

## Green Paper "Confronting demographic change: a new solidarity between the generations"

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Do you consent to the publication of your personal data/data relating to your organisation with the publication of your replies to the consultation?	Yes
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Are you replying as an individual or an organisation?	Individual
Gender	Male
Age	40-54
Country of residence	NL - Netherlands
Do you take the view that the discussion of demographic trends and managing their impact should take place at European level? If so, what should be the objectives, and which policy areas are concerned?	Yes, I think this is an issue that should be dealt with on an european level. The objectives should be: - making the economic effects of ageing population manageable - preventing that some countries with a saving system for pensions (like the Netherlands) will suffer under other countries that have failed to anticipate - making it possible for older people to stay useful and productive members of society - make sure that a decline of population is not seen as a negative development. Europe is already overcrowded. A smaller population can live in Europe in a more sustainable way. However, the changing of society from on that is directed to eternal growth, to one that can stabilise itself at some level is still a major issue.

<p>Over many years, the Union has been making considerable efforts to achieve equality between men and women and has coordinated national social protection policies. How can a better work/life balance help to tackle the problems associated with demographic ageing? How can a more balanced distribution of household and family tasks between men and women be encouraged? Should the award of certain benefits or advantages (leave, etc.) be linked to an equal distribution of tasks between the sexes? How best to ensure an adequate income for both parents on parental leave? How can the availability of child care structures (crèches, nursery schools, etc.) and elderly care structures be improved by the public and private sectors? Can a reduced rate of VAT contribute to the development of care services? How can parents, in particular young parents, be encouraged to enter the labour market, have the career that they want and the number of children they want?</p>	<p>The questions asked seem to me rather far away from the real reasons of a lower birth rate. With the climbing incomes and a more luxury lifestyle people have set different demands to their housing, holidays, education of their children etc. All these demands can only be realised if the number of children is low. Having five children that want to study at university means bankruptcy! Every child must have its own room nowadays, but most houses have only three bedrooms. But isn't it better to have less children in favourable conditions than many in poor conditions? As to the policy measures you propose to encourage young people to combine work with having children: i think it is best for children to be raised in their parental environment (at home so to say). Only after some 4 years of age, when school starts can they move out in society, but they still need a well organised home-base. This security cannot wholly be replaced by professional arrangements. Aside from this is it my opinion that the efforts to obtain equality between men and women should be continued.</p>
<p>The Thessaloniki European Council in June 2003 declared that an EU integration policy for immigrants should help to meet the new demographic and economic challenges currently facing the EU. This is the debate initiated by the Green Paper adopted last January.</p> <p>To what extent can immigration mitigate certain negative effects of demographic ageing?  What policies should be developed for better integrating these migrants, in particular young people?  How could Community instruments, in particular the legislative framework to combat discrimination, the structural funds and the Employment Strategy, contribute?</p>	<p>there is high unemployment under second-generation migrants; these people already live in our countries en should be helped to improve their qualifications for the european job-market. As long as unemployment is above 3 % in the EU it is stupid to have extra immigrants, only for jobs that can clearly not be fulfilled with employees already living in the EU migration could be permitted. I consider a (slow) decline of european population as desirable and certainly no reason at all for organising new immigration.</p>

