

Response to the Discussion Document for an EU Health Strategy

In which areas is action at the EU level indispensable?

- A change in demography is evident. Older people comprise an increasing part of the population. In 2025, 44% of the European population will be 50 years or older and there will be a particularly rapid increase in the number of people aged 80 years and older. The EU must develop strategies to meet this challenge. Promoting good health and active societal participation among older citizens will be crucial in these strategies. Improvement of the health of older people should therefore be a main priority across EU policies and in EU Member States.
- Health promotion for older people has shown to be cost-effective and can contribute to a longer and healthier life - and therefore also to a longer working life.

How could methods for involving stakeholders be improved and how can we create innovative partnerships with stakeholders?

- We value the Commissions biannual forum on Europe's demographic future and stress the importance of DG Sanco's involvement in this.

How can we ensure that progress is made and that objectives are met?

- Initiatives aimed to improve health of older people should be undertaken in a gender sensitive way and take the heterogeneity and autonomy of older people into consideration in order to be successful.
- To assess progress of a health strategy, indicators should include the health status of older people, and include data on the very old in health-monitoring statistics.

Is there a means to use the Healthy Life Years indicator or other outcome measurements to give weight to areas on which the EU should concentrate?

- We agree on the Healthy Life Years indicator since it includes life expectancy as well as quality of life.

How can different approaches be used and combined?

- We value the life cycle approach but stress that it should put more emphasis on actively targeting older people.
- Successful integrated approaches should create the conditions and opportunities for older people to have regular physical activity, healthy eating habits, social relations and meaningful occupations

Healthy ageing is the process of optimising equal opportunities for health in order to enable older people to take an active part in society and to enjoy an independent and good quality of life.

For more information on recommendations for healthy ageing please visit:

www.healthyageing.eu

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On behalf of the steering group of the Healthy Ageing Project

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