
PRESS RELEASE

European policy for inclusive ageing societies

Ageing in Europe: A new book presents evidence on how to reinforce social and economic inclusion in spite of population ageing

Brussels, 29 October 2015

Population ageing is a secular challenge which will strain the fabric of Europe's societies.

- Ever more retirees will demand pensions that will have to be financed through taxes and pension contributions from ever fewer younger workers. Will this create tensions between generations?
- Health is improving but at high costs. Are our societies willing to bear these costs?
- Older workers have accumulated a lot of experience. Will this, however, offset the loss of innovative energy by the young?
- The oldest old are the fastest growing population segment. Will there be sufficient capacity for long-term care when it will be needed? Will informal caregivers (usually daughters) feel lonelier, more socially excluded and more depressive?
- Will the digital divide create increasing tensions between older workers with good computer skills who will be happier – and retire later – and those unskilled who are left behind?

These are some of the key questions pondered by researchers from all over Europe and Israel and contained in a new book on “Ageing in Europe – Supporting Policies for an Inclusive Society” which was presented on the 29th of October in Brussels.

Ruth Paserman, Deputy Head of the Cabinet of Marianne Thyssen, Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs, Skills and Labour Mobility, informed about the relevance of these questions and the associated research: “Population ageing presents us with huge challenges, but also opportunities. The knowledge generated by SHARE will help us deliver reforms aimed at extending working lives and making social protection systems sustainable in our ageing societies. Now we must get more countries to participate in SHARE to enhance its usefulness as a tool for mutual learning” stresses Ruth Paserman.

The presented research is based on the latest data of the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE). SHARE is supported by the European Commission's DG Research & Innovation and DG Employment, Social Affairs & Inclusion and collects detailed information on European individuals aged 50 or older. SHARE is a key evidence base for the European Union's policy efforts aimed at reinforcing social and economic inclusion in spite of population ageing.

“The notion that population ageing drives our societies into a war between generations may be popular in television shows but the facts are quite different. Intergenerational cohesion is still strong all over Europe”, says Axel Börsch-Supan, Director of the Max Planck Institute for Social Law and Social Policy and Coordinator of SHARE. “Hence, well-designed public policy based on solid evidence derived from suitable data has a very good chance to further advance people’s quality of life in spite of population ageing”.

The book is publicly available:

www.degruyter.com/view/product/462442

EDITOR’S NOTE

The findings presented in the book *Ageing in Europe – Supporting Policies for an Inclusive Society* are based on the fifth wave of data of the Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe (SHARE), which collects detailed information on European individuals aged 50 or older and makes it available to researchers free of charge.

SHARE is a multidisciplinary and cross-national panel database of micro data on health, socio-economic status and social and family networks of approximately 110,000 individuals (more than 220,000 interviews) from 20 European countries plus Israel. In March 2011 it became the first European Research Infrastructure Consortium (ERIC). SHARE is centrally coordinated by Prof. Axel Börsch-Supan, Ph.D. at the Munich Center for the Economics and Aging (MEA), Max Planck Institute for Social Law and Social Policy. The SHARE enterprise allows researchers from across Europe and elsewhere to address key questions included in the European Commission’s new research program Horizon 2020. One example is Challenge No. 6 “*Europe in a changing world – inclusive, innovative and reflective societies*” which aims to gain a greater understanding of the societal changes – among them population ageing – in Europe and, through analysis, develop social, economic and political inclusion and positive inter-cultural dynamics in the EU and international partners.

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