

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

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Privacy statement	
Personal Data	
Do you consent to the publication of your personal data/data relating to your organisation with the publication of your replies to the consultation?	No, references to the personal data should remain anonymous
Name ***	
E-mail address ***	
Are you replying as an individual or an organisation?	Individual
Gender	Female
Age	15-24
Country of residence	FR - France
Explanation	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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? <p>oui. Réflexion sur une nouvelle politique familiale et migratoire. Encouragement à la natalité par un appui social et financier des familles. Redonner sa place à la famille dans la société et à l'enfant en particulier.</p>	
1. The challenges of European demography	
1.1. The challenge of a low birth rate	
<p><i>Over many years, the Union has been making considerable efforts to achieve equality between men and women and has coordinated national social protection policies.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 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?

Une meilleure conciliation entre vie professionnelle et vie privée permettrait de ne pas laisser de côté la vie privée, la famille et ses obligations. Soigner la relation du couple pour éviter les ruptures. Donner plus d'attention aux enfants, donner une plus grande place à leur éducation et participer réellement à leur développement. On peut encourager une répartition plus équilibrée des responsabilités domestiques et familiales entre hommes et femmes par l'entreprise. C'est elle qui doit donner une égalité des chances professionnelles aux hommes comme aux femmes, et prévoir un mode de travail (horaires...) adapté à l'accomplissement des responsabilités domestiques et familiales, pour les hommes comme pour les femmes. Chaque couple doit savoir s'organiser pour accomplir leurs tâches, si les deux souhaitent mener à bien une vie professionnelle, oui il faudrait un partage égal des congés. Mais c'est au couple de décider et pas à l'administration de conditionner l'octroi de certains avantages à une égalité de partage des tâches entre l'homme et la femme, au nom de leur liberté. Pour stimuler davantage l'offre de structures de garde d'enfants (crèches, écoles maternelles, etc.) et de soins aux personnes âgées, à la fois par les collectivités publiques et les entreprises : plus de subventions, création de nouvelles structures, un nouveau "marché" à développer et moderniser par les entreprises, encourager une nouvelle concurrence dans ce domaine pour stimuler les entreprises à trouver de nouveaux produits répondant de façon adaptée à la demande. Un taux réduit de TVA appliqué aux services de garde d'enfants et de soins aux personnes âgées peut-il contribuer à leur développement ? Oui, comme tout autre avantage fiscal. Comment permettre aux parents, notamment aux jeunes couples, d'accéder au marché du travail, de répondre à leurs besoins de carrière et d'avoir le nombre d'enfants qu'ils désirent ? Par une nouvelle politique de l'entreprise, une nouvelle définition de celle-ci, cf ci-dessus. C'est elle qui doit rendre possible carrière professionnelle, succès professionnel et "succès familial".

1.2. The possible contribution of immigration

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.

- 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?

Dans quelle mesure l'immigration peut-elle compenser certains effets négatifs du vieillissement démographique ? Remplacer nos enfants, nos actifs, nos travailleurs.

2. A new solidarity between the generations

2.1. Better integration of young people

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

- 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?

2.2. A global approach to the “working life cycle”

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?

- 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?

2.3. A new place for “elderly people”

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?

2.4 Solidarity with the very elderly

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?

3. Conclusion: what should the European Union's role be?

- 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?

The Questionnaire

How did you perceive this questionnaire? Expectations not met

Why?

Too long