

**Always at the Optimal Age!**

**The European Year for Active Ageing  
and Solidarity between Generations 2012**

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**FINNISH NATIONAL ACTION PLAN**

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Finnish National Action Plan

## Summary

■ The theme of the European Year 2012 is active ageing and solidarity between generations. The decision on this was made in June 2011.

The motto of the European year is: "Always at the optimal age!"

The executive group has prepared a national action plan, according to which the main goals of the European year in Finland are:

1) To promote understanding of the importance of active ageing and collaboration between generations for the development and maintenance of people's participation and well-being during their whole life course.

2) To promote the dissemination of practices that support active ageing and co-operation between generations, in workplaces, schools, day care and NGOs.

3) To gather information on different generation groups and their operative cultures. During the year, unbiased information is to be distributed and the fostering of positive age attitudes in our society is to be promoted.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health coordinates the project and has established an informal steering group. The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health is responsible for organizing the European year in Finland.

## Key words

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## FOREWORD

2012 is the European year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations. This topic is of current interest everywhere in Europe. During the next 20 years, ageing will advance more rapidly in Finland than in other European Union countries.

Life expectancy has grown rapidly over the last decades. At the same time, health and functional capacity have improved. This is a positive achievement and brings new possibilities. We must take advantage of the opportunities that these additional healthy years of one's life offer. In the future we must better secure good, balanced and meaningful life in all its phases. Citizen's well-being and the quality of life must also be improved during the senior years by supporting older people's active participation in their family life, in their immediate communities and in the activities of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and society.

The goal is a good society for all ages. Catering to the needs of all age groups strengthens fairness between generations. A socially sustainable society treats all its members fairly, strengthens participation and communality, supports health and functional capacity, and offers the security and services required.

The foundations of future well-being are created through work and participation. Financing social security is based above all on a high employment rate. However, the amount of people of working age has already started to decrease in Finland, and therefore everyone's contribution is needed.

We must strive for a society in which health and work ability can improve, and make continuing at work possible; in which problems and diseases are prevented and intervention is more efficient. Moving the focus from handling problems to preventing them improves above all the quality of people's everyday life, but is also a societal investment that consolidates the financial foundations of social security.

Changes in population age structure have far-reaching effects on the whole of society. In Finland, preparing for ageing has already been a salient age policy for years. In order to realize this we need extensive collaboration between different administrative branches, municipalities, local level actors, and non-governmental organizations.

The Ministry of Social Affairs and Health has established an informal steering group for the European year. Together with the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, this group has prepared a draft of the Finnish national action plan.

Paula Risikko  
Minister of Social Affairs and Health

Maria Guzenina-Richardson  
Minister of Health and Social Services

## BACKGROUND

In coming years, the amount of over 60-year-olds in Europe will increase at the same time as the average age of the workforce rises and the amount of the working population falls <sup>1</sup>.

Changes in population structure bring along both opportunities and challenges. In the coming years, the amount of the aged population will increase faster in Finland than in most other countries. The impact of this extends to the whole of society. Access to social and health services, pensions and other forms of social security should be offered to everyone, in spite of growing pressure on public finances.

Well-being and prosperity are built up through work and the participation of everyone. The prerequisites of social and economic sustainability are a high employment rate, healthy and functionally able citizens, as well as effective social and health services. If we see to it that the baby boom generation stays longer in the labour market and leads a healthy, active and independent life for as long as possible, we are able to rise to the challenge that the ageing of the population evokes and can strive to reassert fairness between generations.

Within the framework of employment strategies, Member States have begun attempts to reverse the tendency toward early retirement. In the EU-27, the employment rate of those at the age of 55–64 was already 46 per cent in 2009, whereas it was 36.9 per cent in 2000. In Finland the employment rate of the older generation has in past years risen quicker than in other EU countries, which mainly results from pension reforms and many work life development projects. Motivating older employees to stay in work life requires the enhancement of working conditions and their adjustment to older employees' health and needs, updating older employees' skills by offering them better opportunities for lifelong learning, and by revising taxation and benefit systems to encourage people to stay on longer in work life. Longer careers mean a better pension. There is a tendency to secure the subsistence of those living on the lowest pension incomes by bringing guaranteed pension into play. Guaranteed pension is paid to those whose total pension at the moment is lower than the amount of guaranteed pension.

