term care: Challenge for intergenerational solidarity**

- **How to make long-term care sustainable and fair for all generations**

Moderator: Georg Fischer, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, European Commission

- *Stefan Fetzer*, Federal Association of Health Insurance Funds, Germany
- *Rachelle Kaye*, Institute for Health Service Research, Maccabi, Israel
- *Sue Yeandle*, University of Leeds, United Kingdom

Rapporteur: Philippe Swennen, International Association of Mutual Benefit Societies (AIM)

- **Quality long-term care for dependents of all ages**

Moderator: Cveto Uršič, Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Slovenia

- *Clemens Tesch - Römer*, Centre of Gerontology, Germany
- *Evelyne Gaussens*, Geriatric Clinic, France
- *Syd Ashby*, AGE - European Older People's Platform

Rapporteur: Sibylle Reichert, European Association of Paritarian Institutions (AEIP)

- **Human resources in long-term care**

Moderator: Mateja Kožuh Novak, Association of Slovenian Pensioner Organisations

- *Frits Tjadens*, Vilans – Institute for Long-Term Care, the Netherlands
- *Brigid Barron*, Eurocarers
- *Giovanni Lamura*, EUROFAMCARE and Italian National Institute on aging (INRCA), Italy

Rapporteur: Roland Bladh, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, European Commission

- **Plenary session**

Chair: Dušan Kidrič, Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development (UMAR), Slovenia

- **Plenary discussion 1: The Way Forward**

- *Elise Willame*, Chair Social Protection Committee (SPC)
- *Jerome Vignon*, Director, Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, European Commission
- *Ljudmila Novak*, Member of the European Parliament
- *Luc Van den Brande*, President Committee on the Regions

- **Plenary discussion 2 - The Way Forward**

- *Anne Sophie Parent*, AGE-the European Older People's Platform
- *Bettina Schwarzmayr*, European Youth Forum
- *Mateja Kožuh Novak*, Association of Slovenian Pensioner Organisations
- *Franz Karl Prüller*, ERSTE Foundation
- *Rachelle Kaye*, International Association of Mutual Benefit Societies (AIM)
- *Bruno Gabellieri*, European Association of Paritarian Institutions (AEIP)

- **Concluding session**

- *Valérie Létard*, State Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Solidarity, France
- *Marjeta Cotman*, Minister of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Slovenia

Useful links

EU Presidency:

Slovenian Presidency: www.eu2008.si

French Presidency: www.ue2008.fr

European Commission:

DG Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities: <http://ec.europa.eu/social/>

Steering Group members:

Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, Slovenia: <http://www.mddsz.gov.si/>

AGE: www.age-platform.org

AIM: www.aim-mutual.org

AEIP: www.aeip.net

European Youth Forum: www.youthforum.org

ERSTE Foundation: www.stiftung.org

Anton Trstenjak Institute: <http://www.inst-antonatrstenjaka.si/>

ZDUS: www.zdus-zveza.si

Third Age University, Slovenia: www.univerzazatretjeobd-drustvo.si

Sponsors:

ERSTE Foundation: www.stiftung.org

Fondation Roi Baudouin: www.kbs-frb.be

Viure I Coinviure Fundacio: www.caixacatalunya.es/viureiconviure

King Baudouin Foundation

Working together for a better society

www.kbs-frb.be



The King Baudouin Foundation is an independent and pluralistic foundation. We provide financial support to around 2,000 organizations and individuals annually. The Foundation also acts as a forum for debate and reflection and fosters philanthropy. With an annual budget of 48 million euros, the Foundation looks for sustainable ways of contributing to justice, democracy and respect for diversity. We operate out of Brussels, but are active at regional, Belgian, European and international level. Our Board of Governors sets out broad lines of action, which are implemented by some 60 colleagues. The Foundation was created in 1976, to mark the 25th anniversary of King Baudouin's reign.

The King Baudouin Foundation has been active for many years on issues around ageing and intergenerational solidarity. Recently it has provided financial support to 172 projects which help older people play an active and meaningful role in society and create sustainable and reciprocal relationships between generations. The Foundation set up two reflection groups composed of individuals who are active in the voluntary sector, social movement and enterprises and who, after one year of exchange of ideas and experience, concluded with a series of proposals for action.

The Foundation organised a cycle of seminars on intergenerational solidarity to widen the public debate on these issues. The outcome of the work done by these two groups is described in a publication “Une Société pour tous les âges” (a Society for all Ages) which contains examples of intergenerational projects. The publication is available in French and Dutch on our website and includes an Executive Summary in English.

Viure i Conviure



Over its 80 year history the savings bank Caixa Catalunya has shown its commitment to contributing to a better society through the cultural, environmental and social activities carried out by its charitable work section. In the social field, its Foundation Viure i Conviure creates projects aimed at improving people's quality of life and directed especially towards the elderly, the disabled, people with health problems and young people with social needs. The bulk of our work goes into organising intergenerational programmes, maintaining a network of Sant Jordi Clubs [social activity centres for the elderly] and social health and care centres, awarding grants to non-profit organisations and supporting projects promoting healthy lifestyles. We would especially like to mention here the “Live and live together” shared-housing programme that Caixa Catalunya Charitable Work created in Barcelona in 1996/97, to meet both the need for company of senior citizens who live alone and the accommodation needs of young university students who have to leave their home towns to study in another city. The programme promotes the values of tolerance, solidarity and mutual respect between the two generations.



All EU Member States have to prepare for major demographic changes that will strongly affect the relationships between generations and present considerable challenges to policy makers and citizens. The nature of intergenerational relations will be affected by societal changes including greater geographic and professional mobility and changing family ties. Many see in this development a challenge for the cohesion and sustainability of our societies. We feel that it raises issues that cannot be ignored by policy makers and citizens.

As organisers of this conference, we are convinced that raising awareness of the need for more solidarity and cooperation between generations will help build public support for the policy changes that are necessary to adjust our social systems to meet Europe's demographic challenge and achieve a more cohesive and sustainable society.

