PRIME MINISTER'S OFFICE

Department for Family Policies

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

National Work Programme

For active, lively, dignified ageing in a supportive society

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1. ACTIVE AGEING AND SOLIDARITY BETWEEN GENERATIONS IN ITALY

1.1 The European context

By means of a decision taken on 14 September 2011, the European Union declared 2012 to be the 'European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations'.

As Europe undergoes profound demographic change (a falling birth rate and increasing life expectancy), active ageing is becoming an increasingly important topic in a number of fields (employment, welfare, healthcare, social relations, economics) and it poses some major challenges for governments and society.

Against this background the European Union has decided to devote 2012 to raising awareness of and discussing active ageing and solidarity between generations; it has called upon the Member States to promote a national and European debate on the subject amongst all the parties concerned and to draw up a work programme illustrating the national activities planned for the Year.

Furthermore, the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (2012) must – in pursuit of continuity and synergy – take into account the experiences of the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion (2010) and the European Year of Volunteering (2011) which promote active citizenship.

The celebration of this Year is intended as an opportunity to promote an active-ageing culture based on a society for all ages and, at the same time, to encourage solidarity and cooperation between generations – bearing in mind that men and women are equal but different.

The main areas to which policies and initiatives relate are:

- employment and working conditions;
- participation in society;
- promotion of a healthy, independent life.

¹ European Parliament and Council Decision 940/2011/EU (OJ L 246, 23 September 2011, p. 5)

1.2 On demography in Italy²

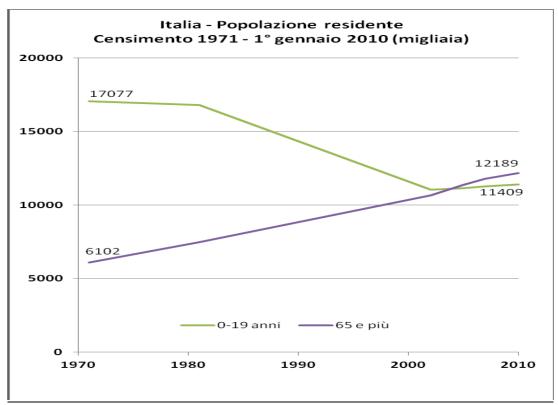
An ageing population – a typical symptom of a country's demographic maturity – need not be viewed solely as a source of instability in the scenarios which are currently being painted. An ageing society will not necessarily end up better or worse than it was previously; it will merely take on an appearance which in certain respects is different.

Knowing how and why a country's population ages, how long that process will take, what effects it will have and who will be affected by it is essential not only for dealing with the phenomenon but also for exploiting the positive aspects thereof and for seizing and making the most of opportunities which are often overlooked.

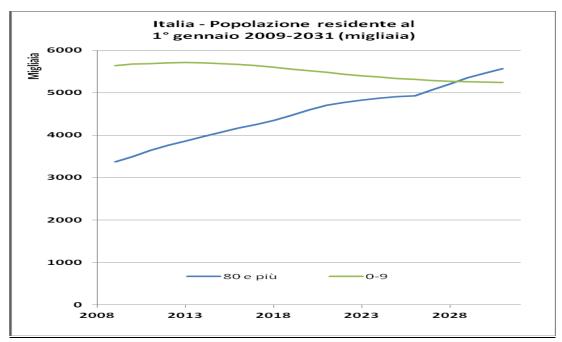
One of the most significant aspects of the major demographic revolution which our country has been undergoing in recent decades is the radical transformation in the age structure of the population. Certain data relating to this change illustrate with impressive clarity the trends which we are likely to see in the near future. Although there are already over half a million more over-65-year-olds ('grandparents') than under-20-year-olds ('grandchildren'), it has been reliably estimated that this difference could exceed six million within twenty years. At the same time it is forecast that, just before we reach 2030, there will be more people aged over 80 ('great grandparents') than under 10 ('great grandchildren'). Looking beyond then to 2051, the projections clearly indicate how much greater the challenge will be: the population aged under 65 will shrink by 6.5 million, whilst the population aged 65 and over will increase by slightly more than 8 million (including an extra 1.7 million over-90s).

