Project "Democratic Ownership and Civic Participation in Europe" International Workshop
Raising EU identity awareness in 3rd age citizens

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Book of Abstracts

Scientific committee and project managers:

Prof. Ing. **Michela TIBONI** – Assessore all'Urbanistica e Pianificazione per lo Sviluppo Sostenibile Comune di Brescia
MTiboni@comune.brescia.it

Prof. Arch. **Michèle PEZZAGNO** – Università degli Studi di Brescia
michele.pezzagno@unibs.it

Scientific secretary:

Ing. **Silvia ROSSETTI** – Università degli Studi di Brescia
silvia.rossetti@unibs.it

The Friendly City

Roberto Busi
Department of Civil Engineering, Architecture, Land, Environment and Mathematics, University of Brescia - roberto.busi@unibs.it

For decades now, the work of the School of Urban Planning of the University of Brescia recognizes (and is recognized in) - the expression "Friendly City". The adjective "friend" contains, in its simplicity of use, a set of multiple semantic meanings, which, together, contribute to outline a rich and unambiguous set of values to be achieved.

Without claiming to be exhaustive – it is not possible here - we limit ourselves to highlight that "friendly city" means a city that, at the same time, is:

- *safe*; both in terms of vulnerability to accidents (*safety*) and in terms of prevention of criminal acts (*security*);
- *accessible*; because every movement must necessarily be able to take place, peacefully, by all (and therefore also by the weakest and most vulnerable road users) from the threshold of the place of departure until that of the desired place;
- *beautiful*; because the urban landscape is a determining factor in the quality of urban life;
- *social*; because attention to the structure of the "city of stone" (*urbs*) is functional, primarily, to the society therein established (*civitas*); but also because city equipments - subject to the necessary checks on the economic viability – should be actually oriented to serve people, in a spirit of solidarity;
- and *discreet*; because its impact on the environment has to be as small as possible.

The speech aims to highlight how these objectives constitute a single complex of synergic values that can be actually prosecuted.

Roberto BUSI

Roberto BUSI è professore ordinario di Tecnica Urbanistica nell'Università degli Studi di Brescia, ove è direttore scientifico del CeSCAm-Lab (Centro Studi Città Amica), di cui è stato fondatore nel 1995, e coordina il Dottorato di ricerca in "Luoghi e tempi della città e del territorio" ed il Dottorato di ricerca in "Ingegneria Civile e Ambientale" (DICA). Ha studiato da sempre tematiche ambientali in rapporto alla città ed al territorio. Dal 1992 si occupa anche di sicurezza degli utenti deboli della strada in ambiente urbano in rapporto alla riqualificazione degli spazi pubblici urbani scoperti e, più in generale, dei fattori urbanistici che influiscono sulla qualità della vita urbana. E' stato responsabile di molteplici unità di ricerca (UE, CNR, MIUR, ecc.). E' autore di circa trecento pubblicazioni scientifiche.

Demand and offer of social and assistential services for the wealth of individuals and families in Brescia

Maurizio Carpita, Veronica Cappa, Paola Zuccolotto - DMS StatLab
Department di Economics e Management, University of Brescia

This historic moment is characterized by significant changes in the social structure, due to factors that are very different but related each other. Certainly the negative effects of economic crisis are affecting households' incomes, changing their needs in terms of social and health services. Another important aspect to consider is the social and geographical mobility, which can be declined in multiple aspects, as dimension of the household's social network, and immigration. Even raising the retirement age and increasing the female employment rate may determine changes to the social welfare and the structure of household's networks (for example the care of elders should be left to third parties).

To analyze this complex phenomenon, the University of Brescia carried out the Project "*Demand and Supply of social and health services*", a biennial study (June 2014 – May 2016) co-funded by the Comunità Bresciana Foundation. Partners of the projects are the Department of Economics and Management with the *DMS StatLab - Data Methods and Systems Statistical Laboratory*, the Department of Civil Engineering, Architecture, Land and Environment and the Department of Experimental and Clinical Science.

