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Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

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DRAFT REPORT

on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council
on the European Year for Active Ageing (2012)
(COM(2010)0462 – C7-0253/2010 – 2010/0242(COD))

Committee on Employment and Social Affairs

Rapporteur: Martin Kastler

Symbols for procedures

- * Consultation procedure
- *** Consent procedure
- ***I Ordinary legislative procedure (first reading)
- ***II Ordinary legislative procedure (second reading)
- ***III Ordinary legislative procedure (third reading)

(The type of procedure depends on the legal basis proposed by the draft act.)

Amendments to a draft act

In amendments by Parliament, amendments to draft acts are highlighted in ***bold italics***. Highlighting in *normal italics* is an indication for the relevant departments showing parts of the draft act which may require correction when the final text is prepared – for instance, obvious errors or omissions in a language version. Suggested corrections of this kind are subject to the agreement of the departments concerned.

The heading for any amendment to an existing act that the draft act seeks to amend includes a third line identifying the existing act and a fourth line identifying the provision in that act that Parliament wishes to amend. Passages in an existing act that Parliament wishes to amend, but that the draft act has left unchanged, are highlighted in **bold**. Any deletions that Parliament wishes to make in such passages are indicated thus: [...].

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DRAFT EUROPEAN PARLIAMENT LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION

**on the proposal for a decision of the European Parliament and of the Council on the European Year for Active Ageing (2012)
(COM(2010)0462 – C7-0253/2010 – 2010/0242(COD))**

(Ordinary legislative procedure: first reading)

The European Parliament,

- having regard to the Commission proposal to Parliament and the Council (COM(2010)0462),
 - having regard to Article 294(2) and Article 153(2) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union, pursuant to which the Commission submitted the proposal to Parliament (C7-0253/2010),
 - having regard to Article 294(3) of the Treaty on the Functioning of the European Union,
 - having regard to the opinion of the European Economic and Social Committee of 21 October 2010¹,
 - after consulting the Committee of the Regions,
 - having regard to Rule 55 of its Rules of Procedure,
 - having regard to the report of the Committee on Employment and Social Affairs and the opinions of the Committee on Culture and Education and the Committee on Regional Development (A7-0000/2010),
1. Adopts its position at first reading hereinafter set out;
 2. Calls on the Commission to refer the matter to Parliament again if it intends to amend its proposal substantially or replace it with another text;
 3. Instructs its President to forward its position to the Council, the Commission and the national parliaments.

Amendment 1

**Proposal for a decision
Recital 2 a (new)**

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(2a) Pursuant to Article 3 of the Treaty on

¹ Not yet published in the Official Journal.

European Union, the Union is to, inter alia, combat social exclusion and discrimination, and is to promote social justice and protection, equality between women and men and solidarity between generations.

Or. en

Amendment 2

Proposal for a decision

Recital 4

Text proposed by the Commission

(4) 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 active ageing and thus ensuring that the *baby boom cohorts*, who are, on the whole, healthier and better educated than any such *cohort* before them, have good opportunities for employment and active participation in society.

Amendment

(4) 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 sustainable culture of lifelong* active ageing and thus ensuring that the *rapidly-growing population currently in their late 50s and above*, 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 *family life and* society.

Or. en

Amendment 3

Proposal for a decision

Recital 5

Text proposed by the Commission

(5) The growing proportion of older people in Europe makes it more important than ever to promote healthy ageing. Healthy ageing can help raise labour market

Amendment

(5) The growing proportion of older people in Europe makes it more important than ever to promote *the* healthy ageing *of all, in particular older, persons, supporting*

participation of older people, enable them to be active in society for longer, improve their individual quality of life and curb the strains on health and social care systems.

their vitality and dignity. Healthy ageing can help raise labour market participation of older people, enable them to be active in society for longer, improve their individual quality of life and curb the strains on health and social care systems.

Or. en

Amendment 4

Proposal for a decision

Recital 6

Text proposed by the Commission

(6) The Commission presented its views on the demographic challenges the EU faces and on opportunities for tackling them in its communications on ‘The demographic future of Europe —from challenge to opportunity’ of 12 October 2006 and on ‘Dealing with the impact of an ageing population in the European Union’ of **21 April 2009**.

