Basic information

2010/0242(COD) COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure) Decision	Procedure completed
European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (2012) See also 2014/2255(INI) **Subject** 4.10.05 Social inclusion, poverty, minimum income 4.10.07 The elderly 4.10.11 Retirement, pensions 4.10.14 Demography 4.15.04 Workforce, occupational mobility, job conversion, working conditions 4.45.02 Cultural programmes and actions, assistance	

Key players

European Parliament

Committee responsible	Rapporteur	Appointed
EMPL Employment and Social Affairs	KASTLER Martin (PPE)	22/09/2010
	Shadow rapporteur CREȚU Corina (S&D) KACIN Jelko (ALDE) LAMBERT Jean (Verts/ALE) CABRNOCH Milan (ECR) LE HYARIC Patrick (GUE/NGL)	

Committee for opinion	Rapporteur for opinion	Appointed
REGI Regional Development	VAN NISTELROOIJ Lambert (PPE)	27/09/2010
CULT Culture and Education	TAKKULA Hannu (ALDE)	19/10/2010
LIBE Civil Liberties, Justice and Home Affairs	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	
FEMM Women's Rights and Gender Equality	The committee decided not to give an opinion.	

Council of the European Union	

Council configuration	Meetings	Date
Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs	3053	2010-12-06
Employment, Social Policy, Health and Consumer Affairs	3099	2011-06-17
Competitiveness (Internal Market, Industry, Research and Space)	3074	2011-03-09
Agriculture and Fisheries	3108	2011-07-19

European Commission

Commission DG	Commissioner
Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion	ANDOR László

Key events

Date	Event	Reference	Summary
06/09/2010	Legislative proposal published	COM(2010)0462	Summary
09/09/2010	Committee referral announced in Parliament, 1st reading		
06/12/2010	Debate in Council		Summary
16/03/2011	Vote in committee, 1st reading		Summary
18/03/2011	Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading	A7-0061/2011	
17/06/2011	Debate in Council		
07/07/2011	Decision by Parliament, 1st reading	T7-0332/2011	Summary
07/07/2011	Results of vote in Parliament		
19/07/2011	Act adopted by Council after Parliament's 1st reading		
13/09/2011	End of procedure in Parliament		
14/09/2011	Final act signed		
23/09/2011	Final act published in Official Journal		

Technical information

Procedure reference	2010/0242(COD)
Procedure type	COD - Ordinary legislative procedure (ex-codecision procedure)
Procedure subtype	Legislation
Legislative instrument	Decision
Amendments and repeals	See also 2014/2255(INI)
Legal basis	Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union TFEU 153-p2
Other legal basis	Rules of Procedure EP 165
Stage reached in procedure	Procedure completed

Committee dossier	EMPL/7/03709

Documentation gateway

European Parliament

Document type	Committee	Reference	Date	Summary
Committee draft report		PE454.625	20/12/2010	
Committee opinion	REGI	PE452.779	27/01/2011	
Committee opinion	CULT	PE452.767	08/02/2011	
Amendments tabled in committee		PE458.631	15/02/2011	
Committee report tabled for plenary, 1st reading/single reading		A7-0061/2011	18/03/2011	
Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading		T7-0332/2011	07/07/2011	Summary

Council of the EU

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Draft final act	00020/2011/LEX	13/09/2011	

European Commission

Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
Legislative proposal	COM(2010)0462	06/09/2010	Summary
Document attached to the procedure	SEC(2010)1002	06/09/2010	Summary
Commission response to text adopted in plenary	SP(2011)8072	08/09/2011	
Follow-up document	COM(2014)0562	15/09/2014	Summary

National parliaments

Document type	Parliament /Chamber	Reference	Date	Summary
Contribution	IT_SENATE	COM(2010)0462	29/10/2010	
Contribution	PT_PARLIAMENT	COM(2010)0462	09/11/2010	

Other institutions and bodies

Institution/body	Document type	Reference	Date	Summary
EESC	Economic and Social Committee: opinion, report	CES1377/2010	21/10/2010	

Additional information		
Source	**Document**	**Date**
National parliaments	IPEX	
European Commission	EUR-Lex	

Final act	
Decision 2011/0940 OJ L 246 23.09.2011, p. 0005	Summary

European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (2012)

2010/0242(COD) - 15/09/2014 - Follow-up document

The Commission presents a report on the implementation, results and overall assessment of the 2012 European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations.

