

Consultation on the Green Paper on Ageing

Fields marked with * are mandatory.

Introduction

GREEN PAPER ON AGEING – Fostering solidarity and responsibility between generations

This Commission has put demography high on the EU policy agenda. In June 2020, it presented the [report on the impact of demographic change](#) setting out the key facts of demographic change and its likely impacts. The [green paper on ageing](#) is the first outcome to this report and launches a debate on one of the defining demographic transformations in Europe - namely ageing.

Never before have so many Europeans enjoyed such long lives. This is a major achievement that is underpinned by the EU's social market economy. One of the most prominent features of ageing is that the share and the number of older people in the EU will increase. Today, 20% of the population is above 65. By 2070, it will be 30%. The share of people above 80 is expected to more than double, reaching 13% by 2070.

This demographic trend is having a significant impact on people's everyday lives and on our societies. It has implications for economic growth, fiscal sustainability, health and long-term care, social cohesion and intergenerational fairness, and it concerns every age. In addition, the pandemic's disproportionate impact on older people – in terms of hospitalisations and deaths - has highlighted some of the challenges an ageing population poses to health and social care systems. However, ageing also provides new opportunities for creating new jobs, boosting prosperity, for instance in the 'silver' and care economies, and fostering intergenerational cohesion.

This consultation enables all European citizens, Member States and relevant stakeholders to provide their views on the [green paper on ageing](#) and contribute to the debate.

About you

* Language of my contribution

- Bulgarian
- Croatian
- Czech
- Danish
- Dutch
- English

- Estonian
- Finnish
- French
- German
- Greek
- Hungarian
- Irish
- Italian
- Latvian
- Lithuanian
- Maltese
- Polish
- Portuguese
- Romanian
- Slovak
- Slovenian
- Spanish
- Swedish

* I am giving my contribution as

- Academic/research institution
- Business association
- Company/business organisation
- Consumer organisation
- EU citizen
- Environmental organisation
- Non-EU citizen
- Non-governmental organisation (NGO)
- Public authority
- Trade union
- Other

* First name

Friederike

* Surname

Ladenburger

* Email (this won't be published)

ethica@comece.eu

* Organisation name

255 character(s) maximum

Secretariat of COMECE (Commission of the Episcopates of the European Union) (COMECE Secretariat)

* Organisation size

- Micro (1 to 9 employees)
- Small (10 to 49 employees)
- Medium (50 to 249 employees)
- Large (250 or more)

Transparency register number

255 character(s) maximum

Check if your organisation is on the [transparency register](#). It's a voluntary database for organisations seeking to influence EU decision-making.

47350036909-69

* Country of origin

Please add your country of origin, or that of your organisation.

- | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|--|-------------------------------------|--|
| <input type="radio"/> Afghanistan | <input type="radio"/> Djibouti | <input type="radio"/> Libya | <input type="radio"/> Saint Martin |
| <input type="radio"/> Åland Islands | <input type="radio"/> Dominica | <input type="radio"/> Liechtenstein | <input type="radio"/> Saint Pierre and Miquelon |
| <input type="radio"/> Albania | <input type="radio"/> Dominican Republic | <input type="radio"/> Lithuania | <input type="radio"/> Saint Vincent and the Grenadines |
| <input type="radio"/> Algeria | <input type="radio"/> Ecuador | <input type="radio"/> Luxembourg | <input type="radio"/> Samoa |
| <input type="radio"/> American Samoa | <input type="radio"/> Egypt | <input type="radio"/> Macau | <input type="radio"/> San Marino |
| <input type="radio"/> Andorra | <input type="radio"/> El Salvador | <input type="radio"/> Madagascar | <input type="radio"/> São Tomé and Príncipe |