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² By Gian Carlo Blangiardo, Professor of Demography at the University of Milan-Bicocca and a member of the National Family Monitoring Centre's Technical and Scientific Committee and of the European Commission's High-Level Group of Experts on Demography.



Translation key: (heading) Italy – resident population//1971 census to 1 January 2010 ('000s) 0-19 anni = 0-19-year-olds; 65 e più = over-65s



Translation key: (heading) Italy – resident population as at 1 January 2009 to 2031 ('000s) $80 \, \text{e} \, \text{più} = \text{over-}80\text{s}; \, 0.9 = 0.9\text{-year-olds}$

Given these shifts in age structure, it may be wondered whether the existence of a population which on average has already lived for more years than its remaining lifespan (43.50 years vs 40.17 years respectively) means that a progressive decline in enthusiasm and in the urge to invest and innovate may legitimately be expected.

There is, indeed, the temptation to speculate that – today more than yesterday, and tomorrow much more than today – the urge to invest in the future (accepting the attendant risks and sacrifices) may weaken on account of changes in the make-up of the

population which encourage people to 'live in the present'. But if such is the case (even if only partly), what should the response be?

An effective response could be to improve the 'quality' of the remaining years by enabling both individuals and society as a whole to cultivate knowledge, social contact, relationships and involvement in the productive and/or voluntary sector. This means that the two totals of years would not be comparable and that the overall balance between life past and life to come could even be reversed.

Since the Italians' youthful enthusiasm during the post-war reconstruction period has now subsided, we may justifiably suppose that, at present and over the next few decades, we shall be able to keep alive the idea of investing in the future only if a structurally mature population is given reasons and opportunities for considering the choice to remain active to be a reasonably appropriate one. This will be possible if the Italian people can be encouraged by means of policy, culture and social relationships to experience ageing not as a 'winding down' period but as a time for exploring new opportunities and new roles.

2. INSTITUTIONAL ACTIVITY IN SUPPORT OF ACTIVE AGEING AND A SUPPORTIVE SOCIETY

2.1 Commitment at national level

National coordination for the 2012 Year has been entrusted to the Department for Family Policies within the Prime Minister's Office, which acts as a link between the authorities concerned and all the other entities involved in the planning of national activities.

To this end, the working methods and the priority activities to promote the Year and its contents have been discussed at a number of institutional meetings. It has become clear that a stance should be adopted vis-à-vis the year's topics relating both to active ageing and to solidarity between generations.

As regards specific topics, the following matters should be raised, discussed and examined in greater depth:

- promotion of a different, positive idea concerning senior citizens;
- importance of lifelong education and training (for men *and* women);
- promotion of civic service and voluntary activities;
- transfer of knowledge from the elderly to the young and efforts to overcome any potential or latent conflict between generations;
- smooth, guided transition into retirement;
- education concerning healthy, active lifestyles;
- the facilities which encourage active ageing, such as urban mobility and infrastructures.

First of all, identification of experiences and activities already undergone and undertaken in respect of the above topics has been deemed important and the significance of national and transnational networks (not least as a means of comparing and assessing good practices) has been highlighted.

Furthermore, in view of the role played by the regions and local bodies in promoting initiatives in support of policies designed to help the aged and to develop optimum social and territorial conditions to enable senior citizens to participate fully and actively in local

communities, efforts have been made to coordinate local and national objectives with a view to providing mutual support and enhancement.

Accordingly, an opportunity has arisen to involve the various institutional levels with a view to examining in greater detail the matters relating to the Year, beyond the 2012 celebrations. The institutional reference framework is the National Family Monitoring Centre (a technical and scientific support body), one of whose tasks relating to the drafting of national family policies is the updating of information concerning the main demographic, sociological, economic and family-policy developments.

In particular, it is considered that a survey of existing or forthcoming regional legislation relating to active ageing and solidarity between generations could usefully be carried out in conjunction with a recording of projects and good practices concerning those topics.

As regards the dissemination and promotion of the Year's contents, the Department for Family Policies intends first of all to draw the public's and operators' attention to the significance of the European Year, to the main objectives set for the Year and to the implications of democratic challenges.