The European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations has managed to **mobilise numerous governmental and non-governmental actors**. It has helped convey a more positive image of population ageing by highlighting the potentials of older people and promoting their active participation in society and the economy.

The decision on the EY2012 defined a budget envelope of **EUR 5 million** for the period between January 2011 and December 2012. No new credits were allocated to the European Year, and the money was taken from existing financial appropriations. The budget for the European Year was mainly used to **finance the communication activities** of the Year

Most of the activities at the EU-level were designed to **support stakeholders in the Member States and facilitate their participation** in the European Year. The EU programme was thus implemented in close cooperation with national coordinators for the European Year and the Stakeholder Coalition.

The main activity at European level was a **communication and promotional campaign** implemented by a contractor. The central hub of this campaign was the European Year **website.**

Implementation and new initiatives: many Member States and civil society organizations have used the European Year as an opportunity to develop new initiatives or strengthen their existing ones (such as *Generations@school*). The activities triggered by the EY2012 demonstrated the development of several new tools, mainly:

- **the Guiding Principles on Active Ageing**, endorsed by the EU's Social Affairs Ministers on 6 December 2012: the 19 Guiding Principles are structured under the headings of the Year: employment, participation in society, and independent living. They are addressed to Member States and other relevant levels of government and organizations which have a role to play in further improving conditions for active ageing. The application of these Guiding Principles would also contribute to the attainment of the employment and poverty reduction targets of the Europe 2020 Strategy, notably as a result of more people being able to work longer and earning better pension entitlements;
- **the development of an Active Ageing Index** which was developed in close cooperation with the United Nations Economic Committee for Europe (UNECE) and the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research (Vienna). The index measures different dimensions of active ageing and quantifies untapped potentials for each country.
- **a covenant of mayors on demographic change**: this provides a framework allowing local and regional policy makers to commit to taking new measures in response to ageing. This goal of establishing such a covenant is now being pursued in the context of the European Innovation Partnership on Active and Healthy Ageing (EIP AHA) and its action group on 'Innovation for age-friendly, buildings cities and environments

Policy maker in the Member States are invited to make the most of these tools. The EU will continue to support them. This will take the form of **policy guidance**, notably in the context of the European Semester, the cycle coordinating economic and budgetary policies in the EU.

Active and healthy ageing is, also one of the **investment priorities of the European Social Fund (ESF)** in the 2014-2020 programming period.

The independent living pillar of the European Year 2012: the Commission supports the Social Protection Committee in producing **a report on long-term care** published in June 2014. It examined how the gap between long-term care demand and supply can be closed through appropriate investment in measures that reduce the need for long-term care and enhance the efficiency of its delivery, including through the use of technology-enabled services.

The Commission concludes that the European Year 2012 has contributed to **establish active ageing firmly on the European and many national policy agendas** in a cross sectorial multi-stakeholder approach. This momentum needs to be maintained. The strong solidarity between generations that characterise Europe's societies and welfare systems can only be sustained in the context of ageing populations and tight budgets by promoting active ageing in all its forms.

European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (2012)

2010/0242(COD) - 09/03/2011

The Council adopted conclusions on the preparations for the launch of a pilot European Innovation Partnership (EIP) on active and healthy ageing. As part of the Innovation Union flagship initiative under the Europe 2020 strategy EIPs lay down a new approach to European research and innovation intended to tackle common societal challenges. EIPs should bring together all relevant actors at EU national and regional levels across policy areas and industrial sectors, in order to:

- step up research and development efforts;
- coordinate investments in demonstrations and pilot cases;
- anticipate any necessary regulation and standards; and
- mobilise demand, in particular through better coordinated public procurement to ensure that innovative products are quickly placed on the market.

The overarching goal of the partnership is to **increase the average life expectancy of Europeans by 2020**, while ensuring that people can also live healthier and more active lives. The launch of an EIP on active and healthy ageing as a pilot case will enable the performance of this new concept to be tested for possible future EIPs.

The Council welcomes the continuing work by the Commission in bringing forward the pilot EIP on Active and Healthy Ageing (AHA), the overarching goal of which is to increase on average, by 2020, the healthy lives of Europeans by two years. It takes note of the Commission's progress in setting up a high level Steering Group with a broad and balanced membership including relevant stake-holders across the sectors concerned, with a view to undertaking preparatory work for the pilot including, notably, drawing up **recommendations** for a Strategic Implementation Plan (SIP), in summer 2011, on the basis of which initiatives would be put forward through appropriate institutional channels for the implementation of the pilot EIP.