The first objective of this project is to measure the degree of social well-being of the households living in Brescia. The "well-being" is a multidimensional and complex concept, which cannot be captured by a single indicator: considering economic and socio-demographic characteristics, the goal of our research is to build some composite indicators to measure different aspects of "latent constructs" of interest as poverty and vulnerability.

Data on households' characteristics and incomes were available thanks to a strength collaboration with Statistical Staff of the Brescia municipality. From the civil registry we collect information about individuals (first and last name, tax code, gender, date of birth, birthplace and marital status) and about households (address, number of components, parental relationship between members), from 2005 to 2014; data of income were available from 2005 to 2013. These main sources of information have been merged into one integrated data warehouse. The next step will be to link these measures of poverty and vulnerability with the needs of social and health services (private and public) and their evaluations by the households. The results of this analysis can play a key role in the government of social and economic local policies.

Network implications on health in a sample of older persons in Brescia. The "Anziani in Rete" study

Flaminio Squazzoni[#] Alessandra Marengoni[*]

[#]*Department of Economics and Management, Università of Brescia - flaminio.squazzoni@unibs.it*
[*]*Department of Clinical and Experimental Sciences, University of Brescia - alessadra.marengoni@unibs.it*

Thousands of persons turn 65 years of age every day. This determines a population change without precedent in human history. Income growth and progress in nutrition, education, sanitation and medicine in advanced countries have increased life expectancy and improved health conditions. In this situation, the prevention and care of chronic diseases is dramatically challenging the quality, efficiency and sustainability of health care systems worldwide.

Although we know that certain life styles tend to increase the people's likelihood to have different chronic diseases, we know less about the role of the quality of social life especially in older adults, i.e., social networks and social capital. Actually, many studies examined socioeconomic status and health as consequences of education, occupation and income, i.e., macro social factors. A few studies have analysed social networks and capital, i.e., the way people are connected with other people and the kind of social resources they can access through social connections often beyond their family, which are difficult, sometimes impossible to get otherwise, e.g., information, advises, time, empathy, help and social support. This is especially true for older aged persons, who could spent most of their time inactive and with little social support. For instance, persons with weak social networks, less connected to friends and acquaintances beyond their family may have little knowledge about healthy behaviours, worse self-management of chronic diseases, and lower use of preventive services. Easy access to rich social services at the neighbourhood level, e.g., non-profit associations, sports clubs, artistic communities can determine whether an old person can be exposed to important cognitive stimuli and opportunities of knowledge exchange that can have positive implications on preventing cognitive impairment, unhealthy behaviour and depression.

In order to look at the interplay of health and social life, we evaluated a randomized sample of the older population of Brescia, Italy, in three city districts was (N=200, age≥65 years). Data were collected from April to August 2014 through a comprehensive geriatric assessment, information on socio-demographic variables, including family, friendship and acquaintance contacts. This allowed us to measure certain social network properties, i.e., degree, efficiency and variety. By accessing the list of all non-profit, voluntary associations in the three districts including in the sample, we built an indicator of the quality of the associational life at neighborhood level.

Results showed, first, that network effects were different depending on the person's age. While family is more important for older persons, certain features of social networks were more important in less older persons. In particular, we found a significant positive correlation between the presence of higher educated contacts and higher heterogeneity of contacts on reducing cognitive impairment

and preventing certain diseases. Higher self-concern, better access to medical care and adherence to medications could explain the positive association between the higher degree of social networks and the lower likelihood of having a stroke. We also found that being married and having higher social capital at the neighborhood level, higher social network degree, and less heterogeneity of social networks were associated with a lower number of chronic diseases. We also found a positive effect of the quality of the association life on cognitive impairment, as people living in districts having a more vital associational life performed better in cognitive tests.

Although limited to a cross-sectional analysis and including a small sample size, our results help to cast new light on the complexity of health policies, which should include attention to the quality of social life, and suggest the benefit of integrating different disciplines, e.g., geriatrics, biology, neurology and social sciences, in order to look at prevention, care and disease from a unified perspective.