To this end a <u>website dedicated to the Year</u>³ has been set up under the auspices of the Department for Family Policies, as has an <u>electronic mailbox</u>⁴ to which operators and members of the public can send notifications concerning events, studies and research relating to 2012 Year topics.

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³ http://www.invecchiamentoattivo.politichefamiglia.it

⁴ 2012-invecchiamentoattivo@palazzochigi.it



In addition there is due to be a specific communication campaign borrowed from the European campaign relating to the Year, in which the material prepared by the EU for the 27 Member States (including slogans, television advertisements, radio announcements,

press releases and background documents for the events and seminars organised nationally or locally) will be adapted and translated.

As an across-the-board measure involving all the parties concerned, the European Year will be widely advertised through dissemination of the Year's initiatives at various promotional events.

Furthermore, a prize will be offered for exploitation of the best 2012 Year initiatives, which will be brought together in a final publication.

Lastly, the year's achievements and the prospects for the future are to be incorporated into a National Charter entitled *For active, lively, dignified ageing in a supportive society*, drawn up by the Technical and Scientific Committee and the National Family Monitoring Centre and to be shared by all public and private entities concerned.

2.1.1 Employment and working conditions

The Government – in particular the Ministry for Labour and Social Policies, in association with the ISFOL (*Istituto per lo Sviluppo della Formazione Professionale dei Lavoratori* [Institute for the Development of Vocational Training for Workers] – has been working for a number of years on a scheme for the structured monitoring of current phenomena, developments and activities relating to the ageing of the workforce and the extension of working life.

Over the 2011-2012 two-year period the ISFOL Plan's 'Project 4: analysis of specific labour-market targets' (to be financed by the European Social Fund: Employability Axis – CRO – OB. sp.2.1/CONV – OB. sp. 2.1, 'Improving the efficiency, effectiveness, quality and inclusivity of labour-market institutions') has been operating in specific areas in an attempt to describe the characteristics of the mature supply of labour and to analyse the target (as a user of public and private employment services) in preparation for the Europe 2020 strategy.

However, the purposes of that activity also include helping to ensure fulfilment of the commitments made by the Italian Government in the course of the second round of assessment of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA), which was launched in 2002 under the auspices of the UN Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and on the basis of the decisions taken at the 48th session of the UN Commission for Social Development (2010).

In this context in particular the Ministry for Labour and Social Policies/ISFOL activities firstly involve systematising and disseminating the results obtained through the following research projects:

- Survey of local and regional active-ageing activities. Research has enabled local and regional activities undertaken since 2007 whose reference target is workers in the second half of their career (i.e. aged over 45) to be selectively identified and subsequently classified and described. Both the Report and the documentary database are currently being published by the ISFOL.
- <u>Survey of European information campaigns on active ageing</u>. This activity has involved gathering information concerning the main information activities and the campaigns to support the national active-ageing programmes in certain European countries. The relevant report is available on the ISFOL website.

- <u>Survey of employment services in certain EU Member States</u>. Research has been carried out into the arrangements made in certain Member States in order to provide employment services for older workers. A summary report on the research will be published in the course of 2012.
- <u>Monitoring for Italy of the regional strategy for implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA)</u>. The report to the UNECE under the second round of MIPAA assessment will be available during the first half of 2012.
- The views of producers and trade-unionists at district level. This is a series of interviews with institutional representatives and local producers (mainly selected within productive areas of a district nature). The research report will be published in the course of 2012.

Reference points: Ministry for Labour and Social Policies (DG for Labour Service Policies) and the ISFOL.

Amongst other current activities, ISFOL runs the:

- Central European Platform for an Ageing Society (CE-Ageing Platform) Project. The purpose of this project (which is financed by the ERDF) is to devise a transnational strategy to combat current ageing phenomena in the partner countries through the exchange of good age-management practices. Such a strategy is designed to:
 - help minimise the negative effects which demographic ageing has on society and on the economy;
 - help improve governance policies and processes and adapt them to demographic change;
 - reduce regional disparities and the spatial segregation of the groups concerned by providing a platform for the exchange of knowledge between urban and rural areas and regional and national levels, and also at transnational level;
 - facilitate better use of local potential inherent in a diverse workforce involved in ageing processes (by raising awareness of demographic change);
 - promote the planning of new services and the improvement of the skills of the groups involved, with a view to meeting SMEs' requirements and drawing up a joint strategy;
 - devise innovative activities and services for SMEs in the fields of diversity management, lifelong learning and life/work/health balancing.