The Council **reiterates its support for the pilot EIP and the setting up of the Steering Group**, without prejudice to the examination of the subsequent Commission initiatives and the way in which Member States would be involved in the concrete implementation of the activities of the pilot EIP. The Council also reiterates its call for an **evaluation of the pilot EIP** in due time.

In the development of the pilot EIP, the Council attaches great importance, notably, to taking into consideration existing initiatives on both supply and demand side in the areas of research, development and innovation (including relevant research infrastructures) as well as the sectors of health and information society, and identifying and reinforcing synergies amongst them in such a way that a more simplified and transparent research and innovation landscape would be created. In this respect the Council stresses the independent and voluntary nature and the essential role of Joint Programming, the implementation of which should be actively pursued, and looks forward to the Commission's timely contribution to the preparation of the six "second wave" JPIs.

The Council agrees that **Member States should be involved in the Steering Group** by an active group of representatives of Member States at Ministerial level, constituted to cover the main focus areas in the pilot. As far as the present pilot EIP is concerned, the Council welcomes the participation of representatives of BE, ES, HU and PL in the work of the Steering Group with a view to contributing to this work from the Member States' perspective, but without prejudice to the governance arrangements of future EIPs and without prejudice to the Council's position as to the recommendations arising from the work of the Steering Group. The Council should be kept well informed of the work of the Steering Group.

The Council encourages the Commission to continue **developing, in close cooperation with the Council and Member States, the concept of the EIPs** on the basis of the Council conclusions of 26 November 2010 taking also into account the experience from the pilot EIP, the views of the stake-holders, and the evaluation of the pilot EIP as soon as available. The Council highlights in this respect the necessity of simple, transparent and light procedures respecting the voluntary nature of coordination of Member States' activities concerned.

The Council also recalls the conclusions of the European Council of 4 February 2011 that the Council will take the necessary political decisions on future Innovation Partnerships before they are launched.

European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (2012)

2010/0242(COD) - 06/09/2010 - Legislative proposal

PURPOSE: to establish the European Year for Active Ageing (2012).

PROPOSED ACT: Decision of the European Parliament and of the Council.

BACKGROUND: the European Union is in a process of significant population ageing. According to Eurostat's latest projections released in 2008, there would be only two people of working age (15-64) for every person aged over 65 in the EU by 2060 compared to a ratio of four to one today. The strongest push in this direction is expected to occur during the period 2015-35 when the baby boom cohorts will be in retirement. This shift is due to a combination of low birth rates and rising life expectancy. These demographic changes present both challenges and opportunities. Population ageing may increase pressure on public budgets and pension systems, as well as on the staffing of social and care services for older people. There is a fear that the older generations might become too heavy a burden on younger, working-age people and that this could result in tensions between generations. This view neglects, however, the significant actual and potential contribution that older people — and the baby-boom cohorts in particular — can make to society. A key opportunity for tackling the challenge of demographic ageing and preserving intergenerational solidarity consists therefore in ensuring that the baby-boom cohorts stay longer in the labour market and remain healthy, active and autonomous as long as possible.

In the framework of the Employment Strategy, Member States have started to reverse the trend to early retirement so that the EU-27 employment rate for people aged 55-64 has increased from 36.9% in 2000 to 46% in 2009. Encouraging older workers to stay in employment requires notably the improvement of working conditions and their adaptation to the health status and needs of older workers, updating their skills by providing better access to life long learning and the review of tax and benefit systems to ensure that there are effective incentives for working longer.

Active ageing is also an effective tool for tackling poverty in old age. In 2008, 19% of people aged 65+ in the EU were at risk of poverty. A considerable number of older people experience old age as a time of marginalisation. While better employment opportunities for older people could help tackle some of the causes of poverty among this age group, active participation in voluntary activities could reduce the isolation of older people. The huge potential that older persons represent for society as volunteers or carers could be better mobilised by eliminating existing obstacles to unpaid work and by providing the right framework.

IMPACT ASSESSMENT: current activities at EU level do not seem properly geared to dealing with what needs to be done:

1. raise awareness among the general public, policy makers and other stakeholders of the importance of active ageing and of the need to do more to mobilise the potential of the baby boom cohorts;
2. foster an exchange of information and experience between Member States and stakeholders;
3. give Member States and stakeholders an opportunity to develop policies by way of specific activities and by committing to specific objectives.

