

Second Ministerial Roundtable

Mainstreaming ageing to advance a society for all ages

Friday 17 June 2022

15:00-16:30

In the coming decades, the number of older people in the EU is expected to increase.

These are actually good news.

This means that we live longer, we are healthier and more active than we were at the same age in previous generations. In that aspect, ageing societies is not a problem but an opportunity for all of us.

Preparing for an ageing population is vital to the achievement of the integrated 2030 Agenda, with ageing cutting across the goals on poverty eradication, good health, gender equality, economic growth and decent work, reduced inequalities and sustainable cities.

Therefore, while it is essential to address the exclusion and vulnerability of older persons, it is more important to go beyond treating older persons as a vulnerable group.

Older persons must be recognized as the active agents of development in order to achieve truly inclusive and sustainable development outcomes.

To this end, comprehensive and targeted measures should be taken in order to mainstream ageing and address inequalities due to age.

To name some examples, **older women** must be encouraged to live without discrimination on any ground and be part of the recovery and resilience plans after the Covid-19 pandemic, since they were in the frontline in dealing with it.

In this respect some of our national priorities based on the National Action Plan on Gender Equality are as follows:

- provide support for older women to eliminate multiple discrimination and remove social exclusion, through encouraging their participation to society, providing them with basic digital skills training in order to help them reintegrate in the labour market, implementing intergenerational programs in schools where they can transmit their life experience and knowledge to young children.

Second, measures should be taken to promote the participation of older persons to the labour market taking into consideration the difficulties they are facing to reintegrate due to long-term unemployment. In Greece, we are implementing multiple active labour programs addressed also to older workers and long-term unemployed who are often people over the age of 50.

It goes without saying that the working experience and knowledge of older persons, is necessary to enterprises and younger workers. Nonetheless, the labour cost may be higher for older persons, preventing employers from hiring them. To this end, the Ministry of Labour implements programs that provide employers with incentives to hire older workers and thus promote active ageing

Last but not least, i in the field of social solidarity, our country has included the elderly in the beneficiary groups of the National Strategy for Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction for the Programming Period 2021-2027 by adopting an inclusive approach in the design and implementation of policies and measures for vulnerable groups.

It is also of utmost importance to foster cooperation and coordination among relevant Ministries and Bodies, in order to ensure that all actions are integrated in a general context of national planning.

To this end the Ministry of Labour, has established a special working group for the social protection of the elderly with wide participation.

To conclude, I would like to emphasize the importance of consultations with the civil society working for the promotion

of the rights of older persons as well as of international fora as this successful conference, where good practices can be exchanged and useful solutions can be proposed to promote age mainstreaming and create equal and inclusive societies.