- Angola
- Anguilla
- Antarctica
- Antigua and Barbuda
- Argentina
- Armenia
- Aruba
- Australia
- Austria
- Azerbaijan
- Bahamas
- Bahrain
- Bangladesh
- Barbados
- Belarus
- Belgium
- Belize
- Benin
- Bermuda
- Bhutan
- Bolivia
- Bonaire Saint Eustatius and Saba
- Bosnia and Herzegovina
- Equatorial Guinea
- Eritrea
- Estonia
- Eswatini
- Ethiopia
- Falkland Islands
- Faroe Islands
- Fiji
- Finland
- France
- French Guiana
- French Polynesia
- French Southern and Antarctic Lands
- Gabon
- Georgia
- Germany
- Ghana
- Gibraltar
- Greece
- Greenland
- Grenada
- Guadeloupe
- Guam
- Malawi
- Malaysia
- Maldives
- Mali
- Malta
- Marshall Islands
- Martinique
- Mauritania
- Mauritius
- Mayotte
- Mexico
- Micronesia
- Moldova
- Monaco
- Mongolia
- Montenegro
- Montserrat
- Morocco
- Mozambique
- Myanmar /Burma
- Namibia
- Nauru
- Nepal
- Saudi Arabia
- Senegal
- Serbia
- Seychelles
- Sierra Leone
- Singapore
- Sint Maarten
- Slovakia
- Slovenia
- Solomon Islands
- Somalia
- South Africa
- South Georgia and the South Sandwich Islands
- South Korea
- South Sudan
- Spain
- Sri Lanka
- Sudan
- Suriname
- Svalbard and Jan Mayen
- Sweden
- Switzerland
- Syria

- Botswana
- Bouvet Island
- Brazil
- British Indian Ocean Territory
- British Virgin Islands
- Brunei
- Bulgaria
- Burkina Faso
- Burundi
- Cambodia
- Cameroon
- Canada
- Cape Verde
- Cayman Islands
- Central African Republic
- Chad
- Chile
- China
- Christmas Island
- Clipperton
- Cocos (Keeling) Islands
- Colombia
- Guatemala
- Guernsey
- Guinea
- Guinea-Bissau
- Guyana
- Haiti
- Heard Island and McDonald Islands
- Honduras
- Hong Kong
- Hungary
- Iceland
- India
- Indonesia
- Iran
- Iraq
- Ireland
- Isle of Man
- Israel
- Italy
- Jamaica
- Japan
- Jersey
- Netherlands
- New Caledonia
- New Zealand
- Nicaragua
- Niger
- Nigeria
- Niue
- Norfolk Island
- Northern Mariana Islands
- North Korea
- North Macedonia
- Norway
- Oman
- Pakistan
- Palau
- Palestine
- Panama
- Papua New Guinea
- Paraguay
- Peru
- Philippines
- Pitcairn Islands
- Taiwan
- Tajikistan
- Tanzania
- Thailand
- The Gambia
- Timor-Leste
- Togo
- Tokelau
- Tonga
- Trinidad and Tobago
- Tunisia
- Turkey
- Turkmenistan
- Turks and Caicos Islands
- Tuvalu
- Uganda
- Ukraine
- United Arab Emirates
- United Kingdom
- United States
- United States Minor Outlying Islands
- Uruguay

- Comoros
- Congo
- Cook Islands
- Costa Rica
- Côte d'Ivoire
- Croatia
- Cuba
- Curaçao
- Cyprus
- Czechia
- Democratic Republic of the Congo
- Denmark
- Jordan
- Kazakhstan
- Kenya
- Kiribati
- Kosovo
- Kuwait
- Kyrgyzstan
- Laos
- Latvia
- Lebanon
- Lesotho
- Liberia
- Poland
- Portugal
- Puerto Rico
- Qatar
- Réunion
- Romania
- Russia
- Rwanda
- Saint Barthélemy
- Saint Helena, Ascension and Tristan da Cunha
- Saint Kitts and Nevis
- Saint Lucia
- US Virgin Islands
- Uzbekistan
- Vanuatu
- Vatican City
- Venezuela
- Vietnam
- Wallis and Futuna
- Western Sahara
- Yemen
- Zambia
- Zimbabwe

The Commission will publish all contributions to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would prefer to have your details published or to remain anonymous when your contribution is published. **For the purpose of transparency, the type of respondent (for example, 'business association, 'consumer association', 'EU citizen') country of origin, organisation name and size, and its transparency register number, are always published. Your e-mail address will never be published.** Opt in to select the privacy option that best suits you. Privacy options default based on the type of respondent selected

* Contribution publication privacy settings

The Commission will publish the responses to this public consultation. You can choose whether you would like your details to be made public or to remain anonymous.

Anonymous

Only organisation details are published: The type of respondent that you responded to this consultation as, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you reply as well as its transparency number, its size, its country of origin and your contribution will be published as received. Your name will not be published. Please do not include any personal data in the contribution itself if you want to remain anonymous.

