

EURAG - INFORMATION

The European Federation of Older Persons

Bund der älteren Generation

Fédération Européenne des Personnes Agées

Federazione Europea delle Persone Anziane



The Social Platform starts in the EU—Autumn at full speed

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During the work group meeting of the Social Platform in Brussels on October 7, 2006, in which EURAG-EUROPE was represented by its President, Dr. Hönigsperger, the national reports on the implementation of the revised Lisbon Strategy and on the progress in further developing „social protection and integration“ were at the centre of the attention. Besides that, the preparation of the annual conference of the Social Platform in December 2006 with the theme “Social Values and Democracy: Renewing the Guiding Principles of the European Union” was the other main topic on the agenda.

Objectives of the revised Lisbon Strategy

Time-limit for progress reports of member states expired

The 25 EU member states were granted by the European Commission a time limit until 15th September 2006, to send their progress reports on the national implementation of the decisions taken during the European Council's Spring Conference 2005.

Thus, the European Governments had to reveal their efforts in implementing an active labour market policy in order to create new jobs and to boost employment.

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Social protection and social integration

Country reports on national policies in the final stage

The member state reports on progress in further developing social protection and on national measures for the social inclusion of risk groups are expected to be sent to the European Commission by 15th October 2006.

Again, all 25 governments within the EU governments are obliged to actively involve NGOs in the development of national strategies, concrete programmes and measures concerning this topic. Unfortunately, this has not satisfactorily been done in several countries.

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Doing so, governments were especially asked to prevent societal risk groups from exclusion – in particular elderly workers and older women, which are at the highest risk of poverty.

PLEASE NOTE!!!! Every single government within the European Union is obliged to include its respective national NGOs in the development of implementation strategies and the creation of the progress report based on the revised Lisbon Strategy.

If this has not been the case in your country, we recommend you to insist on your right to the *Open Method of Coordination (OMC)* in the future. The EURAG- Office of the President has access to all progress reports written in the respective mother tongue from now on.

We are ready to send copies of the progress reports to each EURAG member on request.

(Please call 0043 1 512 11 00 or fax us 0043 1 512 11 00 / 30, or contact us via E-Mail office@eurag-president.eu)

Please check whether the progress report of your country refers to supportive measures – especially on professional training programs – for older workers. The recommendations of the Wim Kok Report in the context of the half time review of the Lisbon Strategy, at the Spring Council Sessions 2005, pointed toward this direction.

„EU–
Affairs“

Continuation of page 1, right column

Therefore it is up to the respective NGOs to actively insist on their right of participation and to claim an important voice in the future. We therefore recommend our member organisations, which were not invited to participate in drafting the government report 2006, to secure their participation at least for the reporting period 2007.

The Office of the President has got a list of the responsible coordinators and contact–person for each member states at its disposal, which will be sent to EURAG members on demand.

(Please call 0043 1 512 11 00 or fax us 0043 1 512 11 00 / 30, or contact us via E-Mail office@eurag-president.eu)

Unfortunately social topics, such as the fight against poverty and social exclusion, are expected to play a less important role in the reports to be published soon. Therefore the Social Platform and its members , and subsequently EURAG–EUROPE, should direct their efforts towards safeguarding the European Social Model.

**The Annual Conference of the Social Platform**

in December 2006 will lobby for an reorientation of the EU towards the fundamental values and principles, which so far were recognized as common fundament of social cohesion of the Member States and the basis of the European Social Model. Abandoning these values and principles in favour of economic interests is not acceptable . Consequently the conference will attach importance to the issues of a high level of social protection, equality between women and men, as well as a high standard of living and quality of life.

Gertraud Dayé ends her work for EURAG!

