



EUROPEAN ASSOCIATION
FOR POPULATION STUDIES

ЕВРОПЕЙСКАЯ АССОЦИАЦИЯ ПО
ДЕМОГРАФИЧЕСКИМ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЯМ

ASSOCIATION EUROPEENNE
POUR L'ETUDE DE LA POPULATION

EUROPÄISCHE GESELLSCHAFT
FÜR BEVÖLKERUNGSWISSENSCHAFT

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Green Paper on Demographic Change
DG EMPL/E/1
J-27 01/122
European Commission
B-1049 Brussels

Milan, 12 October 2005

Dear Sirs,

On behalf of the European Association for Population Studies (EAPS), I have the pleasure to answer to your call for consultations concerning the Green Paper on Demographic Change. EAPS, founded in 1983, is a scientific association of individual members and associated institutions. EAPS is an international and multidisciplinary forum for population studies with a special focus on Europe's population. It aims to stimulate the interest in population issues among governments, national and international organizations and the general public.

EAPS warmly welcomes the great attention on the part of the European Commission towards demographic change as it appears from the Green Paper initiative. As a scientific organisation, our contribution to the consultation will not focus on specific policy suggestions, but on the knowledge base for the understanding of demographic change. We would like to focus on three issues.

Monitoring and understanding demographic change in Europe requires a high level of scientific competence in the complex field of demography and population studies. Research in this field is related to actual societal challenges and opportunities, and it is both by tradition and by necessity intrinsically interdisciplinary and internationally oriented. For these reasons of interdisciplinarity and international orientation, demography and population studies have not been particularly prominent—with limited exceptions of high quality—in research agendas at the national and international level, as well as in higher education. Review procedures, for instance, also at the international level, are predominantly organised along disciplinary lines which hampers interdisciplinarity, and international comparative research has a low priority in national research agendas.

EAPS believes that promoting research and training in demography and population studies at the European level is needed to help in finding answers to the fundamental questions posed by the Green Paper and by future issues concerning demographic change. EAPS encourages the European Commission to support population research and training with instruments targeted on interdisciplinarity and international comparison.

EAPS also believes that policies responding to the challenges of demographic change should be based on solid scientific knowledge. As in the "best practice" case, this knowledge is assured by the opportunity to collect and analyse data on demographic change both at the macro and at the micro level. Of particular relevance to knowledge-based policy-making in Europe are longitudinal data collection ventures, of the type that is available in some

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European countries and in the USA. These ventures usually transcend the capacities of individual countries and would benefit from a European approach.

EAPS encourages the European Commission to support the regular collection of comparative data on demographic change in Europe, including micro-level data and especially longitudinal surveys.

Public discussion of demographic change is fundamental to promote a better understanding of its determinants, to raise awareness among the relevant actors including citizens, to foster synergies of knowledge between policy-makers and the public sectors, NGOs, the private sector and the scientific community. Since 1985 EAPS has organised a European Population Conference usually on a bi-annual basis. The next conference is scheduled to take place in Liverpool (21-24 June 2006). EAPS would strongly favour that, given the prominence of demographic issues in Europe and the potentialities for research on the issue, the European Population Conference will become an event on an annual basis. As these conferences are a perfect platform to exchange information and to strengthen the knowledge base for policymaking, this would benefit a regular science-policy debate and also allow to potentially host policy-oriented discussions and workshops and meetings on European projects. *EAPS would particularly welcome the collaboration of the European Commission in view of the organisation of an annual European Population Conference.*

The Council of EAPS salutes the European Commission for organising the consultations on the Green Paper and appreciated the opportunity to participate in these consultations. The Council invites the Commission to continue its important work on demographic change in Europe and hopes for a continued collaboration with the Commission.

On behalf of the Council,

Francesco C. Billari
Secretary-General

DHL

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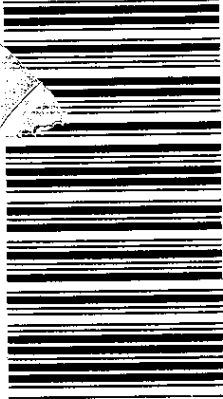
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