Even after one's career is over, active involvement is an effective approach to secure successful ageing. In spite of the fact that part of the population of pensionable age carries out large amounts of voluntary work within their own family and NGOs, some older people experience old age as a time of marginalization. Better opportunities for older people to work and be active in different organizations could diminish the withdrawal of older people, by offering meaningful tasks and increasing participation.

Active ageing is a concept that comprises different combinations to improve life quality, such as participation in the labour market, active tasks such as helping one's neighbours and other voluntary work, and participation in community life and meaningful free time.

Active ageing has different definitions: some mainly emphasize extending careers, (e.g. OECD 1999), whereas the angle in others is wider and covers promotion of the health, involvement and security of the entire population. The World Health Organization WHO executes an age policy primarily on the grounds of the principles of active ageing, the central fields of which are 1) the health of the ageing population, 2) social participation of the ageing population and 3) security. Active ageing requires

interaction-based cross-administrative action; through this, solidarity between generations increases and inequality is prevented. It is evident on different levels such as in the functions of evidence-based policy, (macro), organizing communities and neighbourhoods (meso) and in separate actions (micro). These different levels must develop hand in hand in order to promote active ageing effectively. (WHO 2002 Active Ageing – A Policy Framework.)

In Finland, securing healthy ageing is seen as an investment that influences the length of careers as well as the need for social and health services, and in this way affects people's life quality and economic sustainability.

In this action plan, active ageing refers to dynamic ageing both in everyday life and at work. Active ageing means the establishment of better opportunities and working conditions, so that older employees can participate in the labour market. It also means the prevention of social isolation through promoting active participation in the community and society, and supporting healthy ageing. In this way, the social inclusion of older people is secured even when careers are over. The prevention of social exclusion and the promotion of health, as well as the maintenance of social, psychological and cognitive performance are essential.

## OBJECTIVE OF THE EUROPEAN YEAR 2012

The main objective of the European year is to encourage and support the intentions of the Member States, their regional and local authorities, social partners and civil society to promote active ageing and the well-being and social role of those approaching 60 years of age or older than that, and in this way to reassert fairness between generations. Consequently the objective is to

(1) improve public awareness of the importance of active ageing, in order to emphasize the contribution of older people to society and the economy, to promote active ageing, and to better use the potential of older people and to improve citizens' attitudes towards age-related issues;

(2) open discourses and develop reciprocal learning between Member States and stakeholders on all levels in order to promote policies of active ageing, to define and spread good practices, as well as to promote collaboration and synergy;

(3) present terms for engagement and practical measures, so that Member States and stakeholders on all levels are able to develop policies with special measures and commit to specific objectives pertaining to active ageing.

# FINLAND'S SITUATION

## DEMOGRAPHIC CHANGES

In Finland, the amount of older and retired people is growing as the average life span lengthens. The generations entering work life are approximately 30,000 units smaller than the retiring generations.

The retiring possess know-how and ability that is still usable to support both society's and personal well-being.

### Lifelong learning offers opportunities

Active ageing requires continuous learning. In Finland, the promotion of lifelong learning is included in all education. Lifelong learning presupposes that individuals have mental capacity, skills and economic opportunities to learn new things during their whole life course, and training organizations offer all student groups suitable ways to promote their know-how (Ministry of Education and Culture future review 2010). The promotion of lifelong learning is included in education legislation, recently also in the new University Act 558/2009: In carrying out their mission, universities must promote lifelong learning.