Prof. Flaminio Squazzoni is associate professor of Economic Sociology at the Department of Economics and Management, University of Brescia. He leads the GECS-Research Group on Experimental and Computational Sociology (www.eco.unibs.it/gecs). He is President of the European Social Simulation Association and editor of JASSS-Journal of Artificial Societies and Social Simulation. He published in Social Networks, PLoS ONE, Journal of Informetrics, Research Policy, JASSS, Social Science Computer Review, Computational and Mathematical Organization Theory, and Complexity, among others. He is author of "Agent-based computational sociology" (Wiley, 2012).

Prof. Alessandra Marengoni is associate professor of Internal Medicine at the Department of Clinical and Experimental Sciences, University of Brescia. She works in the Geriatric Unit of P. Richiedei Hospital, Gussago, Brescia. Her research is on multimorbidity and chronic diseases in the elderly. She got a PhD in Geriatric Epidemiology at the Department of Neurobiology, Care Sciences and Society at the Karolinska Institutet, Stockholm. He published articles in BMJ, PLoS ONE, Journal of the American Geriatrics Society, American Journal of Public Health, Rejuvenation Research, and Ageing Research Reviews, among others.

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Active Design: a planning approach to "enabling" spaces

Alberto Arenghi
Department of Civil Engineering, Architecture, Land, Environment and Mathematics, University of Brescia – alberto.arenghi@unibs.it

With regard to the theme of the Workshop it is believed that the sense of belonging to a community implies participation, or rather that 'being there' to bring their experience.

According to the International Classification of Functioning, participation is one of the main indicators of health that WHO has defined to be "created and lived by people within the settings of their everyday life; where they learn, work, play and love" (The Ottawa Charter, 1986). In this perspective the multiple interaction between people, health and environment is central. A focus entirely centred on the concept of disease, it is replaced by a vision of society in which the result of a well-made intervention is measured in terms of participation.

The real problem is not the health status or its cause, but how it can be placed in a context unable to receive it, which isolates the suffering person considering him as a neglect and unwanted subject, belonging to a minority group whose rights are not considered as a primary asset. Good health could become illness if placed in an unsuitable environment; on the opposite, a well designed environment makes a biological suffering condition acceptable if not livable.

It is therefore crucial that design activity is able to synthesize the multiple interaction above mentioned. Active Design offers a reading and a conception of the project that contribute to encourage, stimulate and maximize the people capabilities through an 'enabling' and 'training' environment. The focus must move from 'cure' to 'take care' since our society is characterized by ageing and chronic diseases that people must face in environments which mitigate their negative consequences.

Alberto Arenghi

Civil Engineer, Associate Professor in Building Technology at the Department of Civil, Architectural, Environmental Engineering and Mathematics of the University of Brescia. Director of the Interdipartimental Laboratory BrAL *brixia accessibility lab. Accessibility to Cultural Heritage & Wellbeing*.
The main research activities concern the topics of accessible design and the study of the thermal behavior of buildings. With regard to the first topic, a particular attention has been devoted to the following issues: - The elimination of architectural barriers in ancient buildings and archaeological sites; - Applicability and interpretation of regulation for the removal of architectural barriers according to Universal Design and to the International Classification of Functioning (ICF); - Study of devices to increase the autonomy of people with disabilities.

Smart Ageing

Luigi Mundula
Department of Economics and Management, University of Cagliari – luigimundula@unica.it

Form a concept related on the energy saving and efficiency use issues, the smart city notion has been developed to include different aspects of urban life but with a changeless focus on the endowment of information and communication technologies as point of reference. This technocentric view is based on the fact that the political target is to improve the economic growth and all the scholars are agree that the latter depend on the innovation level which again is linked to the ICT endowment and use. From this point of view the contribution that smart cities perspective can give to the aging issue has been explored mainly in terms of improving the welfare efficiency, i.e. to use technological solutions to better prevent or manage the health problems of the elderly people. In opposition to this narrow approach it's possible define smart a city not because is technological advanced but because is able to use in an efficient way all the available resources to answer quickly and efficiently to endogenous stresses and to exogenous shocks that the urban population faces daily. In that vision the elderly people are not only a passive object to manage, but a active resource able to contribute to the urban development. A such approach is not only a etic duty but even a economic need, as the demographic old-age dependency ratio is projected to increase from the actual 27.8% to 50.1% in the EU by 2060 (EU Commission, The 2015 Ageing Report). Starting from this background the paper aims to explore conditions and possible ways to valorise the elderly people, meant as knowledge and identity repository, in order to transform them from a cost into a source of revenue for the society and so generating an improvement of social wellbeing.

