

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	25-39
Country of residence	UK - United Kingdom
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>These debates should take place at a European level but with the proviso that the needs of certain countries are not subjected to the needs of others. Some countries (Ireland, France, the UK) are set to continue growing beyond the dates of others and legislation that ahrms these countries cannnto be deemed to eb acceptable. Various policy areas are concerned. health (Although any more attempts to remove people's fundamental civil rights such as the attempt to force UK worklers to limit their working time to 48 hours a week) would be an infringement of civil rights and ther rights of citizens to decide on their own state of health. Women and their participation in the workplace is concerned. I do NOT believe that the role of the family is affected and will expand on that later in this form.</p>

<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>As mentioned above, I have deep objections to this forming part of this debate. Firstly, as a single person I find it abhorrent that policies are being decided to an ever greater degree according to the needs of families. Families are no more important than single people. Families do not have needs - children have needs. Personally I am tired of paying taxes just to fulfill over the top promises to families at both a British and European level. If people choose to marry that is their business. If they choose to have children that is their business. My rights and my working habits should not be affected by it. I believe that the commission should promote equal rights for women at all levels but as for linking benefits or advantages to an equal sharing of tasks? That is monstrous social engineering and is doomed to failure. Do you honestly believe that could ever be passed? As for an adequate income for parents...give one parent an adequate income based on the other partner going out to work. I don't pay my taxes to subsidise fathers who feel like a 6 month holiday just because they have had a child. With regards crèches, I believe that a small rise in taxes to pay for creche facilities would be more than offset by the extra taxation paid by parents going out to work. If a family can afford for one parent to stay at home, then that is great and I believe desirable, but where this is not the case, I believe it is better for that parent to be working, even if only part time. That way they are paying taxes and contributing to an ageing society. I fail to see how reducing VAT is going to help anything. You want to provide more services for families by reducing tax? Or is it just by reducing tax for families and sneakily raising them for us single people who already pay proportionally more tax than families? As for the last question, I think that this is a very difficult balance. Some people can afford to stay at home and raise their children and removing their right to do so would be deeply undemocratic. Dismantling Europe's ridiculously over the top social model would encourage parents to enter the job market as the government would stop spoiling married people and parents at the expense of single people and would provide more employment which would help young parents believe there are more opportunities for them.</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>Immigration is vital. The maths are simple. Less people of working age paying for more retired people. And as long as countries like France and Italy refuse to face facts and reform their pension systems, the situation is going to get worse and be a major drag on growth. We need immigration. In addition, immigrants bring dynamism, skills and are generally prepared to work hard. What is vital is to give newly arrived immigrants language lessons (a doctor who cannot understand what you are saying might as well not be there) and possibly IT classes etc. We also need to try and improve views on immigration throughout Europe to dispel the racism that pervades so many countries. I do not know enough about the Community instruments to be able to contribute anything useful on that point.</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>You could start by telling the UK government to put back all the funding it has taken away from adult education. I cannot speak for any other government but this one has constantly undermined ongoing education. Eu programmes need to be extended. I once went on a Leonardo da Vinci programme...no one has ever heard of it and kept on telling me I must mean Erasmus. Voluntary activities are very important. However, whilst the encouragement of the Eu is important, i felt hat this is ebst doen at a national level. For example, in France young peopel tend to ahve to prove themselves whereas in the UK they can often get a better job much earlier. A single approcash would ahrm one or the other of these systems for example. I am no expert in this area however.</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>Firstly, retirement ages should be scrapped. It is not for any government to tell em when I can and cannot work until. If I choose to work until 100 my right to do so should be protected. At the same time, retiring at 55 is fine fo yuo can, but the state should not be paying for such a luxury. It is a drag on the taxpayer and the money could eb used more effectively elsewhere. Young peopel should be given more opportunities in the workplace. Trainign programems should be extended and the message should be put through from a very young age that these people can be whatever they want to be. As for young couples, I am afraid that is their problem. Provide crèchjes by all means but as mentioned above I really am sick of us single peopel being taken for a ride and payign endlessly to win the family vote for politicians. As for enabling older people, you bring in exceptionally harsh penalties for agesim in the work place *(both against the old and the young) and make legislation that accepts that a 16 year old and a 90 year odl ahve the same rights in the workplace.</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>Statutory retirement ages are ageist, undemocratic and deeply bigoted. Do we have no freedoms left? People should be allowed to work to whatever age they are physically able to and wish to. Elderly people do participate in the UK. They often work way past 65 in part time jobs. I fail to see how the rest of Europe is not achieving this but with respect that is not a commission problem. Citizens should rather ask their governments why they are failing them. As for involving elderly people in the voluntary sector - why is it for the commission to encourage them to do any such thing? You want to impose social voluntary work on us now? People either care about others and therefore volunteer or they don't. It is not for you to tell old people how they should spend their retirement. For goodness sake, leave people alone to choose how to spend their days. A uniform health and social security level is never going to be achieved. Therefore, if a country chooses to offer a similar level of healthcare etc to pensioners who move there from another country, that's great. If they don't, then I can only suggest that elderly people think twice before moving there. Health promotion - well it depends. Will it be more undemocratic attempts to remove our fundamental civil rights in the vein of the working time directive or tell us which minerals we can take (both of which are in direct contravention of EU treaties on liberty of movement and how we live our lives) or do you mean actual promotion for a healthy lifestyle? If it is the former - stop now because these things are not your business. If it is the latter, then more advertising etc would seem to be a sensible way forward.</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>Firstly - has it occurred to you that many every elderly people do not want families or the state interfering in their lives? My grandmother is 91 and objects entirely to social services sticking their nose into her business. Care should only come into effect when the elderly person wants it. Again this is an issue of freedom of the individual. The state should only interfere when it is needed and requested and not otherwise. Beyond that, I am not really qualified to say, but increasing and expanding carer benefits for families who look after elderly residents would seem a good solution. People in care homes tend, I am led to believe, to die earlier than would otherwise be the case so surely that should be the last resort?</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>Firstly, I would like to say how disgusting I find it that you have not once mentioned the rights or needs of childless, single people on this form. Do we therefore assume that you really do see us as nothing more than a convenient cash machine to fund your family policies? I do not have a family and do not want my family/ work life balance changed. Your priorities (families) could not be clearer and I find it undemocratic and abhorrent. you should be deeply ashamed at this disgusting bigotry although frankly I doubt you are. You ask how the commission can take on board demographic change - well why not start by looking at the increasing amount of single childless people and considering their needs and rights for once. Given we pay for all these expensive promises for families, we ought to have something in return sometimes. I would actually like a response to this final point. And I don;t mean some rubbish statement about what you are doing to protect all Europe's citizens because that would refer to married people and parents too. I would like to know why this study so utterly ignores the role and rights of single childless people and what the Commission has ever done or intends to do to specifically help and support single childless people within a directive that was not also designed to help married people or parents. I would like a response please.</p>
<p>How did you perceive this questionnaire?</p>	<p>Expectations not met</p>
<p>Why?</p>	<p>Too technical</p>