Adult education and studying forms an important part of lifelong learning. According to the 2006 adult education survey, over 1.6 million adults took part in adult education every year in Finland. However, ageing, 55–64-year-old people participate less than other age groups. Adult education benefits were revised for the unemployed and employed in 2010. This enabled the unemployed to study in self-initiated training on unemployment benefits when it was agreed upon as a part of the job applicant's job seeking plan or employment plan. This has activated even those over 50 years of age; in 2010 they made up 11.3 per cent of new self-initiated trainees supported by unemployment benefits.

Liberal adult education (popular education) is an important part of the Finnish adult education system. Over half of adult education consists of studies mostly in open educational institutions. Liberal adult education is based on the grounds of lifelong learning training that supports the integrity of society, equality and active citizenship. The goal of training organized on the grounds of liberal adult education is to promote people's versatile development, well-being and realization of democracy, pluralism, sustainable development, multiculturalism and internationalism. This adult education emphasizes voluntary learning, communality, and inclusion.

### Healthy ageing

Finnish ageing policy has already made, and continues to make, many changes that contribute to the status, rights and services of older people, and aims to

- promote age equality
- develop the structures and contents of the promotion of well-being and health to respond to the needs of older people
- secure access to a home (private or collective) and everyday life, even when a person's functional capacity and state of health requires round-the-clock care and attention

- recognize the major reasons behind the need for services and prepare for them appropriately (especially dementia) and to
- secure the participation of older people on both the individual and community level.

(Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2008; Ministry of Social Affairs and Health & Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities 2008; Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2009; Prime Minister's Office 2009; Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2010a; 2010b.)

Examples of promoting healthy ageing are the proposals made in 2009 by the Ikäneuvo working group of the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health on the promotion of older people's well-being and health. The working group saw a clear service gap in preventive social services and health care, and proposed, for example, that the financing of consultation services that promote the health and well-being of older people be fortified, in order to form an information and service network that covers the whole country. The group even proposed securing opportunities for that through legislation when social and health care legislation is revised. The implementation of the propositions is under way. The Health Care Act (1326/2010), effective from 1 May 2011, obliges municipalities to organize counselling services for the promotion of the well-being, health and functional capacity of the old age pensioners living in their region. Even in the draft law on securing availability of social and health services for the older people, a strong emphasis is placed on the systematic securing of healthy ageing. Increasing well-being and health promotion measures and services is emphasized, along with a reform of social welfare legislation (Ministry of Social Affairs and Health 2010c). The prevention principle is one of the central principles that control this reform. Information regarding this can be found on the website of the National Institute for Health and Welfare: [www.thl.fi/ikaneuvo](http://www.thl.fi/ikaneuvo). It has been produced in collaboration with the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities, based on the Ikäneuvo working group memorandum.

## Participation as part of active, healthy ageing

In securing participation, the important principle that one must observe is the diversity of older people. Age diversity increases along with ageing. Children of a particular age group form a developmental cohort, in which certain skills can be anticipated at certain ages. By retirement age, people have decades of different experiences and paths of education, work life, leisure, family ties and lifestyles behind them. Thus older people do not form a coherent group and their opportunities and needs for participation are different and on different levels. Therefore securing participation has many dimensions.

Healthy eating, drinking, exercise and sleeping habits promote the health of ageing people and the maintenance of the self-management of potential diseases, active participation and good functional capacity. Cooking and dining offer important opportunities for social interaction and shared experiences with other people. As well as preventing illnesses, good nutrition shortens possible hospitalization periods, and supports staying at home.

Recipients of care must have the opportunity and the right to partake in decision-making concerning their own service and placements in care provision. There is much to be developed here; decisions are taken on behalf of people, and people often lack



information that would support participation. The issue at stake here is the maintenance and confirmation of an individual's social functional capacity, and the securing of the sense of community of an older person so that he/she is a legally competent member of his/her community.

In more detail, social participation means people's opportunities to influence the development of society and their surroundings. The voice of older people should be heard in decision-making that concerns them; older people's councils are important in protecting participation in this respect.

The possibilities that older people have as consumers and users of services expand as their economic situation improves with age. This should also be visible in market supply, so that the different needs of the growing group of older people are catered for. The older consumers should have more opportunities and platforms to influence the designing of services and user friendly planning.