Luigi Mundula

Laureato in Ingegneria presso l'Università di Cagliari (1996), Corso di perfezionamento in "Urbanistica, Ambiente e Territorio" presso l'Università degli studi di Cagliari, Master in Economia e Istituzioni (2001) presso l'Università di Roma "Tor Vergata", Dottore di Ricerca in Tecnica Urbanistica presso la Sapienza Università di Roma (2002), borsista post-dottorato presso il centro RCOST (Research Center of Software Technologies) dell'Università del Sannio (2002-2004) e presso l'Università di Roma "Tor Vergata" (2005-2006), coordinatore dell'Osservatorio Smart Cities -Società Geografia e Comune di Roma (2012-2014), attualmente è idoneo al concorso nazionale per Professore Associato di Geografia Economica (MGGR-02), Professore aggregato di Politica Economica (SECS-P02) presso l'Università degli studi di Cagliari (dal 2007) e Research Fellow presso la Fondazione Economia Tor Vergata (dal 2012).
L'attività di ricerca si inserisce nell'alveo degli studi di politica e geografia economica con particolare riferimento alle politiche di sviluppo economico-territoriale ed al ruolo dell'innovazione e dell'ICT. Tale ambito di ricerca è stato esplorato partecipando a diversi gruppi di ricerca nazionali e internazionali, sviluppando proposte progettuali in ambito nazionale ed europeo, nonché attraverso

un'attività di consulenza che ha permesso di testarne le ipotesi in casi concreti. I risultati sono stati presentati in diversi convegni nonché pubblicati in ambito sia nazionale che internazionale.

Active Ageing: New Attitudes And Approaches

Introduction

I have never been confortable with the denomination "older people". Who are they, who are we talking about? Are they Italian researchers who are considered to be older workers already at the age of thirty-five, are they frail older people in institutional care, are they older people belonging to the dynamic time between work, retirement and old age (once called the third age) , are they simply those who are above the average age of the population in a country (French Official Journal)?

In what way do the existing legal mechanisms and policies support, limit or hinder the contributory role of older people, of different groups of older people?

Finally as word of introduction, a question: "Are we afraid of ageing society? Are we really afraid of lower fertility and longevity in European countries, or are we afraid to admit that numerous social changes have brought also a new cultural organisation and role of ages and policies are to be amended or created accordingly". These are the questions I would like to ask you and these are, and many others, the questions I am asking myself. I hope we might answer at least some of them, now and later on in a debate we intend to open.

European identity and (older) people's active citizenship

This event is about European identity. Are we aware of our European identity? Particularly we, older people, who have been coining our identities, personal and collective identities, in different social, political and cultural contexts?

Knowing a little bit more about the European Union, its principles, history, current structural developments and mission, is as important as understanding the identity and the aims of our own country. The European Union and our country are closely related and we are European citizens as much as we are citizens of our own country. Within this framework , it is barely conceivable to think that European institutions are of no concern to European citizens, because they simply are! More than 70% of our national legislation comes from Europe, whether it concerns maximum working hours, the food we eat, the air we breathe or the age when we can retire. And do we really know who decides about all these issues? It is not the anonymous bureaucrats in Brussels, but increasingly it is the European Parliament that makes decisions, the men and women whom we elect. Together with our ministers, heads of state or government they take decisions affecting our everyday life, whether we are young or old, producer or consumer, or living in the North, South, East or West of the Community . Often we complain that Europe is distant from its citizens - but is it?

How well do we know EU

Although based on the principles of the French Revolution – liberty, equality, fraternity – the European Union is not a revolutionary enterprise, but it is an intellectual enterprise as much as it is a practical reality

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Over decades EU has become a framework for numerous enriching cultural, social, economic and other transactions among its member states. It established a common currency and it has provided for common security. Nevertheless, it has also failed several times and in several ways. Thus, Jacques Delors, Marcel Gauchet, Cohn Bendit and others are convinced that Europe has failed in imposing itself as a political force and it has failed in imposing itself in the processes of globalisation. Moreover, member states do not truly understand that "union is a force" and that union means community, giving, as well as ensuring receiving.