Public

Organisation details and respondent details are published: The type of respondent that you responded to this consultation as, the name of the organisation on whose behalf you reply as well as its transparency number, its size, its country of origin and your contribution will be published. Your name will also be published.

I agree with the [personal data protection provisions](#)

The following questionnaire includes all the questions contained in the [green paper on ageing](#).

You may provide your opinion in the text boxes under each question. Please feel free to either answer all the questions, or choose to answer the questions that are of most interest or concern you directly.

You can also upload your written contribution, if you so wish, by using the button available at the end of the questionnaire.

Laying the foundations (chapter 2 of the green paper)

1. How can healthy and active ageing policies be promoted from an early age and throughout the life span for everyone? How can children and young people be better equipped for the prospect of a longer life expectancy? What kind of support can the EU provide to the Member States?

2500 character(s) maximum

Access to health care, education and intergenerational inclusive social policies is crucial for the younger generation for developing an inclusive vision for active aging.

For developing such an inclusive vision it is necessary that the young generation gets the possibility for a life in good health and with enough opportunities for education. But also living together with older people should be part of an inclusive vision for aging of the younger generation.

Older persons are crucial actors in building pluralistic societies where human dignity and freedom is valued and respected. Their life experience of democracy, freedom or pluralism provides a concrete content to the values which can often only seem theoretical to the younger generation. It is thus essential to facilitate time and to create spaces for coming together. The elderly play an undoubted role in the future of Europe, it is them who have seen the European project emerge and develop from the ruins of the XX Century's totalitarianisms.

The opportunity of developing personal faith and to get spiritual guidance is also important for being equipped for the prospect of a longer life expectancy. In this context the importance of intergenerational links are crucial: the spiritual and cultural resources of older people should be available to younger generations, older people can be 'missionaries of the family', supporting younger families through difficulties and trials. They can be masters and teachers of hospitality.

At the same time, elderly wisdom is not limited to the past. They are able to have a broader view than only short-term concerns and are a source of hope in the future for the younger generation. Grandparents can help their families realise what really matters on the scale of a lifetime. The elderly are an essential source of orientation for the next generation. Considering their experience and perspective, they are giving support and encouragement.

We ask for a strong focus on intergenerational solidarity between the younger and the older generation. The EU Their life experience of democracy, freedom or pluralism provides a concrete content to the values which can often only seem theoretical to the younger generation. It is thus essential to facilitate time and to create spaces for coming together.

2. What are the most significant obstacles to life-long learning across the life-cycle? At what stage in life could addressing those obstacles make most difference? How should this be tackled specifically in rural and remote areas?

2500 character(s) maximum

Life-long learning should be first and foremost understood as a process of formation of the human person, with all facets of education and training addressed in an integral way. An education that is integral requires that life-long learning is continuous and cohesive. Therefore, the most significant obstacles to such cohesion and regularity ought to be tackled: these include remedying to the lack of thorough inclusion of all trainees, as well as young people entering the labour market and workers redirecting their career due to changes in the economy. Mechanisms of cooperation and networking among all actors in the field (enterprises, formal educational institutions, training centres, non-formal and informal education providers) are essential to ensure that all citizens can have opportunities to train and learn throughout their life. In particular, such services should be ensured to (1) young people approaching the labour market after their studies, also as source of guidance, and (2) to those citizens in life stages where it is most problematic to change career path (e.g. approaching retirement age or in need of upskilling in the digital or green sector). In general, however, opportunities for life-long learning and dedicated projects (e.g. formational experiences, ad-hoc training and skills programmes) should be set up for all ages. In life-long learning frameworks, rural areas should become an essential part of such policies. They should be supported through financial stimuli for dialogue platforms between educational and training centres of urban and rural areas, with a special focus on (1) the inclusion of citizens from socially disadvantaged backgrounds and (2) the teaching of competences and skills for the revitalisation of rural areas, in coordination with local actors.

3. What innovative policy measures to improve participation in the labour market, in particular by older workers, should be considered more closely?

2500 character(s) maximum

According to the European Commission, the employment rate among older workers in the EU is lower than for workers aged 25-54. In 2019, 59% of those aged 55-64 were employed, against nearly 81% of all those aged 25-54. Improving the participation of older workers is crucial over time not only because of a mere demographic challenge with the ageing of the EU population, but in the first place because work is fundamental to the dignity of every person. Older people should keep a better access to employment, in line with the EPSR Action Plan. In addition, working should go in pair with fair working conditions, to ensure decent work and the respect of human dignity and eliminate precarious work.