In an ageing society, participation must be widely secured. It is important to secure the cultural equality and cultural participation of older people as consumers and producers of culture. They become "visible" through different cultural activities; this "becoming visible" in society, changes attitudes, renders myths untrue, and challenges stereotypes.

## Good solutions for work life

In Europe and Finland wide agreement prevails that careers are too short in proportion to people's life expectancy and functional capacity. Careers should be extended at their beginning, middle and end and we should support their good quality. Health promotion at workplaces (e.g. supporting healthy eating during working time, and social work with substances abusers at the workplace) foster work ability and the occupational safety of employees of all ages. Work load factors vary in different occupations; therefore workplaces should actively develop work and working conditions. The better the employees' work ability, the longer careers last, and the better is productivity.

Finland has developed internationally significant methods to support entry into working life, the development of work and know-how, the promotion of health at workplaces, and to guide employees of varying ages to develop their know-how and maintain well-being within organizations. Many methods have however not sufficiently penetrated workplaces, therefore their dissemination should be intensified.

Even though efforts have been made to support careers from their beginning, young people's access to the labour market has become notably difficult during the past years, and for example young people's long term unemployment has increased. Sustainable development of careers requires new solutions, especially at the beginning of careers.

In addition, great emphasis has been placed on developing, for example, peer support-based coaching in the transition to retirement. Some Finnish organizations have used such training programmes and many continue to do so. The impact of these on the transition from work to pension and on the quality of life after work has not however been examined thoroughly. During the European year, information on and experiences of retirement training will be gathered.

## Solidarity between generations

Solidarity between generations or mutual solidarity refers to different things in different EU countries. In Finland we have recently discussed for example the unequal pension schemes of different generations, and age discrimination in workplaces. In 2009 in Finland, the Prime Minister's Office initiated a comprehensive evaluation of the impact of ageing and adequacy of provisions. According to this "Report on ageing", there is no evidence of conflict between generations in Finland in regard to social security. The report also states that developing society so that it is optimal for all ages is a challenging goal, but that the idea is not utopian.

Discussion on generations must be continued in order to develop understanding of different generations. Every generation consists of different groups, whose values, expectations, know-how and ways of operating differ. Development of cooperative ability and the solidarity of generations calls for the identification of these different groups, their ways of operating, and their needs.

In this action plan, solidarity between generations refers to the togetherness of generations, and to equality. The goal of the European year is a socially sustainable society that treats all members of society fairly, strengthens togetherness and equality between generations, and supports the health, functional capacity and active participation of all age groups.

## Outline of the national action plan:

The English slogan of the European year is "Everyone has a role to play"

The Finnish motto is "Aina on oikea ikä!" "Always at the optimal age!"

Subject to situations, a different subtitle can be inserted into the motto, for example "Everyone has a role to play - and learn something new" "Always at the optimal age – to learn new things".

In Swedish the motto is: "Det är alltid rätt ålder att..." Always at the optimal age..."

The momentum of the European year should be utilized to achieve better coverage and awareness of existing knowledge and good practices that promote its goals. Finland has been active in its research and promotion of the functional capacity and work ability of older people for decades. Now we must obtain a fresh viewpoint, so that public awareness and use of the information and working solutions can be widened. The message of the European year: "Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations" must emphasize participation and the strengths of people of various ages both in everyday life and at work. How can we utilize everyone's strengths and how can we complement each other's know-how and ability to cope?

Every possible platform and co-operation network shall be utilized to make this matter known. The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, the National Institute for Health and Welfare, and The Central Union for the Welfare of the Aged are already involved with their projects and platforms. In addition, other organizations, such as local authority actors and service producers, as well as NGOs shall be invited to join in. Even universities and institutes of higher education, which study questions related to the activities and co-operation of people of various ages and support the development of know-how among the older generation, have been invited to participate in the realization of the European year. We hope that the European year will be realized

both regionally and locally in municipalities and organizations. Centralized plans of action for the year may be made for instance for different regions.