On July 11, 2006 Gertraud Dayé communicated to us her wish to end her work with EURAG in order to retire from active working life. Despite the endeavours of numerous persons from the EURAG family, she could not be convinced to continue volunteering as an „International Cooperation Officer“ of EURAG. In the last 30 years in which she worked in different functions for the



Gertraud Dayé (1946), Austria; Interpreter– study at the University of Graz. She worked from 1976 to 2004 for EURAG. In the last ten years she managed EURAG as its director. In 2002 she was elected chairman of the NGO Committee for Ageing at the UN in Vienna. In addition, she was member of the Task Force „Monitoring RIS“, a think-tank, supporting the implementation of the Madrid World Ageing Plan 2002 in the UNECE region. Ms. Dayé was also a member of the European Platform in Brussels and was committed in the fields of social policy, social services, anti-discrimination and fundamental rights. Until recently, she has been working for EURAG-EUROPE in an volunteer Position.

EURAG General Secre-

„ We wish to thank Gertraud Dayé for her long-lasting generous work for the EURAG Family“

tariat, Gertraud Dayé contributed to raise the image of EURAG among the European Commission in Brussels, the United Nations in New York as well as among the UNECE in Geneva. Through her networking with other international organizations from the field of Ageing, such as the IFA (International Federation on Ageing) and the AARP (American Association of

Retired People) valuable synergies for the international ageing agenda could be won. Even though Gertraud Dayé is no longer available for supporting the General Secretariat and for the representation of EURAG at the European Union, she will continue making her expertise available for the concerns of the older generation, in particular as the chairperson of the Vienna NGO Committee on Ageing.

Visit of the President to member organisations in the Czech Republic

Czech Pensioners' Federation in upraise

A lively discussion started, following the presentation of the President of EURAG on „The situation of the older generation in Europe“ at the annual meeting of the Pensioner's Federation of the Czech Republic, particularly since at the beginning of the next year a fundamental reform of the system of long-term care is to be introduced. In order to more effectively represent the interests of the seniors, the Czech Senior Council was founded. „By cross linking all the forces working for the interests of the older generation, more could be achieved“, concluded the president.

Report on the visit of Zivot 90, see page 4



Zivot 90: An exemplary project in the field of ageing

Dr. Hoenigsperger expressed her admiration for the services provided by Zivot 90 to older persons and was impressed by the commitment showed by the whole Zivot 90—Team showed under the direction of EURAG Vice—President Jan Lorman on the occasion of her visit to Prague in beginning of September 2006. The services offered by Zivot 90 cover mobile care and medical support, respite care, rehabilitation, operating a 24 hours warning system for seniors living alone, as well as an extensive education program. With these, the entire demand for services and assistance in the later period of life is covered by Zivot 90. Because of the manageable structures the necessary services can be made available spontaneously without bureaucratic impediments and without co-ordination activities involving other providers.

Hope for the General Secretariat in Graz ?

In spite of a long ongoing financial crisis of the General Secretariat in Graz a solution is within the range of vision.

Due to the fact that the financial support, the General Secretariat in Graz had initially applied for, was not granted by the City of Graz and the Governor of Styria, the working contracts of the EURAG-Team in Graz had to be terminated by the General Secretary. Thus, the General Secretariat in Graz has remained vacant in the last months.

Therefore the President and her team stepped in and accomplish interimly the most urgent tasks and activities – among others: organisation and preparatory work for the Board and General Council Meeting to be held in Vilnius, as well as editing and publishing the EURAG-Newsletter.

Furthermore, the representation of EURAG at international organisations and in international conferences are taken care by the President to the full extent.

Our General Secretary, Dr. Herfort– Wörndle, has announced the possibility to solve the financing crisis due to subsidies to be granted by the country of Styria. The President hopes that thereby a

basis for a sustainable funding of the General Secretariat will be created until the decision making bodies are meeting in Vilnius.

If this is not the case, the Board and the General Council will choose a new path in order to lead EURAG into a sustainable future. This includes the possibility of subsidies by the Austrian Federal Government as well as a relocation of our General Secretariat in a country of one of our member organisations.