The Commission considers that broad-based support will be required at all levels of society and from a wide range of stakeholders. The key challenge is to mobilise stakeholders in a way that will generate significant action at national, regional, local and company levels across the EU. With greater political momentum and visibility for active ageing policies, policy makers can be encouraged to take more ambitious initiatives. It is for this reason that implementation of the European Year for Active Ageing could be useful.

LEGAL BASE: Article 153(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the EU.

CONTENT: the year 2012 shall be designated as the European Year for Active Ageing.

Objectives: the overall purpose of the European Year shall be to encourage and support the efforts of Member States, their regional and local authorities, social partners and civil society to promote active ageing and to do more to mobilise the potential of the rapidly growing population in their late 50s and above, thereby preserving solidarity between generations. Active ageing means creating better opportunities and working conditions to enable older workers to play their part in the labour market, combating social exclusion by fostering active participation in society, and encouraging healthy ageing. On this

basis, the objectives shall be:

- to raise general awareness of the value of active ageing in order to highlight the useful contribution older persons make to society and the economy, to promote active ageing and to do more to mobilise the potential of older persons;
- to stimulate debate and develop mutual learning between Member States and stakeholders at all levels in order to promote active ageing policies, to identify and disseminate good practice and to encourage cooperation and synergies;
- to offer a framework for commitment and concrete action to enable Member States and stakeholders at all levels to develop policies through specific activities and to commit to specific objectives related to active ageing.

Activities:the measures to be taken to achieve the objectives the following activities at Union, national, regional or local level:

- conferences, events and initiatives to promote debate, raise awareness and foster the making of specific commitments;
- information, promotion and educational campaigns;
- exchange of information, experience and good practices;
- research and surveys on a Union or national scale, and dissemination of the results.

The Year should be seen as the highlight of a major effort spanning the period 2011-2014, during which the EU would focus many of its programmes and policies on the issue of active ageing and put in place a framework in which new initiatives and partnerships supporting active ageing at all levels (Member State, regional, local, social partners, civil society) can be encouraged and publicised.

In 2011, public authorities, social partners and civil society organisations at all levels would be encouraged to commit themselves to specific goals related to active ageing; the focus would be on achievements during the European Year. The goals would be documented on a European website which would then become the website for the European Year and would also serve as a tool for monitoring and evaluation.

In 2012, the focus of the European Year would be on starting to implement the commitments made during 2011, on raising awareness among the general public, publicising these initiatives through media activities and the involvement of other multipliers. Results of active ageing projects funded under existing budget lines and programmes would be presented.

The primary intention is to promote active ageing in employment by creating better opportunities for the participation of older workers, and to promote active ageing in society, by combating social exclusion through voluntary work, healthy ageing and autonomous living.

Coordination at Union level: the Commission shall convene meetings of the national coordinators for the purpose of coordination at Union level and to exchange information, including on commitments made and their implementation in the Member States. The European Parliament, the Member States, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions will be associated in the activities.

Evaluation: by 30 June 2014, the Commission shall submit a report to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the European Committee of the Regions on the implementation, results and overall assessment of the initiatives provided for in this Decision.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS: no additional funding is sought for the European Year. The flexibility for annual or multiannual priority-setting based on the budget lines and programmes of the Directorate General for Employment and other relevant programmes provides sufficient financial margin for running the Year on a scale similar to previous European Years. The administrative resources can also come from existing administrative budgets.

European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (2012)

2010/0242(COD) - 06/09/2010 - Document attached to the procedure

This ex-ante evaluation follows a call from the Slovenian Presidency in 2008 for a European Year on Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity (2012). The Commission plans to adopt a proposal for a Decision by Parliament and Council on designating 2012 as European Year on Active Ageing. The Commission opted for the short title of active ageing which implies that intergenerational solidarity is to be seen as an outcome of active ageing which presents a key opportunity for preserving solidarity between generations.

In preparing the ex-ante evaluation, the Commission services have also asked for the views of key stakeholders regarding the orientation and implementation of the European Year In addition, the Commission services took into account evaluation results of previous European Years.

This ex-ante evaluation considers the different options for an initiative on promoting active ageing. The structure of the document is as follows:

- definitions and policy context,
- problem analysis and needs assessment,
- objectives,
- policy options,
- assessment of policy options,
- implementation of preferred option,
- monitoring and evaluation.

