European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (2012)

Why a European Year for Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity in 2012?

2012 will be the 10th Anniversary of the United Nations Action Plan on Ageing. In response to the demographic challenge all EU member states are facing, the EY2012 will seek to:

- Promote active ageing in employment
- Promote active ageing in the community through volunteering and caring
- Promote healthy ageing and independent living
- Enhance solidarity between generations in order to create a society for all ages

What does Active Ageing mean?

Active Ageing is defined by the World Health Organization as the process of optimising opportunities for health, participation and security in order to enhance quality of life as people age. It allows people to realise their potential for wellbeing throughout their lives and to participate in society according to their needs, desires and capabilities, while providing them with adequate protection, security and care when they need assistance.

It implies optimising opportunities for physical, social and mental health to enable older people to take an active part in society without discrimination and to enjoy an independent and good quality of life. On the other hand, creating an intergenerational society needs awareness of each and everyone about what she or he can do for the society of all ages, urgent adaptations of family policies and innovative solutions for new working careers which are life-cycle based.

What does Solidarity between Generations mean?

Intergenerational solidarity refers to the mutual support and cooperation between different age groups in order to achieve a society where people of all ages have a role to play in line with their needs and capacities, and can benefit from their community's economic and social progress on an equal basis.

What is our objective?

Our entire society is going to have to adapt itself to the needs of its ageing population, but it will also have to tackle the new challenges faced by other age groups so that all generations will be able to continue supporting each other and living together peacefully.

This means that we will have to collectively review our policies and practices as regards town planning, rural development, public transport, access to health care, family policy, education and training, social protection, employment, civic participation, leisure, etc.

Demographic change should be looked at as an opportunity, which can bring innovative solutions to many current economic and social challenges, but this will require a new assessment and reworking of several economic and social policies within society.

Empowering older people to age in good health and to contribute more actively to the labour market and to their communities will help us cope with our demographic challenge in a way that is fair and sustainable for all generations. Involving young people at early stages is necessary to get mutual inspiration and to raise awareness of the interdependence of the generations, e.g. in terms of pension systems.

Why is this Year important for you?

The proposed European Year is designed to serve as a framework for:

- raising awareness on the contribution that older people make to society and the important part that young people play for a holistic society;
- identifying and disseminating good practice;
- mobilising policymakers and relevant stakeholders at all levels to promote active ageing;
- calling for greater cooperation and solidarity between generations.

A wide range of stakeholders: national, regional and local authorities, employers and trade unions, the business sector, civil society organisations, researchers, etc. should use this opportunity to propose action to support active ageing in the field of: employment, social protection, family policies, education and training, health and social services, as well as housing, transport, leisure, and public infrastructures.

All together they can help bring the necessary changes to achieve a society for *all* ages and to find innovative solutions that are sustainable and fair for all generations.

How can you contribute?

- **Help us spread the information!**

- Add the reference to the European Year 2012 to your website

- Add the reference to the European Year 2012 to your publications

- Translate our message in your own language

- Promote our Campaign by inserting a reference in your e-mail signature

- Give regular updates about the campaign through your individual and/or organisation's communication channels (newsletters, Facebook, Twitter..)

- **Commit to promote active ageing!**

- Integrate the EY 2012 objectives in your own work programme/business plan

- Advertise your commitments/ initiatives on the EY 2012 website (www.active-ageing-2012.eu).

- **Join our campaign**

- Download our publications (http://tinyurl.com/3cdqujv), ask for campaign materials and organise a local, regional or national event/debate on active ageing and solidarity between generations.

- Set up meetings with your local, regional and national politicians, decision makers or other stakeholders (researchers, employers, trade unions, NGOs) and mobilise them to launch initiatives to support active ageing.

- Use the next European Day of Solidarity between Generations (29 April 2012) as a good opportunity to stress the link between promoting active ageing and encouraging intergenerational solidarity. You can find some ideas and suggestions on AGE website at: http://tinyurl.com/649fswk

- Integrate a campaign activity into your own **work** programme

More information

In order to see the **list of stakeholders** that are involved in the Campaign, please visit the EY2012 website: www.active-ageing-2012.eu

For more **information on the EY2012 Coalition**, please contact Alice Sinigaglia, Logistic and Campaign Officer, at alice.sinigaglia@age-platform.eu .

Come and join us to promote active ageing and create a society for all ages!