Amendment

(6) The Commission presented its views on the demographic challenges the EU faces and on opportunities for tackling them in its communications on ‘The demographic future of Europe —from challenge to opportunity’ of 12 October 2006, **on ‘Promoting Solidarity between Generations’ of 10 May 2007** and on ‘Dealing with the impact of an ageing population in the European Union’ of **29 April 2009**.

Or. en

Amendment 5

Proposal for a decision

Recital 11 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(11a) The European Parliament adopted on 11 November 2010 a resolution ‘on the demographic challenge and solidarity between generations’, calling on the Member States to make active ageing one of the priorities for the coming years and stressing that the European Year 2012

should, in particular, highlight the contribution that older people make to society and afford opportunities to get younger and older people working together.

Or. en

Amendment 6

Proposal for a decision Recital 12

Text proposed by the Commission

(12) The Commission proposed in its proposal for a Council Decision on "Guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States" of 27 April 2010, which calls under the guidelines 7 and 8 on Member States to increase labour force participation through policies to promote active ageing, to raise employment rates of older workers through innovation in work organisation and to increase the employability of older workers through up-skilling and participation in lifelong learning schemes. Guideline 10 emphasises the need to enhance social protection systems, lifelong learning and active inclusion policies with the aim *to create* opportunities at different stages of people's lives *and shield* them from the risk of social exclusion.

Amendment

(12) The Commission proposed in its proposal for a Council Decision on "Guidelines for the employment policies of the Member States" of 27 April 2010, which calls under the guidelines 7 and 8 on Member States to increase labour force participation through policies to promote active ageing, to raise employment rates of older workers through innovation in work organisation and to increase the employability of older workers through up-skilling and participation in lifelong learning schemes. Guideline 10 emphasises the need to enhance social protection systems, lifelong learning and active inclusion policies with the aim *of creating* opportunities at different stages of people's lives, *of shielding* them from the risk of social exclusion *and of enhancing their active participation in society*.

Or. en

Amendment 7

Proposal for a decision Recital 14

Text proposed by the Commission

(14) The Commission is implementing the European Disability Action plan that contains relevant actions for older persons given the correlation between disability and ageing. In particular actions on accessibility following Design for all approaches would be relevant. Furthermore the EU and all Member States have signed the UN Convention on the Rights of persons with disabilities that contains relevant provisions for older persons.

Amendment

(14) The Commission is implementing the European Disability Action plan that contains relevant actions for older persons given the correlation between disability and ageing. In particular actions on accessibility following Design for all approaches would be relevant. Furthermore the EU and all Member States have signed the UN Convention on the Rights of persons with disabilities that contains *inter alia* relevant provisions for older persons.

Or. en

Amendment 8

Proposal for a decision Recital 14 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(14a) The European Day of Intergenerational Solidarity is celebrated annually on 29 April. Every year, this day provides a good opportunity for Europe to renew its commitment to strengthening solidarity and cooperation between generations in order to promote a fair and sustainable society. It is also an opportunity for all stakeholders, including civil society organisations, to reflect together on how best to respond to the challenge which Europe's ageing society presents.

Or. en

Amendment 9

Proposal for a decision Recital 14 b (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(14b) This Decision establishes a financial envelope, which is to constitute the prime reference for the budgetary authority within the meaning of point 37 of the Interinstitutional Agreement of 17 May 2006 between the European Parliament, the Council and the Commission on budgetary discipline and sound financial management¹.

¹ OJ C 139, 14.6.2006, p. 1.

Or. en

Amendment 10

Proposal for a decision Recital 15

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

(15) Active ageing is targeted by several Union programmes, such as the European Social Fund, the European Regional and Development Fund, the PROGRESS programme, the Life Long Learning Programme, the Public Health Programme, the specific programmes on information and communication technologies and on socio-economic sciences and humanities in the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Development, the Action Plan on ‘Ageing well in the information society’, the Ambient Assisted Living (AAL) Joint Programme for research and innovation, the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme with pilot deployment projects on ICT for Ageing Well and the Action Plan on urban mobility. ***Union co-financing of European Year activities will be in accordance with the priorities and rules applying, on an***