Nevertheless, in times of economic, financial, political and social crisis, the EU is believed to have a new chance, that is, the chance to tackle, democratically, issues of common and global interest, such as environmental issues, reversing the global trend of the market economy (Habermas, 2009, p.105) and demographic changes. (including ageing population, migrations, ageing workforce). These issues cannot be tackled in isolation, but on the contrary, they should become subject to large-scale public debate and real civil dialogue (Jacques Delors, idem).

Nowadays most European institutions and advisory bodies (European Commission, European Parliament, European Economic and Social Council) act accordingly. "The development of a European wide political public sphere - that is of a communicative network extending beyond the national borders and specialising in the relevant questions - is of central importance to the emergence of the European identity, says Habermas (2009, p.87). It is time for Europe and its institutions to become an agora , a truly deliberative space, including the representatives of all its citizens. In this spirit, I believe, we have gathered here in Brescia.

We thought it would be interesting to find out to what extent the relationship between European union and its older citizens has become a reality has been consolidated. To what extent older citizens identify with EU, to what extent they are aware of their European identity.

A research on the relationship between Europe and older citizens conducted by Slovenian Third Age University and its French partner organisation Old up from Paris, has yielded the following results:

- There were more than 500 respondents in each country.
- The majority of the respondents report that Europe has changed their everyday life; political changes, (50,7 %), economic changes, (65,4 %), social changes (46,4 %) and cultural changes (70,9)
- The majority of the respondents report that educational systems should be unique (51,5 %) and cultures should be mixed up (72,3 %).
- The majority of the respondents are of opinion that their co-citizens have no opinion of European citizenship (49,6 %).
- The minority of the respondents report that they know associations related to Europe (36,3 %) et only some of them are their members (11,5 %).
- Media and cultural exchanges would be the best vehicles consolidating the concept of European citizenship. Following are associations, forums, seminars, meetings and politicians.
- The majority said they take part in European elections (78,3 %).

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European identity and (older) people's active citizenship

Since its establishment, the geographical shape of European Union has been changing. Its borders are now open, an open public space has been created. These developments influenced the existence of European society, have shaped a new political community of nations, and the emerging public space.

Individual rights are today secured on both, the European and global levels, and not only within nation states. Typically, social rights will be secured by the nation state, the rights in relation to the internal market will be guaranteed by the European Union and the UN will guarantee human rights. As a consequence of globalisation the idea of active citizenship needs to be developed on three levels: the national, European and global level.

Nevertheless, European identity is still an abstract concept, loosely formulated and loosely rooted in the social tissues, as indeed is the European active citizenship.

Are you sure you know what active citizenship is?

The idea of active citizenship is not new but can be traced back to ancient Greece. Greek citizenship was primarily built on the obligations, that each citizen had to the city (polis) government. To be an active citizen- one who took part in political life. was considered to be a moral duty. One was morally obliged to take an active part in common polis matters, if one wanted to be respected as a citizen and a human being.

In the 1700s there was a redrafting of the citizenship concept. Moral values like fraternity, freedom equality became the basis of active citizenship.

In the 19th c. the concept of "legal state", "state of law", "state of justice", "state of rights", or "state based on justice and integrity" was formulated and citizens' rights were secured within national states.

The citizens of Europe should ideally view themselves not only as British, German, and Italian, etc. but also as European citizens and indeed as citizens of the world to which they are connected with rights and obligations and active citizenship.

Demographic changes and the ageing society

The ageing society is one of the major current demographic changes. The other changes are shrinking populations, the ageing workforce and migrations.

When we think about ageing, we think about it principally as individual ageing, not as demographic ageing. Demographic ageing is a rather new phenomenon which first appeared in the second half of the 20th century. Despite the progress achieved in all areas, human life is not any longer than in previous times, however the number of people over the age of 65 is increasing considerably and deaths are outnumbering births. Ever more people reach an advanced old age and at the same time the rate of fertility is reducing in some European regions due to a number of reasons, migrations being one of them.