The option which has been selected by the Commission is a European Year without a specific budget coordinated and centralised by the Commission.

The purpose of a European Year would go beyond awareness-raising. It should be seen as the highlight of a major effort spanning the period 2011-2014 during which the EU would focus many of its existing programmes and policies on the issue of active ageing and put in place a framework in which new initiatives and partnerships supporting active ageing at all levels (Member State, regional, local, social partners, civil society) can be encouraged and publicised.

European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (2012)

2010/0242(COD) - 06/12/2010

Ministers adopted a **general approach** on a draft decision designating 2012 as the European Year of active ageing (*see Council Doc. 16511/10*), pending the adoption of the European Parliament's opinion at first reading.

The draft decision is aimed to strengthen intergenerational solidarity by increasing awareness of the contribution of older people to society and by spreading innovative measures which could help to mobilise the full potential of the growing population in their late 50s and above. It seeks to stimulate debate and develop mutual learning between member states in order to promote active ageing policies, and it offers a framework for commitment and concrete action to enable Member States and stakeholders to develop policies through specific activities.

European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (2012)

2010/0242(COD) - 07/07/2011 - Text adopted by Parliament, 1st reading/single reading

The European Parliament adopted by 557 votes to 33, with 15 abstentions, a legislative resolution on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Year for Active Ageing (2012).

Parliament adopted its position at first reading following the ordinary legislative procedure. The amendments adopted in plenary are the result of a new series of compromise amendments negotiated between the European Parliament and the Council. They amend the proposal as follows:

Title of the Year: the title of this initiative has been changed. It shall now be known as the 'European Year for Active Ageing and **Solidarity between Generations**'.

General objectives: the overall objective of the European Year shall be to **facilitate the creation of an active ageing culture in Europe based on a society for all ages**. It shall encourage and support the efforts of Member States, their regional and local authorities, social partners, civil society and the **business community**, including SMEs, to promote active ageing and to foster solidarity and **cooperation between generations**, taking into account **diversity and gender equality**. To this end, the European Year shall aim to adapt working conditions, combat negative age stereotypes and age discrimination, improve health and safety at work, adapt life-long learning systems to the needs of an ageing workforce and ensure that social protection systems are adequate and provide the right incentives.

Specific objectives: new specific objectives are defined as follows:

- to **raise general awareness** of the value of active ageing and its various dimensions and to ensure that it is accorded a prominent position on the political agendas of stakeholders at all levels in order to highlight the useful contribution that older persons make to society and the economy, raising the appreciation thereof, to promote active ageing, solidarity between generations and the vitality and the dignity of all people, and to do more to mobilise the potential of older persons, regardless of their origin, and to enable them to lead an independent life;
- to **stimulate debate, to exchange information and to develop mutual learning between Member States and stakeholders at all levels** in order to promote active ageing policies, to identify and disseminate good practice and to encourage cooperation and synergies;
- to **offer a framework for commitment** and concrete action to enable the Union, Member States and stakeholders at all levels, with the involvement of civil society, the social partners and businesses and with particular emphasis on promoting information strategies, to develop innovative solutions, policies and long-term strategies, including comprehensive age-management strategies related to employment and work, through specific activities, and to pursue specific objectives related to active ageing and intergenerational solidarity;
- to **promote activities which will help to combat age discrimination**, to overcome age-related stereotypes and to remove barriers, particularly with regard to employability.

The content of measures have been amended in accordance with the specific objectives. It is stated that when implementing the activities, attention shall be paid to involving all generations in the pursuit of the objectives of the European Year, in particular by seeking to develop an inclusive approach and by encouraging the participation of older and younger people in common initiatives. The Commission and Member States shall take into account gender mainstreaming in all their activities in connection with the running of the European Year. The Commission shall take into account the potential of cross-border activities taking place at a regional or local level for achieving the objectives. Lastly, efforts shall be made to ensure that all activities of the European Year addressed to the wider public are easily accessible to all, including **people with disabilities**.

Coordination with Member States: under the proposal, each Member State shall appoint a national coordinator to be responsible for organising its involvement in the European Year and shall inform the Commission of that appointment. The national coordinators shall also see to it that national activities of the European Year are properly coordinated and may also promote and facilitate local and regional activities in this context. The national coordinators shall also foster the involvement of all relevant stakeholders, including civil society, in the activities of the European Year.