Information related to the subject matter of the European year is distributed in established annual national events, for example, career fairs, the Age forum, municipal fairs and the Occupational Health and Safety Convention. Even the regional offices of the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health arrange a meeting in connection with the theme together with the National Institute for Health and Welfare and/or other organizations and NGOs. In the Jyväskylä area, a meeting is organized together with the University of Jyväskylä on the issues of the European year.

We continue to apply development methods aimed at extending work life, coping with workloads, developing know-how, and the promotion of health for the young, older people, and women in different target groups, contexts and fields in Finland.

Research on the subject matter of the European year promotes further visibility of the highlighted issues. During the European year, research on management of career changes and management of an ageing workforce will be continued. This combines both career-related transfers of different generations and preparedness for them, as well as the work community/superiors' support and understanding during these changes.

## Finland's objectives for the European year

1) To help citizens, NGOs, workplaces and schools better understand the importance of active ageing and solidarity between generations for the development and conservation of people's participation and well-being during the whole life course.

2) To promote the dissemination of practices that support active ageing and co-operation between generations, in workplaces, schools, day care and NGOs.

3) To more effectively promote thorough understanding of issues connected to solidarity between generations. Data on different groups within generations and their ways of operation will be collected during the European Year 2012. Unbiased information on ageing will be disseminated and positive age attitudes will be promoted in society.

## Methods

During the European year, existing information on good practices and effective ways of operation of the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health and the National Institute for Health and Welfare, universities and NGOs will be utilized. Activities will employ existing networks, platforms, occasions, meeting places, and information channels (websites, newspapers, blogs etc. as well as the Finnish EU Office).

In all our activities we strive for as wide collaboration as possible between different actors, as well as for openness and voluntariness. The events of the European year can be co-ordinated for example regionally, and e.g. local or regional events can be organized by different actors.

As well as collaboration between generations, the focus will be on the promotion of active ageing and careers, especially lifelong learning and developing professional competencies.

During the European year, Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations, we highlight the theme 'INFORMATION SERVICES FOR THE AGED AND HOUSE CALLS - promoting well-being' in a network guide, produced through collaboration

between the National Institute for Health and Welfare, the Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities and other experts. This can be found at [www.thl.fi/ikaneuvo](http://www.thl.fi/ikaneuvo)

## Research and scientific reports

We conduct demographic research on active ageing and on for example the impact of culture on health and well-being. In research we utilize the population statistics of the National Institute for Health and Welfare as well as the ATH (Local health and well-being survey), in order to study regional differences through questions such as: do older people help their children for example by looking after grand-children, how do they seek help, what is the intensity of helping. The local health and well-being survey will be revised into a nationwide survey, with a sample of 100,000 Finns.

During the European year, many surveys related to the subject matter already underway will continue, such as the National Institute for Health and Welfare's Finnish well-being and services (HYPA) survey on families with children, which studies for example the issue of different generations assisting each other, and will also possibly conduct a separate survey on families with children. The Life course and intergenerational dialogue research and development project, executed by the Central Union for the Welfare of the Aged with funding from the Finnish Slot Machine Association; the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health's national Work and health interview survey, and the Work ability and third age well-being municipal employees' 28-year follow-up study are also included. In addition, the SOTERKO research project will be realized by the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health, the National Institute for Health and Welfare, the Social Insurance Institution, the Finnish Centre for Pensions, the Government Institute for Economic Research, and research networks and universities. The topic is the health, well-being and participation of young adults.

Both national and international scientific journals, such as *Gerontologia* and the *Nordic Journal of Working Life Studies* magazines, will publish special Active Ageing issues on the topics of the European year. Non-scientific magazines and trade magazines of broad circulation will be informed about the European year and we will ask them to participate with for example a special issue.

## Concrete measures

Proven methods are spread and applied into new operating environments, in order to support school to work transition, develop work and work skills, support coping with workloads, encourage continuing in work life and help organizations assess their ability to support know-how and management of an ageing workforce.