Population is ageing and our societies are ageing. We live in an ageing society. Of course, on one hand this is a threat, but the percentage of older people in a society is a civilisation achievement (ie.in Afghanistan there are only 3.5 % of people 65+ while in EU this is going to be a quarter of population).

But any change requires adaptation. This brings about the need to promote a cultural change in attitudes towards older people and old age, a change in the position of older people in society and the need to modify policies that determine the relationships between generations and that are supposed to meet the needs of different generations.

I have a tendency to believe that enhancing intergenerational solidarity (time, money, knowledge, culture, work) and cooperation is crucial in order to react constructively to today's rapidly evolving social and demographic context.

Changes in the age structure of our populations will have a significant impact on the dynamics among and also within generations, and intergenerational solidarity and cooperation will need to be reinvented and sustained by appropriate policies. Expectations towards all generations should be high and ambitious and older people are no exception here.

Major older people's issues

There are many issues associated with older people:

-working longer under better conditions,
-preparing for volunteering whilst still in paid employment,
-working as a volunteer on an individual basis or in an organised way within public institutions and other organisations during retirement
-having a different position within families,
-taking part in lifelong learning and education,
-participating in local communities,
.participating in taking decisions in municipality matters such as education, health, culture,
-enjoying transport, social protection,
-alleviating poverty, etc.

All of these older people's specific issues -plus others-are important. Not only pension schemes, and pension reforms. Nevertheless, pension reforms have been at the top of discussions in all international institutions (EU Commission, OECD, European Parliament etc.). But as I view it social fairness, social justice should be at the top of the debates. More social fairness is needed not only on the distributive, but also on the cultural and symbolic level.

In order to identify the issues of older people, one must first identify resources in society that are available to the generations in the middle, and secondly, a number of questions need to be asked :

(a)   Do older people have equal access to accommodation, work, culture, health, education, transport, decision-making process?
(b)   Do they have the right to go on working after their retirement without being penalized?
(c)   Do older people have equal access to the media and do they appear in the Media, in public space?
(d)   Are there discounts offered to older people solely on the basis of their age, pushing them in the end to appreciate being supported and slowly abandoning their right to play an equal role in public matters?
(e)   The direction of local, national and EU policies regarding older people is often one that promotes weakness and dependency and this should be changed! EU treaties and common policies as well as numerous documents address older people's issues.

Policies and legal mechanisms protecting older people's rights

The year 2015 should be a landmark in social development: the UN Summit will adopt the post-2015 agenda, the European Social Charter will be 50 years old, and the EU will be devoting the entire year to development. And Slovenia together with other countries is acting towards an International Convention on The rights of Older Persons.

All this is happening against the backdrop of a rapidly changing global social structure. The global population is ageing, and increased life expectancy imposes a heavy burden on traditional public finances and sustainable health systems. At the same time, prolonged life expectancy and advances in technology enable older people to live fuller and more integrated lives. Nevertheless, the inequality gap between the rich and the poor remains a significant impediment to social progress.

Older people seem to face multiple discrimination based on gender, age and ethnicity. Older people might be discriminated against within their own, very diverse, social group, or by other groups. Inequality and 'ageism' thus hinder progress in bridging the generational gap, in reforming the social contract, and in creating a model for long-term demographic stability and a supportive environment. There is a clear need to strengthen inter-generational links and foster human rights awareness and respect for the human rights of people of any age, potentially enabling greater solidarity between generations and thus an inclusive society.

The needs of older people are specific. Despite the fact that the human rights of older persons are in principle addressed in all human rights instruments, there is no coherent, holistic instrument that specifically addresses the rights of the elderly. One approach to addressing this issue that has been gaining momentum is the adoption of an international convention on the rights of older persons.

Older citizens and who represents them at the European level?

a/ The institutional level

The issues of older citizens are being addressed through the endeavours of various European Institutions, mainly by the European Commission and the European Parliament.

The European Commission (EC) The EC seeks public opinion on the issues through promoting public debate, peer reviews, consultations, thematic conferences etc., and prepares proposals in the field of social policy that concern older citizens (employment, social security, volunteering etc.).