The Upper Austria Chamber of Commerce is the leader of the project, which is being implemented by the Vienna-based Centre for Social Innovation (German abbreviation ZSI). The project partnership involves 11 organisations from Germany, the Czech Republic, the Slovak Republic, Poland, Slovenia and Hungary. The project has a 36-month lifespan (2011-2013).

- <u>European ESF-Age Network</u>. The purpose of this Network (which came into being in 2008) is to promote the development and dissemination of active-ageing policies through a more efficient use of the European Social Fund. The main activities are:
 - identifying and sharing good practices;
 - organising learning seminars and study visits involving experts and key players;

 raising awareness within society and at institutional level by involving the individual Member States' stakeholders in the Network's activities with a view to strengthening active-ageing policies.

Within the project, two theme-based macro areas have been identified and are being dealt with by two working parties.

- 1. Sustainable employability and work ability (health and safety at work, working conditions, Work Ability Index, lifelong learning, VPL, intergenerational transfer/mentorship, human-resource management, career guidance, mobility, work processes and organisation, life/work balance);
- 2. Transition from unemployment to work (public and private employment services, prevention of unemployment through job-to-job transfers, entrepreneurship, social undertakings, new jobs, etc.).

Overarching topics include: awareness-raising and constructing a business case; partnership; policy approaches to early retirement; financial incentives; equal-treatment legislation and infrastructure; preconditions at the level of the social partners (adjustment of collective employment agreements).

The ISFOL also administers the Network's website.

2.1.1.1 Lifelong education and training

Training policies and human-capital development policies play a crucial supporting role in respect of active ageing by the population: they make the over-50s more employable and – more generally – help them to participate in social and economic life.

The <u>Lifelong Learning Programme</u> (LLP) includes and replaces earlier EU teaching, vocational-training and e-learning programmes and both strengthens and complements the Member States' education and training activities. It comprises four subprogrammes: Comenius (for schools), Erasmus (for higher education), Leonardo da Vinci (for vocational education and training) and Grundtvig (for adults), directly run by the Member States.

At national level the Programme is coordinated by the Ministry for Labour and Social Policies (DG Active and Passive Employment Policies) and the Ministry for Education, Universities and Research (DG International Affairs). As regards the national operational implementation of sectoral programmes, the coordinators have jointly nominated reference national agencies which administer the programmes as indicated in the following table:

Ministry for Labour and Social Policies	Ministry for Education, Universities and
	Research
National Agency c/o ISFOL	National Agency ANSAS (formerly INDRE)
Leonardo da Vinci Programme	Comenius Programme/Erasmus
	Programme/Grundtvig Programme

Of particular interest for the 2012 European Year is the Grundtvig subprogramme, which meets the teaching and learning requirements of persons involved in any form of adult education and of the institutes and organisations which are responsible for or which facilitate this type of education. The specific objectives are to: 1) meet the educational

challenge posed by the ageing of Europe's population; 2) offer adults new ways in which to improve their knowledge and skills. The planned activities include:

- <u>Grundtvig mobility</u>: visits, assistantships and exchanges for participants in formal and informal adult education, including training and career development for staff working in adult education and also preparatory visits; individual mobility for adult learners; teaching experience for future/new adult-education teachers;
- <u>Grundtvig learning partnerships</u>: partnerships focusing on topics of mutual interest to participating organisations;
- <u>GIVE projects for senior-citizen volunteers</u>: Senior Volunteering Projects (SVPs) are devised for the purpose of harnessing volunteers' skills and activities at European level (in particular, those of senior-citizen volunteers), facilitating mobility and providing scope for growth in a European context;
- <u>Multilateral projects: centralised activity under the control of the Executive Agency;</u>
- Networks: centralised activity under the control of the Executive Agency;
- Other initiatives designed to promote the Grundtvig Programme's objectives (accompanying measures)⁵.

Furthermore, the Regional Schools Offices are requested under the <u>'Europa</u> <u>dell'Istruzione' [Education Europe] Project</u>⁶ to give prominence in their Territorial Plans to European Year-related initiatives and projects. In this connection an outline of the activities could be provided by the end of the year.