At the same time the EU labour market should adapt to its workers by offering places that are flexible to their needs and work capabilities. At the same time work should allow sufficient rest periods and Sunday as a common day of rest to allow a proper work-life balance and time for other activities (family, spiritual life, etc).

> We regret that Next Generation EU or the new Multiannual Financial Framework 2021-2027 do not specifically target older workers' retention into the labour market, although some funds will contribute in Member States' reforms for active support to employment (e.g. the RRF, the ESF+, ERDF, the Just Transition Fund, the EGF).

> The European Commission to table a provision recognizing a common day of rest, in line with Art. 2 of the European Social Charter, and which in principle should be the Sunday, as part of its upcoming proposal for a Directive on a Right to Disconnect.

> The European Commission to update the Working Time Directive, taking into account current challenges brought by the COVID-19 pandemic, and the increase in the use of ICTs and in the number of people teleworking. The Commission should make sure that new working patterns do not affect workers' private lives, health or wellbeing.

> The European Commission to monitor Member States' National Recovery Plans (NRPs) and active labour market policies (ALMP) as part of the European Semester to make sure that these reforms will secure quality jobs and decent working conditions and focus not only on young people who are the most vulnerable on the labour market, but also older people, who have a lot of experience to offer. In a rapidly evolving society, we should value the irreplaceable place of each person to learn from each other.

4. Is there a need for more policies and action at EU level that support senior entrepreneurship? What type of support is needed at EU level and how can we build on the successful social innovation examples of mentorship between young and older entrepreneurs?

2500 character(s) maximum

Fostering intergenerational solidarity is fundamental for younger and older people to learn from each other. We welcome the intergenerational dimension of the Green paper on Ageing and the recognition of the positive impacts of senior entrepreneurship on their health, and as a mean to reduce unemployment and isolation.

We call on Member States to strengthen public policy measures that can support senior entrepreneurship (e.g. by removing disincentives in tax and social security systems, providing well-targeted advice and ensuring access to finance, as proposed by the European Commission in its Green paper on Ageing).

We call on the EU to promote learning and training activities, no matter the age of the workers, in line with the European Commission's Action Plan on the implementation of the European Pillar of Social Rights. The Action Plan could have strengthened better the equal need for older people to access to such opportunities, thus recognizing better the unique value of each person, unrelated of their age.

5. How can EU policies help less developed regions and rural areas to manage ageing and depopulation? How can EU territories affected by the twin depopulation and ageing challenges make better use of the silver economy?

2500 character(s) maximum

Accessibility, affordability, and quality of goods and services are necessary to make rural areas more attractive. This is particularly important for healthcare, social, public and basic services, where strong differences between rural and urban areas exist. Such disparities are caused by geographical or demographic conditions or by excessively centralized political decision-making processes or services in urban areas. This can severely impact people with lower income or possibility to travel, such as elderly who cannot drive and have limited access to transport facilities. Improvements in digital infrastructure are also needed. Moreover, basic education institutions are at times absent from rural areas, e.g. early childcare or higher school grades, severely impacting the liveability or rural areas and access to education. As disruptions in sanitation systems and basic infrastructure can happen following environmental and natural disasters, investments should be made for efficient and sustainable solutions making rural areas more resilient. Access to basic and healthcare services should be further monitored within and accompanied by the European Semester, for instance by supporting investments for functioning and carefully-monitored healthcare systems.

New opportunities and challenges in retirement (chapter 4 of the green paper)

6. How could volunteering by older people and intergenerational learning be better supported, including across borders, to foster knowledge sharing and civic engagement? What role could a digital platform or other initiatives at EU level play and to whom should such initiatives be addressed? How could volunteering by young people together with and towards older people be combined into cross-generational initiatives?

2500 character(s) maximum

COMECE support the idea of establishing a digital platform at EU level play for fostering the knowledge sharing and civic engagement through volunteer work of older people. Such a platform should be addressed to a broad number of stakeholders of the social dialogue in the European societies - including churches.

7. Which services and enabling environment would need to be put in place or improved in order to ensure the autonomy, independence and rights of older people and enable their participation in society?