(15) Active ageing is ***also*** targeted by several Union programmes, such as the European Social Fund, the European Regional and Development Fund, the PROGRESS programme, the Life Long Learning Programme, the Public Health Programme, the specific programmes on information and communication technologies and on socio-economic sciences and humanities in the Seventh Framework Programme for Research and Development, the Action Plan on ‘Ageing well in the information society’, the Ambient Assisted Living (AAL) Joint Programme for research and innovation, the Competitiveness and Innovation Programme with pilot deployment projects on ICT for Ageing Well and the Action Plan on urban mobility. ***It is therefore possible for the European Year to be implemented, to a large extent, by using***

annual or multi-annual basis, to existing programmes and autonomous budget lines in the field of employment, social affairs and equal opportunities. Where appropriate, programmes and policies in other fields, such as education and culture, health, research, the information society, regional policy and transport policy, may support the European Year.

these programmes, within the existing margins which they provide for funding priorities on an annual or multiannual basis.

Or. en

Amendment 11

Proposal for a decision Article 1

Text proposed by the Commission

The year 2012 shall be designated as the European Year for Active Ageing (hereafter referred to as ‘the European Year’).

Amendment

The year 2012 shall be designated as the European Year for Active Ageing - ***promoting solidarity between generations, maintaining the vitality and respecting the dignity of all*** (hereafter referred to as ‘the European Year’).

Or. en

Amendment 12

Proposal for a decision Article 2 - introductory part

Text proposed by the Commission

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

Amendment

The overall purpose of the European Year shall be to ***facilitate the creation of a sustainable active ageing culture in Europe based on a society for all ages and on solidarity between generations. In this framework, the European Year shall*** encourage and support the efforts of Member States, their regional and local authorities, social partners, and civil

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:

society, **including churches and associations active in combating poverty and social exclusion**, to promote active ageing and to do more to mobilise the potential of the rapidly growing population in their late 50s and above, thereby **maintaining the vitality of older people, enhancing their social participation, creating a society for all ages and fostering solidarity and cooperation** 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 supporting the role of older people in family life and voluntary activities and their** active participation in society, and encouraging healthy ageing. On this basis, the objectives shall be:

Or. en

Amendment 13

Proposal for a decision Article 2 - point 1

Text proposed by the Commission

(1) 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;

Amendment

(1) to raise general awareness of the value of active ageing in order to highlight the useful contribution older persons make to **family life**, society and the economy, to promote active ageing, **maintaining the vitality and respecting the dignity of all people to promote solidarity between generations** and to do more to mobilise the potential of older persons;

Or. en

Amendment 14

Proposal for a decision

Article 2 - point 2

Text proposed by the Commission

(2) 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;

Amendment

(2) to stimulate debate and develop mutual learning between Member States and stakeholders at all levels in order to promote active ageing policies, ***to promote sustainable and safe pension systems in Europe based on the three-pillar system of occupational and private pensions***, to identify and disseminate good practice and to encourage cooperation and synergies;

Or. en

Amendment 15

Proposal for a decision

Article 2 - point 3

Text proposed by the Commission

(3) 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.

Amendment

(3) to offer a framework for commitment and concrete action to enable Member States and stakeholders at all levels, ***with the strong involvement of civil society***, to develop policies through specific activities and to commit to specific objectives related to active ageing.

Or. en

Amendment 16

Proposal for a decision

Article 3 - paragraph 1 - indent 1

Text proposed by the Commission

- conferences, events and initiatives to promote debate, raise awareness and foster

Amendment

- conferences, events and initiatives, ***with the strong involvement of civil society***, to

the making of specific commitments;

promote debate, raise awareness and foster the making of specific commitments ***contributing to sustained and lasting impacts***;

Or. en

Amendment 17

Proposal for a decision

Article 3 - paragraph 1 - indent 2

Text proposed by the Commission

- information, promotion and educational campaigns;

Amendment

- information, promotion and educational campaigns ***making use of multimedia***;

Or. en

Amendment 18

Proposal for a decision

Article 3 - paragraph 3

Text proposed by the Commission

3. The Commission and the Member States shall take account of gender mainstreaming in the running of the European Year.

Amendment

3. The Commission and the Member States shall take account of gender ***and disability mainstreaming and of the need for all generations to be involved*** in the running of the European Year.

Or. en

Amendment 19

Proposal for a decision

Article 4

Text proposed by the Commission

Each Member State shall appoint a national coordinator responsible for organising its

Amendment

1. Each Member State shall appoint a national coordinator responsible for

involvement in the European Year. The national coordinators should also see to it that national activities are properly coordinated.

organising its involvement in the European Year *and shall inform the Commission of that appointment.*

2. By 30 September 2011, each Member State shall inform the Commission of its work programme, which shall include details of the national activities planned under the European Year.