Existing local networks will be activated, such as the work life quality contact person network of the Centres for Economic Development, Transport and the Environment, with actions related to European year subjects.

Information will be disseminated regarding measures that support active ageing both locally and regionally, and culture and exercise to support active ageing will be encouraged.

## Communications

To support communications, the EU announced a call for tenders to European advertising/communications agencies and has chosen the actor to be responsible for communications during the European year. This European communications agency will provide national subcontractors, to support the communications of the European year on the level of each country. When this action plan was prepared, the Finnish national level communications subcontractor was not yet known. The aim of the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health is to conduct intensive co-operation with this communications subcontractor during the EU year.

On the EU level, a website has been set up for the European year, and has been translated into all the EU languages: [www.active-ageing-2012.eu](http://www.active-ageing-2012.eu)

The Finnish website has been up and running since September 2011, under the official website of the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health at: [www.ttl.fi/activeaging](http://www.ttl.fi/activeaging). In Finland, different organizations have their own project pages on the year's subjects, which are linked according to agreement to the European year website. There is even a calendar of events on Finland's European year website, where different event organizers can provide information on events. A digital form on the internet can be used to make announcements regarding an event, or the information can be sent via email to [activeaging@ttl.fi](mailto:activeaging@ttl.fi). In addition, a "speaker bank" list will be published on the EU year website, that is, a listing from which different event organizers can choose a suitable speaker for their event. The media will be informed of this.

A separate communication strategy will be drafted for the European year, for which the Finnish Institute of Occupational Health's area of activity called Influence through Knowledge will be responsible.

Committees of the Parliament (Employment and Equality, Social Affairs and Health), advisory boards (Advisory Board on Romani Affairs, Advisory Board for Ethnic Relations and Advisory Board for Minority Issues, Svenska Finlands Folkting – Swedish Assembly of Finland, Folkhälsan – Swedish-speaking NGO in the health and social sector, as well as the Sámi Parliament), and Finnish members of the European Parliament will be informed of the matter. An information event will also be organized for the new parliament.

## CONTENTS AND EVENTS OF THE EUROPEAN YEAR

A socially sustainable society, where people are treated equally, where everyone's inclusion is secured and everyone's health and work ability is promoted, is the goal of the European Year 2012. In order to promote this objective, we raise the following issues:

### 1) Supporting careers:

Management of career change situations; extending careers at the beginning, middle and end

Age management (life span approach)

Development of competence at work

Employees of different ages at the same workplace - sharing knowledge, roles, individual adjustments, induction training

Gender equality

Promoting health: nutrition and other lifestyle issues

## 2) Lifelong learning

Management of information technology (of older people)

Adding to the visibility of the University of the Third Age

## 3) Other issues in connection with active ageing

- How do information services for older people, provided by local authorities, promote the functional capacity, well-being and health of older people living in the municipality

Information service points and house calls promoting well-being that always provide information and guidance on the community's public services, NGO services, services of religious groups and private service providers, and service fees

- Culture and exercise as a means of maintaining functional capacity

Art and culture enhance the health and well-being of older people. The positive effects pertain especially to the social and communal nature of cultural activities. Thus the cultural supply of one's own area and its significance to well-being and health should be highlighted when offering guidance.

[http://www.thl.fi/fi\\_FI/web/fi/tutkimus/tyokalut/neuvontapalvelut/teemat/kulttuuri](http://www.thl.fi/fi_FI/web/fi/tutkimus/tyokalut/neuvontapalvelut/teemat/kulttuuri)

Guidance for physical activity is a recommended and affordable measure of support to maintain and improve the mobility of older people. Good practices for the promotion of physical activity among older people can be found in the Strength in old age programme

[http://www.voimaavanhuuteen.fi/tiedoston\\_katsominen.php?dok\\_id=568](http://www.voimaavanhuuteen.fi/tiedoston_katsominen.php?dok_id=568)

## Supporting healthy ageing

- Advertising the electronic handbook of the National Institute for Health and Welfare

- [http://www.thl.fi/fi\\_FI/web/fi/aiheet/ikaantyminen\\_ja\\_toimintakyky](http://www.thl.fi/fi_FI/web/fi/aiheet/ikaantyminen_ja_toimintakyky)

- The action programme for older people's physical activity completed in spring 2011, carried out with mutual funding from the Ministry of Education and Culture, the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health and the Finnish Slot Machine Association.