2500 character(s) maximum

As already explained in detail in other questions, a strong focus on the following services and enabling environment has to be strengthened for ensuring the autonomy and independence and rights of older people:

- > fair and affordable access to healthcare
- > fair pensions system
- > Recognition of qualifications achieved within the framework of voluntary work
- > Promote new forms of long-term care for social inclusion
- > Raising awareness of the issue of elderly abuse

The covid-19 crisis has also put a light on the phenomenon of elder abuse, which is often ignored and overlooked. Even within private settings, elderly persons are increasingly living in situations of social isolation today. While many European countries have at least oversight procedures against the risk of violence and abuse in the institutions, the exposure of the elderly in care homes can make them more vulnerable to mental and physical violence and abuse.

- > support family-friendly policies for improving intergenerational solidarity
- > improve the representation of interests of elderly people:

Most volunteering work is produced by retired people, who have more time than working persons. Although they do not professionally work anymore, their volunteering work remain to be work, and creates positive effects for the community: "The EU should better value the contribution of volunteering as an active expression of citizenship and promote the recognition and validation of non-formal as well as informal qualification gained through volunteering". Elderly people are not only vulnerable persons but are also active actors of social life. To overcome this confusion between age and vulnerability, elderly persons need to be welcomed in all spheres of community life, also through life-long learning and digital education, both as teachers and as users. Inclusion is key to enable the full participation of the elderly in our communities.

8. How can the EU support vulnerable older persons who are not in a position to protect their own financial and personal interests, in particular in cross-border situations?

9. How can the EU support Member States' efforts to ensure more fairness in the social protection systems across generations, gender, age and income groups, ensuring that they remain fiscally sound?

2500 character(s) maximum

The ageing of the EU population brings questions regarding the fiscal sustainability of its social protection systems. As acknowledged by the European Commission, pensions are the main source of income for most retirees. We also note a big gap between the average women and men's pension, women earning on average 27.9% less than men. At the same time, the number of people potentially in need of long-term care is expected to increase from 19.5 million in 2016 to 23.6 million in 2030 and 30.5 million in 2050 in the EU (Source: European Commission).

Against this background, COMECE Secretariat calls for:

The European Commission to increase EU social policy coherence, notably within the European Semester framework, to fully implement principle 18 of the EPSR on long-term care. In addition, EU institutions should ensure a balanced approach between different care models and reflect the different needs of dependent elderly people.

As the COVID-19 pandemic had a strong impact on the elderly, investments made by Member States as part of the EU recovery plan and under their national recovery plans should be dedicated to creating new structures of solidarity (e.g. informal care, volunteering, etc).

The EU institutions should improve the working conditions of vulnerable workers, in particular in its upcoming initiative on platform work, to reduce socio-economic disadvantages between workers and ensure better access to social security. Every person has the right to live in dignity and to adequate pensions and improving labour market inclusion can help to make Member States social protection systems fairer.

Investing in education and life-long learning is also necessary for an increased international solidarity, as well as reducing entry barriers to the labour market for young people and invest in trainings for older workers and helping them to remain on the labour market.

We welcome the reference in the EPSR Action Plan to the rural areas as a place to improve quality services in long-term care, although there is no specific mention to the elderly. We ask the Member States to make full use of the EU budget to also target regions lacking essential basic and healthcare services.

At a time of recovery from the COVID-19 crisis, it is essential to invest in accessible, affordable and quality public services such as health care, long-term care, assistance to vulnerable people, etc.

10. How can the risks of poverty in old age be reduced and addressed?

2500 character(s) maximum

Pensions are the main source of income for most retirees, and therefore it is essential for them to access to adequate pensions to preserve their dignity and not leave them in precarity. When speaking about elderly people, it is essential to realize fully their social implications for our communities. Older people receive care, but they can also be care givers. Their volunteering work brings a lot to society.

The European Commission has proposed to reduce the number of people at risk of social poverty or social exclusion as one of its main targets in its Action Plan towards the full implementation of the EPSR. However, it does not target specifically older people although old age poverty is increasing. Reducing old age poverty is essential and can be achieved notably by offering decent housing and better pension systems.