More than ever, EURAG will be required as representation of interests of the older generation on an international level. The challenges of changing societies, for instance the demographic change or the consequences of globalisation, have to be identified, taken up and transferred into concrete programmes and actions. Therefore we need a strong and stable EURAG.

We need the support and collaboration of all our members! We count on each of you! Helpful suggestions are welcome:

E-mail: office@eurag-president.eu

More on the EURAG work program in our next edition!

INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF PERSONS WITH DISABILITIES

August 25, 2006 will become a historic date. On this day, negotiators reached agreement on the draft convention to protect the rights of disabled persons at headquarters of the UN in New York.



„August, the 25th will become an historic date“

Even though no one can judge accurately, which influence the UN–Convention will have on the daily life of people with disabilities, the convention is indeed remarkable in several aspects.

This human right convention is the first of the new millennium. With 5 years of negotiation it is among those conventions on which agreement was reached in shortest time in history and the one which has had the highest participation of Non Governmental Organisations (about 800). What's further remarkable is also the approval of an optional protocol, which allows petitioning by individuals. The ratification will take place afterwards via the parliaments of the individual member states.

The final drafting of the text was then entrusted to a committee and will be presumably adopted by the General Assembly in the context of its 61st session in autumn, which will take place from 21st September to December 2006.

The convention foresees a committee, which will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of the convention and is entitled to evaluate the complaints. The evaluation is however not a judgment in the legal sense and is

not legally binding either. The outcome of the evaluation however has got a political effect and can be compared with an admonition of the violating state by the international community.

Don MacKay, the chairman of the UN Committee on the Disability Convention expressed his gratitude to his colleagues from the disability community by saying, “I want to thank the colleagues from the disability community for starting off the process and staying with it for the time according to the motto ‘Nothing about us, nothing without us’”. Don MacKay turned to the future, “The convention will force states to develop a different thinking about disability issues”.

The contribution of NGOs to the successful completion of the project was further emphasised by the president of the European Disability Forum, Mr. Yannis Vardakastanis, in the FRAND meeting of the Social Platform, who warned the stakeholders at the same time, “We will remind them that we are here, if the implementation of the convention will not take place”.

Although the enthusiasm of the participants of the negotiation round is high, it can not be estimated at present, whether all member states will ratify this convention and what impact the convention will have on everyday's life.

The Finnish EU-Presidency: Presidency of a pragmatic approach ?

Finland's six-month Presidency in the Council of the European Union started on the 1st of July 2006. During the Presidency, Finland will chair over 3,000 meetings of the EU in Brussels and around 130 in Finland.

In the field of social policy the emphasise of the Finnish EU Presidency lies in finding answers to the challenges arising from globalisation and demographic change.

Finland will continue the debate on Europe's changing demography. The objective of the Finnish Presidency is based upon the Commission Communication, to identify the required measures in 2006-10 as part of the implementation of the Lisbon Strategy, and to look ahead to the future after 2010.

Part of the program of the Finnish Presidency will be to meet the challenges of globalisation by improving labour productivity, through changes on how work and working life are organised and by taking forward the debate on balancing flexibility and security in working life. The general principles for flexicurity should be approved just after Finland's Presidency comes to an end.

In formulating the principles, Finland will focus on improving the quality of working life as a way of increasing the employment rate and boosting productivity.

During Finland's Presidency, the Commission is to produce a Green Paper on the Future of Labour Law, dealing for e.g. with new forms of work and the balance between flexibility and security (Flexicurity). On the basis of the Communication, Finland will endeavour to formulate a Council position on the short-term challenges for labour law, to support the Commission's ongoing work.

Finland will also push ahead the implementation of the Gender Equality Pact adopted by the European Council Meeting in March 2006 and will raise the issue of gender-equality policy and

reconciling work and family life, particularly in relation to the role of men. Issues relating to legal immigration as a way of ensuring the availability of labour force in an ageing

Europe will be discussed as part of the demographic debate.

