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EAHSA STRATEGY SEMINAR - 2016



Elderly care in the heart of EU policy

Brussels, 27 May 2016 - At EAHSA's strategy seminar, it became clear that elderly care is in the heart of the policies of all EU institutions. The Board and members of EAHSA welcomed representatives of EU institutions and stakeholder groupings to discuss EU elderly care issues and opportunities to co-operate. Krzysztof Balon, Vice-President of the EESC social Section, Ettore Marchetti and Gosia Kosłowska of DG EMPL gave an insight in the current work of their respective institutions. Anne-Sophie Parent (AGE Platform), Aleksandra Kaydzhyska (AEIP), Pascal Garel (HOPE), Nicole Denjoy (COCIR) and Menno Aarnout (AIM) presented their associations and the activities in the field of long-term care and care for older people.

The presentations of the various speakers gave food for thought. "It is clear that the EU is taking plenty of initiatives and is working on the care for older people. We as EAHSA can bring in our expertise and visions", concluded Aad Koster, EAHSA President.

"It is clear that the EU is working on the care for older people, and that we as EAHSA can bring in our expertise and visions."

European Pillar of Social Rights

On 8 March 2016, the European Commission put forward a first, preliminary outline of what should become the European Pillar of Social Rights (EPSR). The Pillar will identify a number of essential principles common to euro area Member States, focusing on their needs and challenges in the field of employment and social policies. In his presentation, Ettore Marchetti (DG EMPL, Active Ageing) explains the relevance for EAHSA and its members.

Throughout 2016, the Commission will engage in a debate with EU authorities, social partners, civil society and citizens on the content and role of the Pillar to move towards a deeper and fairer Economic and Monetary Union. The outcome of this debate should feed into a final text of the European Pillar of Social Rights.

EPSR should strengthen the social dimension of the EU and address Europe's social challenges and foster job creation and inclusive growth. It will outline a number of essential principles to support well-functioning and fair labour markets and social protection systems (20 policy domains under three main thematic headings). It should function as a reference framework to screen employment and social performance and drive reforms at national level. LTC is mentioned as one of domain under adequate and sustainable social protection.

The Commission will involve Member States' authorities, social partners and citizens in shaping the European Pillar of Social Rights through a public consultation, closing at the end of this year. Marchetti invites EAHSA to respond to this consultation and to bring in its vision and suggestions.

Long Term Care in the European Semester 2016

Implementation of the EU's economic governance is organised annually in a cycle, known as the European Semester, as part of which the European Commission analyses the fiscal and structural reform policies of every Member State, provides recommendations, and monitors their implementation and the Member States implement the commonly agreed policies. Recommendations are laid down in so-called Country Reports (CRs). Gosia Koslowska (FG EMPL, Social Protection Systems) introduced the European semester to the participants of the Strategy seminar.

In the 2016 report, the European Commission writes that "regarding health care and long-term care systems, reforms need to continue to enhance their cost-effectiveness and to ensure adequate access. The demographic challenge affects not only pensions but also health care and long-term care related expenditure."

LTC challenges were mentioned in 19 CRs, as Aleksandra Kaydzhivska (AEIP) explained. References were to inadequate provision and coverage (11), to the link with insufficient female labour participation (5), and to sustainability issues (15). Two CSRs mentioned LTC challenges in Spain and in Slovenia.

EAHSA presents ECREAS-initiative to EU stakeholders

Freek Lapré, EAHSA Board member and initiator of the EU research & training centre in ageing services (ECEAS) took the opportunity to present the EAHSA initiative to the present EU stakeholders.



As a key network for the providers for the ageing sector EAHSA has identified a growing need in the exchange of best practices among members and partners and to identify relevant information from research in the ageing sector.



ECEAS, a virtual platform, will develop a format to review and register best practices. Best practices criteria to register at ECREAS are originality and creativity of the programme and/or the service, proven benefits to the residents, clients and staff, the potential for programmes or services to be replicated.