We ask for:

Reducing old age poverty by offering decent housing or elderly friendly housing. Best practices should be shared and promoted in all Member States. In addition, intergenerational solidarity needs to be strengthened in this regard too. In Belgium the association “1toit 2âges” offers places to students to live in families or at an older person’s place, allowing them to share their lives experiences, to help each other, to create social friendship and to reduce loneliness, while at the same time offering students an affordable room, and older people or families an additional income. The EU and Member States should give the proper means to these associations to develop.

A just social and balanced retirement and pensions system needs to be developed, according to principle 15 of the EPSR. Everyone in old age has the right to resources that ensure living in dignity, notably by increasing access to the labour market for young and old persons who want to be integrated or remain active.

EU institutions and Member States should share best practices to reduce the pension pay gap of mothers, by considering the time taken off for maternity leave and child education as a valuable period of informal work in the calculation of pension entitlements.

The EU should better value the contribution of volunteering as an active expression of citizenship and promote the recognition and validation of non-formal as well as informal qualification gained through volunteering

11. How can we ensure adequate pensions for those (mainly women) who spend large periods of their working life in unremunerated work (often care provision)?

2500 character(s) maximum

Pension pay gaps can cause great financial disadvantages for parents. Years taken off to care for the upbringing of a child are not considered as work, are even unpaid, and not considered in the calculation of pension entitlements. To reduce the pension pay gap - especially of mothers -, the time taken off for maternity leave and child education must be considered as a valuable period of informal work in the calculation of pension entitlements.

At the same time, it should be underlined that families taking care of a dependent relative often lack time and available space in their household. In order to support families when ensuring long-term care, the European Commission should encourage Member-States to implement flexible work-life balance arrangements for carers.

The situation of so-called 'live-ins' in private households of EU Member States has to be pursued. Mainly women from Eastern European Countries, often far away from their own families, take care of an elderly person and support the families taking care of a dependent relative. It is important to create a fair care mobility scheme by establishing legal employment relationships and fair working conditions in private households with a transparent labour contract, corresponding insurance protection, fair pay and regulated working hours, as well as free time.

12. What role could supplementary pensions play in ensuring adequate retirement incomes? How could they be extended throughout the EU and what would be the EU's role in this process?

2500 character(s) maximum

Every person has the right to live in dignity and to adequate pensions and improving labour market inclusion can help to make Member States social protection systems fairer.

The role of supplementary pensions has to be discussed on the national level of all Members States .

Meeting the growing needs of an ageing population (chapter 5 of the green paper)

13. How can the EU support Member States' efforts to reconcile adequate and affordable healthcare and long-term care coverage with fiscal and financial sustainability?

2500 character(s) maximum

It is to be welcomed that the European Commission suggested in the context of the Recovery Plan, with the new instrument of "Next Generation EU", a new health programme "EU4health"²⁶ as an answer to the COVID -19 crisis. It will be important to provide this program with sufficient funds to achieve its objectives of reserving medical supplies for crisis, increasing surveillance of health threats, developing the digital transformation of health systems and giving access to healthcare for vulnerable groups. The European Commission also presented several proposals to build a strong "European Health Union" that will prepare and give a unified response to the current health crisis by all Member States. A better exchange of data is needed for the cross-boarder challenges of healthcare

Furthermore, Europe's Beating Cancer Plan is an important milestone in EU health policy. With its four pillars of prevention, early diagnosis, treatment and follow-up care it will work alongside Member States to improve cancer prevention and care in Europe. Healthcare for elder adults also on establishing the necessary conditions to respect their dignity during the last period of their life until natural death. Investments need to be made to improve palliative care, which does not only include care for elder adults, but by age groups, excluding any form of euthanasia or anticipation of death.

14. How could the EU support Member States in addressing common long-term care challenges? What objectives and measures should be pursued through an EU policy framework addressing challenges such as accessibility, quality, affordability or working conditions? What are the considerations to be made for areas with low population density?

2500 character(s) maximum

Promote new forms of long-term care for social inclusion

Institutional long-term care is not the only alternative to provide care for elderly people. Many possibilities exist in the perspective of community-oriented solutions, promoting significant links even between people who are not close, such as day care centers open to the area, residential family homes, different forms of social caretakers, neighbourhood solidarity projects, groups of volunteers of the elderly who work in favour of other elderly people and intergenerational housing projects. The subjects that promote and provide these interventions belong to the public, private and private social sector and document the ongoing experience of a synergy between welfare actors. The strict distinction between the public and private sector and the third sector is inefficient to describe the peculiarities of these services. We are in the presence of experimental forms of subsidiarity in place, which, starting from needs, identify the resources closest to people. In all cases, families should not be alone when taking care of an older or dependent relative. Families who care for an older relative feel supported and stronger when they can join a community of solidarity. There is a great future for innovative community-oriented solutions to the care of the elderly. As demonstrated by many good practices on the national and local level, the creation of networks of family associations should also be supported.