The Commission shall implement the European Year at the level of the Union. It shall facilitate and **support the activities of the European Year at national, regional and local level**, including by proposing, where appropriate, new pathways and tools for the achievement of the objectives of the European Year and their evaluation.

Priority given to the Year by the Commission: the theme of the European Year shall be made a priority by the Commission in the communication activities of its representations in the Member States and by relevant key Union-level networks receiving support for their running costs from the general budget of the Union in their work programmes.

Budget: the financial envelope for the implementation, at the level of the Union, of this Decision, for the period from 1 January 2011 to 31 December 2012, shall be **EUR 5 million**.

In a joint Interinstitutional declaration, it is stipulated that **EUR 2.3 million** will be used from the **budget 2011** without utilizing available margins to fund notably communication activities and EU conferences for the European Year, and at least **EUR 2.7 million**, which shall be reprioritised from existing resources without utilizing the existing margins, will be reserved and made visible in a budget line in the **draft budget 2012**.

Financial and non-financial support: activities at the Union level may give rise to a procurement contract or the award of grants financed from the general budget of the EU. Where appropriate, programmes and policies in fields which contribute to promoting active ageing, such as employment, social affairs and equal opportunities, education and culture, health, may support the European Year, in accordance with the applicable rules and within their existing possibilities for priority setting.

Participating countries: Participation in the European Year shall be open to: (i) Member States; (ii) candidate countries; (iii) the countries of the Western Balkans, and (iv) European Free Trade Association States that are parties to the European Economic Area Agreement.

International cooperation: the Commission may cooperate with relevant international organisations, in particular with the United Nations and the Council of Europe, while ensuring the visibility of the Union's efforts to promote active ageing.

Report: Parliament calls for the Commission report to provide information on how the gender and disability have been mainstreamed in the activities of the European Year and how the European Year has contributed towards developing a sustainable active aging culture across Europe. This report shall serve as a basis for future Union policies, measures and actions in this field.

European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (2012)

2010/0242(COD) - 14/09/2011 - Final act

PURPOSE : to designate 2012 as the 'European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations'.

LEGISLATIVE ACT : Decision No 940/2011/EU of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (2012).

BACKGROUND : ageing is undoubtedly a challenge for the whole of society and for all generations in Europe, and it is also a matter for intergenerational solidarity and for the family.

The part of the population of the Union comprised of people in their late 50s and over will increase at a much faster rate than ever before. Successive European Councils have recognised the need to tackle the effect of ageing populations on European social models. A key response to this rapid change in the age structure consists in promoting the **creation of a culture of active ageing** as a lifelong process and thus ensuring that the rapidly-growing population comprised of people who are currently in their late 50s and over, who are, on the whole, healthier and better educated than any such age group before them, have good opportunities for employment and active participation in social and family life, including through volunteering, lifelong learning, cultural expression and sports.

The Council adopted, on 7 June 2010, Conclusions on 'Active Ageing' inviting the Commission 'to pursue the reparation of a European Year for Active Ageing in 2012, during which the benefits of active ageing and its contribution to solidarity between generations can be highlighted and promising initiatives in support of active ageing at all levels can be publicised'.

The European Parliament adopted, on 11 November 2010, a Resolution entitled 'Demographic challenge and solidarity between generations', calling on Member States to make active ageing one of the priorities for the coming years. The resolution also stressed that the European Year should, in particular, highlight the contribution that older people make to society and afford opportunities to foster solidarity, cooperation and understanding between generations and to get younger and older people to work together.

The designation of a 'European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (2012) fulfills this request.

CONTENT : through this Decision, the European Parliament and Council establish a 'European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations (2012)

Objectives: the overall objective of the European Year shall be to **facilitate the creation of an active ageing culture in Europe based on a society for all ages.** The European Year shall encourage and support the efforts of Member States, their regional and local authorities, social partners, civil society and the business community, including small and medium-sized enterprises, to promote active ageing and to do more to mobilise the potential of the rapidly growing population in their late 50s and over.

In doing so, it shall:

- foster solidarity and cooperation between generations, taking into account diversity and gender equality;
- promote active ageing by creating better opportunities so that older women and men can play their part in the labour market, combating poverty, particularly that of women, and social exclusion, fostering volunteering and active participation in family life and society and encouraging healthy ageing in dignity;
- aim to adapt working conditions, combating negative age stereotypes and age discrimination, improving health and safety at work, adapting lifelong learning systems to the needs of an ageing workforce and ensuring that social protection systems are adequate and provide the right incentives.

