



Commission launches debate on responding to the impact of an ageing population

Brussels, 27 January 2021

The European Commission today presented a green paper to launch a **broad policy debate** on the challenges and opportunities of Europe's ageing society. It sets out the impact of this pronounced demographic trend across our economy and society and invites the public to express their views on how to respond to this in a [public consultation](#), which will run for 12 weeks.

Dubravka **Šuica**, Vice-President for Democracy and Demography, said: *"The fact that we are living longer, healthier lives than the generations before shows the success and strength of our social market economy. But it also presents new challenges, and offers opportunities which we need to consider. This green paper will launch a discussion on tapping the full potential of an ageing population - the drivers for innovation which it presents, and the policy responses required."*

The green paper frames the debate on ageing by setting out the speed and scale of the demographic changes in our society, as well as the impact this has across our policies and the questions we need to ask ourselves in response. This covers everything from promoting healthy lifestyles and lifelong learning to strengthening health and care systems to cater for an older population. It underlines the need to bring more people into the workforce, highlights the opportunities for job creation and looks at the impact of ageing on our careers, wellbeing, pensions, social protection and productivity.

The Green Paper takes a **life-cycle approach**, reflecting the universal impact of ageing on all generations and stages in life. In doing so, it highlights the importance of striking the right balance between sustainable solutions for our welfare systems, and strengthening **intergenerational solidarity**.

Over the coming decades, the **number of older people in the EU will increase**. Today, 20% of the population is above 65, and by 2070, it is projected to be 30%. Meanwhile, the share of people above 80 is expected to more than double, reaching 13% by 2070. Similarly, the number of people potentially in need of long-term care is expected to increase from **19.5m** in 2016 to **23.6m** in 2030 and **30.5m** in 2050 (EU-27).

Next steps

The public consultation launched today is open to interested citizens and organisations from all Member States, including from regional and local levels. The results of the consultation will help to identify the support needed for people, their regions and communities. Based on the results, the Commission will consider possible policy responses to reinforce efforts in Member States and regions to address the issues around ageing.

Background

This Commission has put demography high on the EU policy agenda. The Commission's June 2020 [report on the impact of demographic change](#) showed that in the last 50 years, life expectancy at birth has increased by about 10 years for both men and women. The *Green Paper on Ageing* is the first outcome of this report and launches a debate on the main issues related to ageing in Europe and will be followed by the long-term vision for rural areas that will also look into the question of depopulation.

For more information

[Green paper on ageing](#)

[Factsheet](#)

[Public consultation on demographic change in the EU – green paper on ageing](#)

[Demography webpage](#)

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Related documents

[Green paper Ageing Factsheet - FINAL.pdf](#)

Related media

 [Children with their grandparents](#)