Covenant on Demographic Change

The Covenant on Demographic Change was launched in December last year at the Committee of the Regions (Brussels), with the support of the European Commission and the AFE-INNOVNET Thematic Network. The Covenant will engage local and regional authorities, and other relevant stakeholders, committed to develop environments that support active and healthy ageing and contribute to increase the healthy life expectancy, enhance independent living and well-being of older persons and create a society for all ages.

Both Anne-Sophie Parent (AGE Platform) and Ettore Marchetti (DG EMPL, Active Ageing) underlined the importance of the Covenant for EAHSA and its members. The Covenant will closely cooperate and build on existing initiatives such as the WHO Global Network on Age-Friendly Cities and Communities, the WHO-Europe Healthy City Network, the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing, in the spirit of the 2013 Dublin Declaration on Age-Friendly Cities and Communities in Europe. EAHSA has underwritten the Covenant and fully supports its goals.

'New start' initiative on work-life balance

This new initiative would replace the 2008 European Commission's proposal to revise the Maternity Leave Directive, as announced in the Commission Work Programme 2015.

The main reason behind the initiative is to address the low participation of women in the labour market by modernising and adapting the current EU legal and policy framework to today's labour market to allow for parents with children or those with dependent relatives to better balance caring and professional responsibilities. Parents and workers with caring responsibilities will be positively affected by this initiative.

After consultations and closer study, the European Commission will come up with initiatives to improve the current legislative framework to:

- ensure adequate leave arrangements for both women and men
- promote affordable and quality care services, flexible work arrangements and steps to remove the disincentives to work in tax and benefit systems so that work pays.

Find here relevant documents and info:

- [Covenant on Demographic Change](#)
- [Work-life balance](#)
- [Social Investment Package](#)
- [European Pillar of Social Rights](#)
- [EIP on Active and Healthy Ageing](#)
- [European Semester](#)



Social Investment Package

The European Commission has called on Member States to prioritise social investment and to modernise their welfare states. This means better performing active inclusion strategies and a more efficient and more effective use of social budgets, says Gosia Kosłowska (DG EMPL, Social Protection Systems).

The call features in a Communication on Social Investment for Growth and Cohesion adopted by the Commission, which also gives guidance to Member States on how best to use EU financial support, notably from the European Social Fund, to implement the outlined objectives. The Commission will closely monitor the performance of individual Member States' social protection systems through the European Semester and formulate, where necessary, country specific recommendations. The Package includes seven papers and EC Staff working documents: Demographic and Social Trends, Active Inclusion, Social Services of General Interest, Long Term Care, Homelessness, Investing in Health and the European Social Fund.

Krzysztof Balon

EESC Vice-President of the Section Employment, Social Affairs and Citizenship



The EESC called already in 2008 on the European Council and the Commission to tackle the problems of an ageing population as a matter of urgency, in order to ensure that all older people receive the support and quality of care they need. The EESC stresses following aspects:

- universal access to high-quality care must be guaranteed for people with particular problems or low incomes and sustainable financing systems must be developed which do not leave individuals to face risk alone;
- the development of tailored care services geared to needs must also be ensured in regions which are currently disadvantaged in this respect existing family and neighbourhood networks;
- NGOs, social economy initiatives and cooperative structures should be involved to a greater extent in care work;
- it should be made easier to reconcile family and career through support and respite measures for working family carers (e.g. day-care facilities for older people in large companies, respite services, mobile care) car
- healthy competition between different suppliers of e services should give care recipients more freedom of choice and help develop the supply of services in accordance with defined quality standards;
- the human resources must be provided for care services, in particular by providing high-quality training and improved working conditions for care workers and by upgrading the caring professions;
- the recognition of qualifications throughout the EU should be facilitated;
- strategies and services must be developed to address the problems of dementia and depression in older people, which are among the main challenges facing families and the care system;
- quality standards should be developed for all areas of care of older people.