3. The national coordinators should also see to it that national activities are *in accordance with objectives listed in Article 2 and are* properly coordinated.

Or. en

Amendment 20

Proposal for a decision Article 4 a (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

Article 4a

Participating countries

Participation in the European Year shall be open to:

(a) Member States;

(b) candidate countries;

(c) EFTA States that are parties to the EEA Agreement.

Or. en

Amendment 21

**Proposal for a decision
Article 5 - paragraph -1 (new)**

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

***The Commission shall implement the
European Year at Union level.***

Or. en

Amendment 22

**Proposal for a decision
Article 5 a (new)**

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

Article 5a

Funding and non-financial support

1. Activities at the Union level, as set out in Article 3(1), may be co-financed or give rise to a procurement contract financed from the general budget of the European Union.

2. Co-financing at Union level of activities within the framework of the European Year shall be in accordance with the priorities and rules applying, on an annual or multiannual basis, to existing programmes and autonomous budget lines, particularly in the field of employment, social affairs and equal opportunities. Where appropriate, programmes and policies in other fields which also contribute to promoting active ageing, such as education and culture, health, research, the information society, regional policy and transport policy, may support the European Year.

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

accordance with Article 3(2).

Or. en

Amendment 23

Proposal for a decision Article 5 b (new)

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

Article 5b

Budget

1. The financial envelope for the implementation at Union level of this decision, in particular the activities set out in Article 3(1), for the period from 1 January 2011 to 31 December 2012 is EUR 6 000 000, of which EUR 2 000 000 shall be reserved for use within the period to 31 December 2011.

2. Annual appropriations shall be authorised by the budgetary authority within the limits of the financial framework.

Or. en

Amendment 24

Proposal for a decision Article 7

Text proposed by the Commission

Amendment

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.

1. 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, ***to serve as a basis for future***

EU policies, measures and actions in this field.

2. The report shall also 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.

Or. en

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Population ageing is one of the EU's most important challenges but also one of the biggest opportunities.

The rise in life expectancy linked to ageing is certainly an extraordinary social achievement and a success of our time. Europeans today are leaving longer and healthier lives than ever before which is a positive and encouraging development. However, this success also confronts the European society with a number of challenges, in particular in the area of employment and social protection. To illustrate this, Eurostat's demographic projections expect a decrease of about 6.8% (20.8 million) of people in working age in 2030. Thus, only two people of working age (15-64) will have to support one retired person (over 65), compared to a ratio of four to one today. The EU will therefore experience a steep increase in the share of older people and a large decline in the share of population aged below 50, which may, in turn, increase pressure on public budgets and pension systems, as well as on the social and care provision for older people. In addition, old age is often associated with illness and dependency, and older people can feel excluded from employment as well as from family and society.

For these reasons, population ageing could be considered a huge challenge, if not a hazard, or it could offer new opportunities for the European society, depending on how well we prepare for it. A key for meeting this challenge consists in ensuring that the population in their 50s and over can stay longer in the labour market, continue to be active participants in society and remain healthy and independent as long as possible. It is therefore a challenge that the European society has to prepare for and if prepared well, and much in advance, it could become an opportunity for Europe to prosper faster and with greater extent of social cohesion across generations.

Governments and public policies have to respond to the challenge in a number of areas, in particular by putting in place framework conditions to deal with the consequences of population ageing. In addition, private sector, the social partners and civil society as well as individual citizens have to make their respective contribution. All these stakeholders are key factors in providing solutions to the challenge of Europe's ageing society.

Responding to the challenge at the EU level, on 6 September 2010, the Commission presented a proposal for a decision designating 2012 as European Year for Active Ageing. The proposed initiative would 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 currently in their 50s and above. The European Year should therefore serve as a framework for raising awareness, for identifying and disseminating good practice and, most importantly, for encouraging policymakers and stakeholders at all levels to promote active ageing.

Your Rapporteur very much welcomes the Commission's proposal and its general approach. Such a European Year could and should offer a good opportunity to reflect on the demographic phenomenon challenging the EU and the Member States. But it should also pave

the way to making sound commitments to promote active ageing at all levels. Efforts should be made to consolidate the European Year's results in the framework of specific policies and programmes across the relevant policy areas, thus providing a drive for permanent practices.