Grant access to affordable and quality institutional long-term care

The European Pillar of Social Rights (Principle 18) lists access to affordable and good quality long-term care services as a core principle. The Pillar gives special priority to home care (provided at the home of the person in need of care) and community-based services (the range of non-institutional care services). At the same time, having a well-developed and qualitatively good residential care sector (including semi-residential care) is of vital importance. The EU could monitor accessibility, affordability and quality of long term care. It is important to establish a fair care system in a society that cares for everybody. Flexible models which establish a good network of solidarity between families and the public system are key.

15. How can older people reap the benefits of the digitalisation of mobility and health services? How can the accessibility, availability, affordability and safety of public transport options for older persons, notably in rural and remote areas, be improved?

2500 character(s) maximum

Older people can reap the benefits of the digitalisation of services if they are accompanied by policies supporting their accessibility. For instance, through dedicated phone and digital services, the elderly can approach new forms of technology and be confident enough in doing so. Digitalisation of health services requires (1) uniformity of digital systems to monitor one's health and medical condition and (2) specificity, ensuring that each person is not left behind when making use of services. While digitalisation can bring many benefits, social and human support should always be the preferential way to assist older people, especially those in situations of distress and loneliness. When this is not possible, simplification of technology for elderly people is pivotal to ensure that all services are accessible and easy to use. As for public transportation, policymakers should cooperate to set up improved schemes of environmentally-friendly mobility that, through the joint cooperation between public services and private investments, can reach all parts of regions (urban and rural areas alike). By intensifying frequency and number of public transportation options, attractiveness and affordability of these means can be enhanced. Cooperation between cities, regions and local municipalities on strengthening sustainable public transportation would lead to attain the European Green Deal objectives and to improve the life of the elderly who can only have access to private means of mobility.

16. Are we sufficiently aware of the causes of and impacts of loneliness in our policy making? Which steps could be taken to help prevent loneliness and social isolation among older people? Which support can the EU give?

2500 character(s) maximum

Loneliness has become one of the new scourges of this generation. As they gradually watch their spouse, coworkers or friends pass away, older persons see their social circle reduced over time, leading to isolation and loneliness. In addition, while labour mobility in Europe has expanded job opportunities for European workers, it has also increased the distance between family members. Today, more and more children live away from their parents. Loneliness is also a consequence of the fact that Europeans have less and less children. Children not only ensure the future of Europe, their presence also improves the intergenerational balance and consequently strengthens the intergenerational solidarity. Social isolation and loneliness can also be related to mental sickness. The provision of professional services is not sufficient to answer to the human need for contact and relationship. What is needed is the sustaining of contexts within which people can relate to one another, thus having people whom they can care about and who can care about them. It is also a responsibility of the entire society to foster social ties and prevent isolation and loneliness of its most vulnerable members. The need for solidarity between generations is one of the driving forces of Europe's recovery. Managing the impact of long-term demographic change has many different facets: how we manage our public health, public budgets or public life, but also on how we tackle issues like loneliness, care in the community and access to vital services. In this context it will be also important to analyse the activity of the European Commission to create a long term vision for rural areas and to discuss the role they have to play in our society. This initiative will set out a vision for the future of rural areas by 2040 and gather views covering challenges such as: demographic change, connectivity, low-income levels and limited access to services.

17. Which role can multigenerational living and housing play in urban and rural planning in addressing the challenges of an ageing population? How could it be better harnessed?

2500 character(s) maximum

The issue of housing also needs to be tackled: fiscal benefits for family-friendly and elder-friendly housing should be considered as best practices and promoted in all Member States. Furthermore, the European Commission could promote projects which would involve family associations and social partners. A senseful use of space has to be promoted in our societies - with a special sense for beauty and to create community. In this context the new European Bauhaus initiative should be sensitized for multigenerational living.

Please upload your file

Only files of the type pdf,txt,doc,docx,odt,rtf are allowed

Contact

[Contact Form](#)