<p>European objectives have been laid down for the prevention of long-term youth unemployment, combating early school leaving and raising the level of initial training. The structural funds help to attain them at grass roots level. How can initial training and adult training schemes be improved? What can non-formal education and voluntary activities contribute? How can the structural funds and the instruments for achieving better access to the knowledge society contribute? How can the bridges between school and working life and the quality of young people's employment be improved? What role should social dialogue play? What can dialogue with civil society, in particular youth organisations, contribute</p>	<p>i dont know the situation in other european countries. In the Netherlands there has been a dual development in the educational system that has practically ruined us. In the first place the secondary schools have been merged to massive organisations where individual pupils can hardly be discerned anymore. Children (for instance from other cultures) that dont fit in easily are found to slip off to school types that are to low for their abilities. The school system is operated by a system of detailed bureaucratic rules rather than by educational motives. The ministry of education has effectively eliminated all sense of pride of teachers for the job they do. Secondly we have given priority to theoretical education above practical education. This means that a shortage of people who can do a good job with their hands will be manifest within years and at the same time many children will leave school with an education that serves them badly in finding a job. Especially for the Netherlands should we get rid of the system of religiously motivated schools that have an equal right to government funding.</p>
<p>How can Community policies contribute more to combating child poverty and poverty among single-parent families and to reducing the risk of poverty and exclusion among young people? What forms of solidarity can be fostered between young people and elderly people?</p>	<p>i have no suggestions in this field. I feel that as long as poverty doesnt mean that a child has no acces to acceptable housing, food and education (which isnt the case in the Netherlands) a certain amount of people living under poor conditions is inevitable and should be accepted.</p>
<p>In order to foster the transition to a knowledge society, EU policies promote the modernisation of work organisation, the definition of lifelong learning strategies, the quality of the working environment and "active ageing", in particular raising the average retirement age. Demographic changes reinforce the importance of these policies, whilst raising new questions: How can the organisation of work be modernised, to take into account the specific needs of each age group? How can young couples' integration in working life be facilitated and how can we help them to find a balance between flexibility and security to bring up their children, to train and update their skills to meet the demands of the labour market? How can we enable older people to work more?</p>	<p>It is clear that having young children and wanting to take care of them makes it necessary to do concessions in one's career. A job that keeps you from home for eleven hours ore more each day can simply not be combined with an active parenthood. So work will be organized in such a way that working in less hours during the phase of having young children is stimulated and rewarded. The same can be said for elderly people: they may want to work after their retirement, but in less hours and with an other tempo. This should be accepted in order to make use of the reservoir of knowledge and experience that they represent.</p>
<p>How can work organisation best be adapted to a new distribution between the generations, with fewer young people and more older workers? How can the various stakeholders in the Union contribute, in particular by way of social dialogue and civil society?</p>	<p>slow down a little</p>

<p>The European coordination of retirement scheme reforms is promoting more flexible bridges between work and retirement. Should there be a statutory retirement age, or should flexible, gradual retirement be permitted? How can elderly people participate in economic and social life, e.g. through a combination of wages and pensions, new forms of employment (part-time, temporary) or other forms of financial incentive? How can activities employing elderly people in the voluntary sector and the social economy be developed? What should be the response to pensioner mobility between Member States, in particular with regard to social protection and health care? How should we be investing in health promotion and prevention so that the people of Europe continue to benefit from longer healthy life expectancy?</p>	<p>i am in favour of gradual retirement; of course this should also mean a better income for the people that continue working. The pensions that one has saved for must be paid out and the wages that one earns come on top of that. I dont think it is necessary to actively stimulate employment in the voluntary sector. This will happen automatically as the number of elderly rise. pensioner mobility between states should be facilitated and barriers in social laws and health care should be eliminated. health promotion and prevention is a general issue, not only for elderly.</p>
<p>The coordination of national social protection policies is due to be extended to long-term care for the elderly in 2006. How can this help to manage demographic change? The coordination of national social protection policies is due to be extended to long-term care for the elderly in 2006. How can this help to manage demographic change? In particular, should a distinction be drawn between retirement pensions and dependency allowances? How do we train the human resources needed and provide them with good quality jobs in a sector which is often characterised by low salaries and low qualifications? How do we arrive at a balanced distribution of care for the very old between families, social services and institutions? What can be done to help families? What can be done to support local care networks? And what can be done to reduce inequality between men and women when they reach retirement age? How can new technologies support older people?</p>	<p>this is very difficult. In our society the high salaries are due to high productivity. But the care for older people has clear limits to productivity growth. Families become smaller so many people will fall back on institutional care. People should be stimulated to arrange things for themselves as long as they are able to. When shops are only to be found at a car drives distance it will be difficult for older people to do their own shopping. The same for many other daily needs. Organise living cities where people find all they need at short (walking) distance to keep them independent of professional care as long as possible.</p>

<p>Should the European Union be promoting exchanges and regular (e.g. annual) analysis of demographic change and its impact on societies and all the policies concerned? Should the Union's financial instruments – particularly the structural funds – take better account of these changes? If so, how? How could European coordination of employment and social protection policies better take on board demographic change? How can European social dialogue contribute to the better management of demographic change? What role can civil society and civil dialogue with young people play? How can demographic change be made an integral part of all the Union's internal and external policies?</p>	<p>most important issue is to manage the paradigm shift from growth to a sustainable decline of population. This will have enormous impacts on economic and social organisation. But the limit to growth has already been reached. In destroying our natural environment we create a world that can no longer support the numbers of people that we see in Europe today if we want to keep up our standard of living.</p>
<p>How did you perceive this questionnaire?</p>	<p>Expectations met</p>