[http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Julkaisut/2011/Ikaihminen\\_liikunnan\\_kansallinen\\_toimenpideohjelma.html](http://www.minedu.fi/OPM/Julkaisut/2011/Ikaihminen_liikunnan_kansallinen_toimenpideohjelma.html)

- Further support for the national Strength in old age programme and the launching of measures pertaining to physically active retirement training, and promotion of healthy eating habits, good sleep and moderate alcohol consumption.

- During the European year a national seminar on physical activity for older people will be organized. The Age Institute as well as the Ministry of Education and Culture and the Ministry of Social Affairs and Health can act as responsible organizers with other co-operative organizations if considered necessary.

The European year also highlights the importance of older people's voluntary and peer work, and constructs in this way a bridge to the European Year 2011, which was

the year of voluntary work. Older people's voluntary and peer work is introduced on the European year's website under the link of everyday actors.

Highlighting active and good old age in different forums, dealing with supporting practices, hobbies, identity and self-concept changes with ageing, health and well-being effects, culture and physical activity. Good nutrition habits are also discussed.

4) Solidarity between generations, its manifestation and development needs in different areas of life

The Central Union for the Welfare of the Aged, with funding from the Finnish Slot Machine Association, has started a new R&D project on life course and intergenerational dialogue, which will continue until the end of 2012. The general aim of the project is to promote the psychosocial well-being and participation of older citizens, at the same time lessening their loneliness and social exclusion. This is will be accomplished through enhancing and increasing the frequency of dialogue between generations. Older people are often at a disadvantage, compared with other citizens, concerning opportunities to participate and meet other people. The project strives to promote encounters between generations and to create places of habitual joint activities, civic responsibility, participation, and life skills.

In order to realize the goal:

- data is gathered and analysed, on how people of different generations conceptualize their life course and their own place in the chain of generations, and how they relate to those younger than themselves and to older generations
- active discussion is initiated on tensions between generations and opportunities for joint activities
- The starting-up of co-operation between generations and communities is promoted.

In 2012, a challenge campaign calls different actors to develop concrete ways in which to promote positive curiosity and co-operation between generations. An electronic database of the good practices approved during this campaign will be formed, which is available to everyone. The content of database will be actively spread to establish the practices. The project creates a foundation for future national policy definitions of practices between generations. The project is realized in co-operation between several actors.

EVENTS OF THE EUROPEAN YEAR IN FINLAND (THE LIST WILL BE UPDATED)

<b>Precedent events 2011</b>	
Central Union for the Welfare of the Aged	Event: Solidarity between generations, Old Student house 29 April 2011
Kuntamarkkinat – municipal fair 2011	Advance advertising/promotion of the EU year
Occupational Health and Safety Convention 2011	Advance advertising of the EU year
Finnish Slot Machine Association	Finnish Slot Machine newsletter (April - May 2011) for the 2012 allowances
Europe Information by the Finnish Ministry for Foreign Affairs	Information events on the EU year in Tampere and Turku autumn 2011
Youth Alliance and delegation KANE	Jubilee seminar on voluntary work 8 December 2011 in Helsinki. The seminar ends the Year of Volunteering 2011, and forms a bridge to the European Year for Active Ageing 2012. Panel discussion on opportunities for voluntary work to support active ageing and the role of voluntary work between generations from the point of view of older people.