Intergroup on Ageing This is a group within the European Parliament and unites MPs from different committees and sectors who are willing to discuss this particular issue. The Intergroup issues statements directed at the European Council and other EU institutions. The Intergroup is convinced that social protection and employment policies must be linked, that the EU has a key role to play in bringing about reform of pension systems in order to ensure decent pensions for all, giving people a fair share of society's economic prosperity and not just preventing outright poverty. Countries need to provide secure, universal and fully adequate first pillar pensions . It is also necessary to adopt reforms to allow and encourage older people to keep working.

b/The NGO level

AGE (www.age-platform.org) , the European Older People's Platform, is a European network of around 150 organisations working on behalf of people aged 50+, which directly represent over 28 million older people in Europe. AGE aims to voice and promote the interests of the 150 million people aged 50+ in the European Union and to raise awareness of the issues that concern them most. AGE also aims to give a voice to older and retired people in EU policy debates through the active

participation of their representative organisations at EU, national, regional and local levels, so as to input into EU policy development. AGE's work focuses on a wide range of policy areas that impact on older and retired people. These include issues of anti-discrimination, employment of older workers and active ageing, social protection, pension reforms, social inclusion, health, research, accessibility of public transport and of the built environment, lifelong learning and ICT.

There are other important NGO's at this level, some of which specialise in the issues of older people, and some of them that deal with relevant issues as a part of their particular field of activity. Many also play an important international role in the field of research. Below is a selection of some of the more important and relevant NGOs:

• Care (Christian Action Research & Education for Europe): http://www.careforeurope.org/
• CEV (European Volunteer Centre): http://www.cev.be/
• COFACE (Conf.d.ration des Organisations Familiales de l'Union Europ.enne):
http://www.coface-eu.org/
• CCRE (Council of European Municipalities and Regions): http://www.ccre.org/
• EUROCADRES (Council of European Professional and Managerial Staff):
http://www.eurocadres.org/
• Eurocarers (European Association Working for Carers): http://www.eurocarers.org/
• Euro Cities : http://www.eurocities.eu/main.php
• Euro Health Net : http://www.eurohealthnet.eu/
• European Association for Population Studies : http://www.eaps.nl/
• European Federation for Retirement Provision : http://www.efrp.org/
• European Association of Service Providers for Persons with Disabilities :
http://www.easpd.eu/
• EURAG (European Federation of Older Persons): http://www.easpd.eu/
• European University : http://www.euruni.edu/Scripts/Index.aspx?idz=2
• FAFCE (F.deration der Katholischen Familienverbande in Europa):
http://www.family-eu.org/cms/index.php
• IPSE (Institut de la Protection Sociale Europ.enne) :
http://www.idies.org/index.php?post/Linstitut-de-la-protection-sociale-europeenne-IPSE
• Youth Forum Jeunesse : http://www.youthforum.org/

Since 2000 social policy has occupied a much more prominent place in the overall agenda of the EU. After the adoption of the Lisbon Strategy by heads of state or government , a new goal was formulated which stated that economic and social policies should go hand in hand. As a result an ambitious social agenda was formulated, which sets out the social priorities - the Open Method of Coordination - which promotes stronger co-operation and co-ordination between member states on different social issues. This method applies to the areas of employment, social protection (pensions), social inclusion and education.

Conclusion

The ageing society simply requires many changes of the roles of older people and of the roles of other generations, including many changes in their mutual relationships. Above all, it requires active participation of all citizens within the member states of the European Union.

The policy discourse of dependence, old age stereotypes, prejudices and discrimination should be replaced by policies focusing on the contributory role of older people, older people as agents of change and development.

Intergenerational co-operation should be seen as a condition sine qua non for active ageing.

Older citizens should be more present in the shaping of European policies in line with Jaques Delors' argument that in the future, "the European dynamics will be much more dependent on the contribution of the European (older) citizens than on the European institutions". (Jacques Delors, idem).

For this purpose it is most important that European older citizens increase their knowledge about the European Union, its institutions and its achievements.

Moreover, better policies, experience and knowledge is/will be the basis of older people's European identity awareness.

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dusana.findeisen@guest.arnes.si