Specific objectives : on this basis, the objectives of the European Year shall be:

- **to raise general awareness of the value of active ageing and its various dimensions** and to ensure that it is accorded a prominent position on the political agendas of stakeholders at all levels in order to highlight the useful contribution that older people make to society and the economy, and to do more to mobilise the potential of older people, regardless of their origin, and to enable them to lead an independent life;
- **to stimulate debate, to exchange information and to develop mutual learning between Member States and stakeholders at all levels** in order to promote active ageing policies, to identify and disseminate good practice and to encourage cooperation and synergies;
- **to offer a framework for commitment and concrete action**, with the involvement of civil society, the social partners and businesses and to develop **innovative solutions, policies and long-term strategies**, including comprehensive age-management strategies related to employment and work, through specific activities;
- to **promote activities which will help to combat age discrimination,** to overcome age-related stereotypes and to remove barriers, particularly with regard to employability.

The Decision sets out the measures to be taken to achieve the objectives above, the main ones being as follows: (i) conferences, events and initiatives, to promote debate contributing to sustained and lasting impacts; (ii) information, promotion and educational campaigns, making use of multimedia; (iii) exchange of information, experience and good practice; (iv) research and surveys on a Union, national or regional scale.

When implementing these activities, the Decision provides that attention shall be paid to involving all generations in particular by encouraging the participation of older and younger people in common initiatives. Efforts shall be made to ensure that all activities of the European Year addressed to the wider public are easily accessible to all, including persons with disabilities.

Coordination with Member States and at EU level: each Member State shall appoint a national coordinator to be responsible for organising its involvement in the European Year. The national coordinators shall also see to it that national activities of the European Year are properly coordinated and may also promote and facilitate local and regional activities in this context, and foster the involvement of civil society, in the activities of the European Year.

The Commission shall implement the European Year at the level of the Union. It shall convene meetings of the national coordinators and shall facilitate and support the activities of the European Year at national, regional and local level, including by proposing, where appropriate, new pathways and tools for the achievement of the objectives of the European Year and their evaluation.

Priority given to the Year by the Commission and the European Parliament: the Decision provides that the theme of the European Year shall be made a priority by the Commission in the communication activities of its representations in the Member States and by relevant key Union-level networks receiving support for their running costs from the general budget of the Union in their work programmes.

The European Parliament, Member States, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions shall be associated in the activities of the European Year.

Financial and non-financial support: activities that occur at the level of the Union may give rise to a procurement contract or the award of grants financed from the general budget of the Union.

Where appropriate, programmes and policies in fields which contribute to the promotion of active ageing, such as employment, social affairs and equal opportunities, education and culture, health, research, the information society, regional policy and transport policy may support the European Year, in accordance with the applicable rules and within their existing possibilities for priority setting.

Non-financial support may be granted by the Union for activities undertaken by public and private organisations.

Budget: the financial envelope for the implementation, at the level of the Union, of the Year for the period from 1 January 2011 to 31 December 2012, shall be **EUR 5 000 000.**

In a joint Interinstitutional declaration, it is stipulated that **EUR 2.3 million** will be used from the **budget 2011** without utilizing available margins to fund notably communication activities and EU conferences for the European Year, and at least **EUR 2.7 million**, which shall be reprioritised from existing resources without utilizing the existing margins, will be reserved and made visible in a budget line in the **draft budget 2012**.

Participating countries: participation in the European Year shall be open to:(a) Member States;(b) candidate countries;(c) the countries of the Western Balkans; and (d) European Free Trade Association States that are parties to the European Economic Area Agreement.

International cooperation: for the purpose of the European Year, the Commission may cooperate with relevant international organisations, in particular with the United Nations and the Council of Europe, while ensuring the visibility of the Union’s efforts to promote active ageing.

Report: the Decision provides that by 30 June 2014, the Commission shall submit a report containing an overall assessment of the initiatives provided for in the Decision with details of implementation and results to serve as a basis for future Union policies, measures and actions in this field. It must also provide information on how gender equality has been mainstreamed in the activities of the European Year and how the accessibility of those activities for persons with disabilities has been ensured.

ENTRY INTO FORCE : the Decision will enter into force on 24 September 2011.