Finland would like to see a decision setting up an European Globalisation Fund to start operating from 1st January 2007, the date set by the European Council at its meeting in March 2006. The purpose of the Fund will be to help workers, who have lost their jobs as a result of globalisation, to find new employment .

You can find several events organised by the Finnish EU—Presidency in our list of events!



2007— European Year of Equal Opportunities for All

*„2007— A
chance for
all?“*

The European Commission has decided to proclaim 2007 the “European Year of Equal Opportunities for All”, five years after the European Union had adopted two very wide-ranging directives, namely the racial equality directives 2000/43 EC and the Employment Equality Directive 2000/78/EC which prohibit discrimination in the workplace and in other aspects of daily life.

The goal of this initiative is to provide an additional momentum for the anti-discrimination campaign and to promote “Equal Opportunities for All”, while conveying a positive message about diversity.



The European Year of Equality is a leading initiative of the EU in the context of a broad strategy seeking to support the fight against discrimination in the EU. The European Year of Equal Opportunities for All in 2007 has three key aims:

1. making European Union citizens aware of their right to non-discrimination and equal treatment
2. promoting equal opportunities for all – access to employment, education, at the workplace or in the healthcare sector
3. promoting the benefits of diversity for the European Union.

Further attention will be paid to multiple discrimination.

Source: http://ec.europa.eu/employment_social/equality2007/when_de.htm

Summer 2006

The European Commission invites formally Member States to present a national strategy for the Year, plus specific proposals for national awareness-raising campaigns

Summer/autumn 2006

The Member States start designing the National Strategy for the Year and pinpoint the activities to be organised in 2007

Autumn 2006

The national implementing bodies apply for Community funding: their applications outline the national strategy, the various activities they would like to be co-funded by the EU and the organisations in charge of organising these activities

Late 2006/
early 2007

The European Commission agrees together with each Member State the projects for the Year

Starting from January 2007

The Year gets underway on an European-wide basis and in all the participating countries

30/31 January 2007, Berlin

Conference for the launch of the European Year of Equal Opportunities for All under the auspices of the German Presidency

Self-sufficiency in old age:**Effective tools for increasing the Self-sufficiency and prolonged Independence of an Ageing Population**

A trend—setting conference is going to be held from November 27 to December 2, 2006 in Prague by our member, the EURAG Memory Training Centre. Ms. Dana Steinova, leading expert in the field of memory training in and outside Europe, widens the compensatory approach in order to prevent from cognitive impairment with the help of memory training. The objectives of this Seminar are mainly to direct the attention to the fact that the self-sufficiency is a prerequisite for an independent life in old age.

It is often not sufficiently recognized that e.g. the requirements to handle technical devices in household, to purchase goods or to do bank transactions via internet, places constantly new demands on peoples. The booking of journeys, train tickets and flights, exclude numerous older people, namely those, who have never learned how to work on a PC, to obtain special prices offered when booking electronically. In addition, the needs for senior-friendly equipments of households, especially of those, who are no longer completely mobile, become more and more complex. Older persons, who live alone, or who suffer from weak physical conditions, circulation problems or from temporary disorders, need a more in support to accomplish everyday's life. To cope with this environment also in old age satisfactorily, must be learned and trained.

Registration for the conference :Dana.stein@volny.cz
You will receive all the necessary information for the event from her.

15 Years GEFAS Styria!

GEFAS Styria has reasons for celebration! On the occasion of 15 years of the organisation's existence a congress with the topic ACTIVE AGEING will take place October 12 and 13, 2006 in the Meerscheinschlössl, Graz. The event will start at 9 o'clock with a ceremonial act and all members, friends and supporters are invited and are exempt from charges.

Afterwards, a congress to the theme „ACTIVE AGEING will take place. The organisation lies in the responsibility of GEFAS Styria and COMPASS. You can expect an interesting program, including lectures of important representatives of the European Commission and national experts, as well as presentations of successful EU projects in the field of Ageing concerning the topics education, social affairs, research and occupation.

