European year for active ageing and solidarity between generations

The European Union has designated 2012 as the European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations. Europe must be more age-friendly and better adapted to its ageing population. This view is reflected in the work of COST.

The EU campaign for 2012 – European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations, and 29 April – EU Day of Solidarity between Generations is an opportunity to ensure that intergenerational solidarity remains high on the EU agenda, by encouraging all stakeholders to support civil society initiatives on intergenerational cooperation.

The issue of intergenerational solidarity and cooperation is reflected in all areas of life - how we manage our infrastructure, or enable multi-generational input to the labour market. How we make new technologies accessible and usable to all generations, or how we combat diseases that affect all the various age groups in our society. How we manage our social welfare policies fairly in order to serve each member of society, young or old.

This view is reflected in the work of COST. One of the most significant research projects to encompass the issues of ageing and modern society was **COST Action A5 'Ageing and Technology'** which, as early as in 1992, was representing a major and ongoing contribution of COST to the issues of ageing and intergenerational cooperation. The Action focused on studying the conditions needed for a greater level of autonomy, independence and activity for older people in Europe, specifically. This is however still noteworthy, due to the far-reaching results of this Action and its successful publications. Take some time to read, for example, 'Ageing and Technology: The Outdoor Mobility of Older People - Technological Support and Future Possibilities' (1997), or 'The Need, Requirements and Contents of the European Database on the Elderly Policy/Services' (1994). It was this Action, which formed the basis for the induction of the International Society for Gerontechnology (ISG) and its associative journal ' Gerontechnology ', which focus on the fundamental aspects of technology to serve the ageing society.

Social welfare strategies are a recognised and valued vehicle for social cohesion and solidity. **COST Action IS1102 'Social Services, Welfare State and Places. The restructuring of social services in Europe and its impacts on social and territorial cohesion and governance'** is addressing the problems arising from the significant restructuring undergone by European social services in the last 20 years. Started in 2011, this Action seeks to identify improvements for a more cohesive social policy platform within Europe.

Cohesion and solidarity are the watchwords for this European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations –concepts that are highly valued by COST.

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