Reference points: Ministry for Labour and Social Policies (DG Active and Passive Employment Policies) and Ministry for Education, Universities and Research (DG International Affairs); ISFOL.

In the second half of 2012 a scientific convention is to be held on the topic of lifelong learning in support of active ageing. The purpose of the convention is to:

- raise awareness regarding the social, personal and financial benefits of training for adults;
- launch a discussion and a debate concerning possible ways of improving the training scheme to support active ageing;
- highlight sound national and international age-management practices.

Lastly, the Leonardo da Vinci Agency's activity programme for 2012 includes an information event on the subject of active ageing. The conference will be organised jointly with INDIRE and will focus on new forms of learning in support of active ageing; particular attention will be paid to the role of enterprise, the third sector and transnational-mobility experiences.

2.1.2 Participation in society

As regards participation in society and solidarity between generations, attention may be drawn to the following priorities and activities promoted by the Ministry for Labour and Social Policies:

⁵ For information, see www.programmallp.it; http://ec.europa.eu/education/llp/national-en.html

⁶ http://archivio.pubblica.istruzione.it/buongiorno_europa/presentazione.shtml

- <u>Directive 2012 of the Ministry for Labour and Social Policies concerning the submission of experimental volunteering projects</u> by voluntary organisations included in provincial/regional volunteering registers pursuant to Law 266/1991. The Year of Active Ageing and of Dialogue between Generations will be included amongst the priority activity areas specified each year in the Directive.
- Research into intergenerational volunteering work, in cooperation with the Brescia Provincial Monitoring Centre and the Catholic University of Brescia (from March 2011 to November 2012).
- <u>Directive 2012 of the Ministry for Labour and Social Policies concerning the submission of experimental projects</u> by the social-promotion associations entered in the registers referred to in Article 7 of Law No 383/2000. The Year of Active Ageing and of Dialogue between Generations will be included amongst the priority activity areas specified each year in the Directive.

Reference points: Ministry for Labour and Social Policies (DG Third Sector and Citizens' Associations); National Monitoring Centre for the Voluntary Sector and National Monitoring Centre for Associations.

2.1.2.1 Promoting social-experimentation projects on active ageing

In order to give continuity to activities under the European Year for Combating Poverty and Social Exclusion and the European Year of Volunteering and in order to support the principles of solidarity between generations and activities designed to facilitate active ageing, the Ministry for Labour and Social Policies has published a notice (<u>Directive of 28 October 2011</u>) promoting experimental projects to be undertaken by local authorities in cooperation with non-profit-making associations and scientific partners in one of the following areas: a) social inclusion and action to combat poverty; b) child protection; c) non-self-sufficiency; d) active ageing.

As far as this last point is concerned, the aim is to encourage local institutions and the voluntary sector – on behalf and for the benefit of the elderly – to facilitate active participation in social life in the interests of healthy, dignified ageing.

Reference point: Ministry for Labour and Social Policies (DG for Inclusion and Social Policies).

2.1.3 Promoting a healthy, independent life

In line with the most recent EU policies on ageing, the Ministry of Health has developed avenues for research and action in the sector which relate to a range of topics including:

- 1. promoting positive/healthy lifestyles and forms of behaviour;
- 2. preventing hazardous conditions;
- 3. preventing increasing ill-health;
- 4. preventing worsening and relapses;
- 5. preventing a decline in quality of life in the final stages of existence.

The '<u>Guadagnare salute</u>' [Gain Health] Programme⁷ addresses the topics referred to in the first two points and provides specific funding earmarked for research initiatives and projects.

Research activities are promoted through both the '*Ricerca sanitaria*' [Health Research] notices⁸ and the National Disease Prevention and Control Centre (<u>CCM</u>)⁹.

It is obvious from a brief review of the projects financed in recent years by the CCM on the topic of ageing that an effort has been made to support broad-spectrum research which takes into consideration not only the parameter of active, healthy ageing but also the concept of frailness and the risk of a gradual loss of independence, with a view to promoting all courses of action designed to maintain good quality of life for as long as possible and to activating in good time measures to combat non-independence, involving initiatives to support frail elderly people and the environment in which they live.