Information and registration for the ceremonial act: till October 6, 2006

Tel.: +43(0)316-380-2964 **or Email:** hinterberger@seniorweb.at; www.seniorweb.at

A special „thank you“ to Dr. Rosemarie Kurz!

Dear Rosemarie!

Your child GEFAS Styria, which you have given to us in 1991, has developed from a guidance unit for senior students at the university of Graz as part of the students representation into an internationally well-known and important institution in the field of the age related research and life long learning for older persons. The series of lectures on geriatric issues, which you have initiated in Graz, have substantially contributed to directing the awareness of the public to the challenges arising for ageing policies and particularly regarding the special needs of women. Your fight of many years against abuse in the family, in particular against women as well as older persons, has made a topic of taboo visible in public. Your current commitment in the field of "Elder Abuse" will substantially contribute to the prevention work to be done, not only in Austria but also abroad. We wish you lots of success in the future!

Events Calendar

OCTOBER 2006

- 1 October:** UNO—International Day of the Elderly
- 4-6 October :** British Geriatrics Society Autumn Meeting, Harrogate International Centre, Harrogate, UK
More info under: bgs@hamptonmedical.com or www.bgs.org.uk
- 4-7 October:** European Health Forum Gastein: „Creating a better future for the health in Europe“ , Salzburg, Austria.
More info under: www.ehfg.org
- 6-7 October:** International Seminar in connection with the EURAG Board and General Council meeting in Vilnius about “The role and the situation of the older person in the context of changed family structures“, Vilnius—Lithuania
More info under: EURAG Section Lithuania ; [Tel: 00 370/ 5 273 36 49](tel:0037052733649) or office@eurag-president.eu
- 11-13 October:** World Conference for „the Promotion of Mental Health and Prevention of Mental and Behavioural Disorders; Developing Resilience and Strength Across the Life Span“, Oslo– Norway
More info under: www.worldconference2006.no or post@worldconference.no
- 11-15 October:** 18. Senior’s Seminar 2006 in Leipzig - Germany
More info under: altenkulturleipzig@aol.com
- 12.-13 October:** Healthy Ageing Seminar, Helsinki Finland (Part of its EU Presidency).
More information under: karin.berensson@fhi.se or www.healthyageing.nu
- 12- 13 October:** Congress to the theme ACTIVE AGEING in the Meerscheinschlössl, Graz GEFAS/COMPASS;
More info under: hinterberger@seniorweb.at or www.seniorweb.at
- 17-18 October:** Seminar „Social Rights and Market Freedoms –is a better balance possible?“, Tampere– Finland ; Finnish Federation for Social Welfare and Health
More info under: www.stkl.fi/SocialRightsohjelma.pdf

Events—Continuation**NOVEMBER 2006**

- 2-3 November:** Forum; „Competitive Europe - Social Europe:partners or Rivals?“ Dublin, Irland
- 7-10 November:** XIV World Congress of Inclusion International: „Building an inclusive future: a challenge for globalization“ Acapulco– Mexico
More info under: www.inclusion-mexico.org.mx
- 27 Nov.-3 Dec.:** „EURAG Memory Training Center“ in Prag and the „Czech Society for Memory Training and Brain Jogging“ Seminar „Effective tools f or increasing the Self- sufficiency and pro longed Independence of an Aging population“
More info under: Dana.stein@vilzny.cz

DECEMBER 2006

- 3 December:** International Day of Disabled People
- 5 –6 December:** Annual Conference of the Social Platform, Brussels, „Social Values and Democracy: Renewing the guiding principles of the European Union“
More info under: Pearly.Raynal@socialplatform.org or www.socialplatform.org

2007**JANUARY**

- 29-30Jänner:** Equality Summit—Launch of European Year; Berlin
- 25-27– April:** British Geriatrics Spring Meeting, Brighton Centre, Brighton, UK
More info under: bgs@hamptonmedical.com or www.bgs.org.uk

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