Moreover, your Rapporteur considers that the proposal for the European Year needs to be amended taking account of the following specific issues:

1. A society valuing active ageing has to put in place framework conditions allowing for ageing actively but also for ageing ***while maintaining the vitality and respecting the dignity of all people***. Moreover, active ageing can be successful only in a society built on ***solidarity and cooperation between generations***.

According to the WHO definition, active ageing includes creating more opportunities for older people to continue working, to stay healthy longer and to continue to contribute to society in other ways, for example through volunteering. Consequently, society and economy have to help people to sustain their physical, social and spiritual well-being into old age. There is therefore a need for a holistic approach to promoting active ageing which has to include the health, vitality and dignity aspects, if we want to make it possible for older people to continue to be active participants in society and remain independent as long as possible.

Furthermore, in order to promote active ageing it is of utmost importance to enhance solidarity and cooperation between generations. This idea is shared and promoted by a number of civil society organisations representing interests of different age groups, in particular AGE and the European Youth Platform. Also, the European Day of Intergenerational Solidarity is celebrated annually on 29 April to the same end. However, solidarity between the young, the active and the elderly must not be approached solely from a financial perspective. On the contrary, it has to be viewed in a wider context, encompassing the promotion of mutual cooperation and exchange between all generations so that each of them can find its place in the society and all and every one of them can contribute to the European society to the best of its abilities. The European society has to become a society for all ages.

Your Rapporteur therefore proposes that the European Year 2012 be designated as "European Year for Active Ageing - promoting solidarity between generations, maintaining the vitality and respecting the dignity of all" and that the three pillars – vitality, dignity and solidarity between generations - are given visibility in the European Year's objectives and activities.

2. The European Year 2012 should contribute to developing an ***active ageing culture*** in Europe as a set of attitudes, values, goals, and practices shared by all Europeans.

Active ageing has to become an integral part of the European social model and of the social market economy. It needs to become a cornerstone of the 'European way of life', based on three pillars: vitality, dignity and solidarity between generations. In order to achieve this, the European Year should contribute to changing mentalities and developing ownership and a lasting support for active ageing among all generations, including the population in their 50s and above. The European Year should also help promote the image

of older people, and of the contribution they can offer, among the public at large. It should contribute to changing the way our society is organised and to re-establishing the social relationships and links between and within different generations.

Your Rapporteur therefore suggests that the overall purpose of the European Year be set out in such a way so that the European Year contributes to creating a sustainable active ageing culture in Europe.

3. Achieving the overall policy goals during the European Year requires involvement and support of all relevant stakeholders but also a minimum amount of *budgetary resources*.

The European Year should make it possible for, and encourage participation and involvement of all relevant stakeholders at the EU, national, regional and local level. The social partners' and civil society organisations' role is crucial in this respect. Among the later, special attention has to be given to churches and different associations fighting poverty and social exclusion.

Given that many of the existing EU funding programmes in different areas are relevant to active ageing, there is a possibility for them to contribute to the implementation of the European Year. Encouragement of such a contribution would be welcome also due to the fact that policy support to active ageing is required in a range of different areas. However, actual contribution from these programmes will remain unclear until the very end of the European Year. In addition, it is of utmost importance for the EU to do as much as possible to support Member States in organising their activities at national, regional and local levels, including by creating conditions for identifying and sharing experience. Therefore, there is a need to set aside a certain amount of funds for the EU level activities specific to the European Year, such as information and communication, EU level conferences, analysis and studies.

In order to support the sustainability of the European Year, your Rapporteur therefore urges for a specific funding line for the European Year 2012.

The EU and its Member States have done a lot in the past to increase the life expectancy of European citizens. Economic prosperity, social security and reliable peace have ensured that the quality of life has increased. At the same time, new challenges have arisen which we have to deal with. Living in a culture of active aging can be of help in this respect, in particular if active ageing is developed in a holistic manner, including prevention and promotion of the respect for resources and talents that people of all generations can offer to the economy and society.

The European Year 2012 should therefore be a milestone for these developments in Europe, putting people in the centre of the politics, society and economy and making the Europe's society a society for all ages.