About the EESC

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) is a consultative body of the European Union. The EESC contributes to strengthening the democratic legitimacy and effectiveness of the European Union by enabling civil society organisations from the Member States to express their views at European level.

The European Economic and Social Committee (EESC) is a consultative body that gives representatives of Europe's socio-occupational interest groups and others, a formal platform to express their points of views on EU issues. Its opinions are forwarded to the Council, the European Commission and the European Parliament. It thus has a key role to play in the Union's decision-making process.

For EAHSA following EESC policy initiatives are of relevance:

- Guaranteeing universal access to long-term care and the financial sustainability of long-term care systems for older people
- The professionalisation of domestic work
- Impact of social investment
- De-institutionalisation
- Live-in carers

In the past, EAHSA has been in close contact with the EESC and participated in several public hearings, notably for the opinions on De-institutionalisation (February 2015) and Live-in carers (April 2016).

EAHSA amid EU elderly care stakeholders

The EAHSA Strategy seminar proved to be an excellent opportunity to meet EU stakeholder platforms that are active in the field of elderly care and to discuss with them the opportunities to promote the issues of ageing and care for older people on the EU policy agenda.

Following the discussions after the presentations of Menno Aarnout (AIM), Pascal Garel (HOPE), Anne-Sophie Parent (AGE Platform), Aleksandra Kaydzhyska (AEIP) and Nicole Denjoy (COCIR), there is great appetite to continue the dialogue and to foster working relationships between all representative organisations. “EAHSA is happy to partner with you all and to develop joint projects that help to ensure quality care for older people”, said Aad Koster.

AIM, the International Association of Mutual Benefit Societies is the umbrella organisation of health mutuals and health insurance funds in Europe and in the world. Through its 62 members from 27 countries, AIM provides health coverage to 230 million people in the world and 160 million in Europe through compulsory and/or complementary health insurance and managing health and social facilities. AIM was represented by Menno Aarnout, Executive director.



HOPE, the European Hospital and Healthcare Federation, is a European non-profit organisation, created in 1966 representing national public and private hospital associations and hospital owners. With 35 organisations from the 28 Member States of the European Union, Switzerland and the Republic of Serbia. HOPE covers almost 80% of hospital and social care activity. HOPE's Chief executive officer Pascal Garel was present at the EAHSA seminar to present the work of his association.

AGE Platform is a European network of more than 150 organisations of and for people aged 50+ representing directly over 40 million older people in Europe. It focuses on a wide range of policy areas that impact on older and retired people, among which active ageing, social protection, pension reforms, social inclusion, research, accessibility of public transport and of the build environment. AGE Platform was represented by its Secretary-general, Anne-Sophie Parent.



COCIR is the European Trade Association representing the medical imaging, radiotherapy, health ICT and electro-medical industries. Founded in 1959, COCIR is a non-profit association headquartered in Brussels (Belgium) with a China Desk based in Beijing since 2007. COCIR is unique as it brings together the healthcare, IT and telecommunications industries. COCIR was represented by its Secretary-general, Nicole Denjoy.

The **European Association of Paritarian Institutions (AEIP)**, founded in 1996, is a Brussels-based advocacy organisation representing the Social Protection Institutions established and managed by employers and trade unions on a jointly basis within the framework of the collective agreements. All AEIP members are non-for-profit and cover a number of social protection benefits. AEIP was represented by Aleksandra Kaydzhyska, policy advisor.



The **European Association of Homes and Services for the Ageing (EAHSA)** is the European integral platform of the providers of housing, services and care for the ageing sector. The association was represented by Aad Koster (President), Serge De Kerf, Jiri Horecky, Didier Sapy and Freck Lapré (all Boardmembers), Marcel Smeets (Bourd counsel) and several representatives of member-organisation. The EAHSA Strategy seminar was kindly hosted by EAHSA member Sodexo.