

AGEING MEETING JUNE 2016

The Vice-Chair, Dirk Jarré, reported about the outcome of a preparatory meeting of the UNECE Bureau of the “Working Group on Ageing” in Oslo in May. It was still not clear where the Ministerial Conference will be held; Dirk will inform the Committee immediately when a decision is taken. The brochure, published by the Committee on Ageing, with Recommendations to Decision Makers was received very well and some of these recommendations are reflected in the present draft of the Ministerial Declaration.

The celebration of **the Int. Day of Older Persons** will take place during a special meeting on Monday, 26 September, 2016. On this occasion the outcome of today’s meeting, namely an instrumental approach to participation and inclusion will be presented. Representatives of other NGO Committees will be invited, as well as other persons with an interest in topics on ageing. The Committee will invite pupils/young people to attend the meeting, in order to having young and old persons actively participating in the celebration-meeting.

Plans for future activities of the Vienna Committee on Ageing:

The whole cluster of topics around Crime and Ageing is something this Committee could have a closer look at.

Another topic for future discussions in the Ageing Committee could be how society deals with death, end of life, and which political consequences there are, which recommendations we could give.

The problem of isolation in urban areas was mentioned, as well as the problem that in some rural areas older persons were left behind when younger generations leave the villages and small towns.

Concepts, mechanisms, concrete instruments and processes of and for participation

Mr. Jarré reminded the members of this Committee of the work we did on the topic “Opportunities for active ageing and removing barriers and obstacles to active and healthy ageing”. The outcome led to the brochure “Recommendations to decision makers...”.

At that time we already spoke about an enabling environment. Today the discussion should go a step further: how can older people be better included into society, how can older persons’ participation in society be supported and encouraged.

CoA members had been asked to present examples of good practice in this field.

The basic questions are:

- Why do we want participation, inclusion, co-decision?
- Who defines “successful participation”, what are innovative examples?
- Who benefits from good participation of older persons, who takes the initiative?
- Who monitors processes, which means are needed?

It was agreed that research had to start at the local level, the questions were: who are those discriminated against: the poor? men? women?

We also discussed the topic of loneliness: how can those who are already lonely and isolated be reached and re-included? It was stressed that fighting loneliness was one of the most important issues.

An important strategy to achieve an inclusive society is to pay attention to the needs of all members of society, of the young and of the older generations. This may include increasing services in society, as this is, e.g., done in age-friendly cities. It may also mean to find ways that enable isolated persons to become organised in self-help groups. But the most important measure is to involve the elderly themselves in whatever initiatives are planned.