The 'National Health Plan 2011-2013' (Italian abbreviation PSN) introduces the concept of active ageing into overall health strategies.

More specifically, the activities in this area are laid down in the 'National Preventive Plan 2011-2013' (Italian abbreviation PNP) and in the regional versions of the PRPs. The CCM will shortly publish details of the regional plans.

Explicit support for the well-being and mental health of the elderly is also provided through the inclusion of those concepts in the 'Action Plan for Mental Health' and through future participation in the 'Joint Action on Mental Health', which is to be launched in the course of 2012.

Reference point: Ministry of Health

As far as any distinction between the sexes is concerned, attention is drawn to a project entitled *Mens sana in corpore sano: policies and instruments for a healthy and dignified active ageing for elderly women*, which is financed under the European 'Progress' Programme.

The purpose of this initiative (which is promoted by the Equal Opportunities Department within the Prime Minister's Office) is to examine the effects of ageing in greater detail and from a female perspective, in order to enable guidelines to be drawn up with a view to developing strategies for women's active, dignified ageing.

Reference point: Equal Opportunities Department within the Prime Minister's Office

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⁷ http://www.salute.gov.it/stiliVita/stiliVita.jsp

⁸ www.salute.gov.it/ricercaSanitaria/ricercaSanitaria.jsp

⁹ www.ccm-network.it

3. WORKING WITH THE THIRD SECTOR

The main associations or networks of associations concerned with the Year's topics have been involved in the preparatory meetings for the drawing up of the national programme. In particular, Age Platform Italy (which provides national coordination for <u>Age Platform Europe</u>) has stressed the importance of establishing a 'Coalition for 2012' amongst the associations (including the Italian ones).

Furthermore, AGE Italy is proposing to:

- organise a national conference for the purpose of presenting the Age Platform Europe and Age Platform Italy document;
- publicise all the initiatives of AGE's Italian members via the press and the media;
- appropriately celebrate 29 April 2012 a day devoted to 'solidarity between generations and active ageing';
- organise one or more seminars and/or conventions on active ageing and, in particular, solidarity between generations;
- set up a working party to prepare and submit to the Italian Parliament a draft law (Single Text) on active ageing and related matters;
- promote meetings with Italian Members and the Vice-Presidents of the European Parliament for the purpose of submitting Age Italy's proposals.

4. CALENDAR OF EVENTS

What follows is an initial list of events already scheduled. Any additions or updates to the list will be announced on the <u>Italian</u> website dedicated to the 2012 Year¹⁰.

First half of 2012 – Celebration of the European Year

This event provides an opportunity for presenting the Year and the National Programme. The <u>three main topics</u> of the year (employment and training; participation in society; promotion of an independent, healthy life) will be explored through a brief presentation by the authorities, regions and local bodies of an experiment, project or study on the topic of ageing and solidarity between generations. The day will also provide an opportunity for presenting the activities of the main associations operating in the sector.

As regards activities to encourage the elderly to participate in society, specific attention will be paid to synergies with the activities and priorities associated with the Year of Volunteering.

First half of 2012 – <u>Convention on ageing policies in Italy</u> (Ministry for Labour and Social Policies; ISFOL). This event stems both from the wish to contribute to the debate relating to the European Year and from the opportunity (highlighted by the UN) to bring

¹⁰ http://www.invecchiamentoattivo.politichefamiglia.it

together a large number of government authorities, institutions, social partners and civilsociety bodies for purposes including an examination of earlier action in the light of the actual social problems and demands which arise in connection with the process of demographic ageing.

The convention will be organised on the basis of thematic sessions to be attended by local and national institutions and social players, representatives of EU institutions and of other Member States and international agencies (European Commission, UN, CEDEFOP, etc.) and researchers involved in the analysis of the topics under consideration.

First half of 2012: Conference on the Lifelong Learning Programme, intended to explore the topics covered by the European Year on Active Ageing and national LLP experiences in this field.

June 2012: European conference under the Grundtvig subprogramme on the subject of the training of staff involved in adult education.

September 2011-June 2012: Youth and volunteer programme entitled 'A workshop for evolving ideas': school workshops on participatory citizenship.