The events are mainly organized in existing forums. The following are to be held:

<b>Events during 2012</b>	
Regional Council of North Karelia	Perspectives on Ageing ... High-level conference on health and long-term care 19-21 March 2012, Joensuu
Kuntamarkkinat - municipal fair 2012	Presentation of the EU year (stand/seminar)
Age management network kick-off seminar 2012	The Finnish Institute of Occupational Health will organize a meeting of age management networks in spring 2012 in connection with the publishing of the Age power for work - book
Campus Days 2012	Meilahti, Helsinki (FIOH stand has a competition for youth in connection with EU year)
Week for Older People 2012	
Occupational Health and Safety Convention 2012	Active ageing and solidarity between generations as central theme
Well-being at Work Forum 2012	Active ageing and solidarity between generations as one of the themes
Horisontti Seminar 2012 (Kick off seminar for the European Year 2012)	A FIOH seminar for policymakers, March 2012. Helsinki Music Centre, Active ageing and solidarity between generations as a theme
NIVA course	The Nordic Model: work-life balance - a trap or an opportunity? 24.-27.4.2012 Voksenåsen, Oslo, Norway
Round Table Seminar on Productivity 2012	Active ageing and solidarity between generations as a theme
Safety and Well-being at Work Exhibition 2012	Presentation of the EU year (stand/seminar)
Next Step Youth Event	Presentation of the EU year (stand/seminar)
Healthy SOS 2012	The active life of an active citizen; Presentation of the EU year (stand/seminar)
Local and regional actors	Activity in connection with the subject matter of the EU year, which will be informed locally and compiled into a national event archive (FIOH EU year website)
European Year Closing Seminar	December 2012 FIOH, Helsinki organizes EU year final seminar and official "passing on of the baton" to the organizer of the next EU year

<b>Subsequent events</b>	2013
FIOH	Work, Well-being and Wealth: active ageing at work. International congress 26–28 August 2013 in Helsinki

#### 5) Funding

Funding is targeted towards communications and is co-ordinated by the EU communications office. Therefore the principle of realization of the EU year is that each actor level uses general financial means to realize its projects, mainly in the form of work contributions.

## APPENDIX

**List of people who participated in the preparatory work of the EU-year action plan**

Arrhenius Viveca, Ministerial Adviser, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health  
 Hellstén Harri, Legal Adviser, Federation of Finnish Enterprises  
 Hiltunen Marja-Leena, Senior Officer, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health (Chair)  
 Koltola Lars, Ministerial Adviser, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health,  
     deputy: Gröhn Kari, Senior Research Officer, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health  
 Lavaste Jukka, Senior Officer, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health  
 Lehikoinen Erja, Project Manager, The Regional Council of North Karelia  
 Leppo Tuomas, Senior Officer, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health  
 Leppänen Anneli, Director of Centre of Expertise, Finnish Institute of Occupational Health  
 Luoma Minna-Liisa, Head of the Functional Capacity Unit, National Institute for Health and Welfare  
 Mironen Anne, Head of negotiations, The Trade Union for the Public and Welfare Sectors  
 Moisio Johanna, Senior Officer, Ministry of Education and Culture,  
     Deputy Kari Koivumäki, Planning Officer, Ministry of Education and Culture  
 Närhinen Antti, Specialized Expert, Ministry of Employment and the Economy,  
     Deputy Sari Alho, Senior Officer, Ministry of Employment and the Economy  
 Parjanne Marja-Liisa, Ministerial Counsellor for Finance, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health  
 Räsänen Mikko, Expert, Confederation of Finnish Industries  
     Deputy Bjarne Andersson, Worklife Development Expert, Local Government Employers  
 Suksi Ismo, Senior Officer, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health  
 Työläjäri Riitta, Expert, The Finnish Confederation of Professionals STTK  
 Wallin Marjo, Specialized Researcher, Finnish Institute of Occupational Health  
 Varjonen Elina, Development Manager, Finnish Slot Machine Association  
 Virnes Eevaliisa, Specialized Expert, Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities,  
     Deputy Mika Paavilainen, Lawyer, Association of Finnish Local and Regional Authorities  
 Virta Sari, Team Leader, Finnish Institute of Occupational Health  
 Voutilainen Päivi, Ministerial Adviser, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health