

EU population older and more diverse – new demography report says

The third Demography Report published today in cooperation with Eurostat reveals Europeans are living longer and healthier lives. It also shows how the structure of Europe's population is continuing to change with the number of over 60s in the EU is growing by 2m each year. The report confirms recent trends and brings new data on fertility, life expectancy and migration with a special focus on mobility and migration. It shows a slight increase in fertility rates and an increase in life expectancy where, on average, Europeans are now living two to three months longer for every year. The European Union is also becoming more diverse and family patterns are evolving with new Eurobarometer results suggesting that more and more young Europeans report work experiences in another Member State. The need to adjust EU policies to these developments is clearer than ever. The report provides timely data which will feed into the European debate on demographic change.

Presenting the new report at the informal Ministerial meeting on demography and family policy in Budapest, EU Commissioner for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion, László Andor said: *"Life expectancy is increasing while Europe's workforce is shrinking and, in some Member States, this is happening very fast. We have to adapt our policies to promote a better work/life balance so parents can have children while continuing to work, and we must design policies to encourage Europeans to remain active longer".* He added: *"The EU's Europe 2020 strategy provides the framework for efforts to increase employment and reduce poverty but to tackle the demographic challenge we also need to anchor our priorities in areas like health, migration and regional policies".*

A positive trend in the report is that fertility continues to rise slowly. It has increased from below 1.45 children per women to 1.6. However, for a population to be self-sustaining, 2.1 children per woman would be required. The report points to modern family policies as a good way to improve employment through better reconciliation between paid work and family commitments. It shows a positive correlation between women's participation in work and higher fertility rates.

Life expectancy has also been increasing in an almost continuous and uniform trend at the rate of 2-3 months every year (in 2008 life expectancy for the EU-27 was 76.4 for men and 82.4 for women), and is the main driver behind the population ageing. At the same time, the demographic challenge is geographical with populations in four Member states (BG, LT, LV, RO) decreasing rapidly under the effects of natural growth (more people die than are born) and outward-migration. The population of Central Europe is ageing slowly at the moment but will age very fast from 2030-2040 to become the oldest population in the EU (oldest will be SK).

The report also shows how Europe's population growth is still fuelled mainly by immigration. Non-EU citizens have been joining EU countries at a rate of 1 to 2 million per year and intra-EU mobility has also increased. By 2060 the proportion of migrants and their descendants will double. Although net immigration to the EU halved following the crisis, the total number of non-EU nationals within EU borders still continued to rise. Data shows this fall has been due to a drop in migration for employment, yet there has been an increase in requests for permits for education for example.

New data also show that second generation-migrants tend to achieve levels similar to locals in education and strive to reach similar levels in employment, but are still held back by high unemployment rates. This is a particular area where the EU needs to continue promoting active inclusion policies and measures to foster integration.

In terms of intra-EU mobility, the new Eurobarometer survey shows that one in five of the EU-27 respondents has either worked, or studied in another country, lived with a partner from another country or owns property abroad. One in ten of the respondents plan to move to another Member State in the next ten years.

Background

The Demography Report is published every two years by the European Commission and provides the latest facts and figures that are needed to assess where Member States stand in responding to the challenges of demographic change. This year the report is a joint undertaking with Eurostat, and has a special focus on mobility and migration.

The report was presented during the thematic week Europe for Families, Families for Europe – Population Issues and Policies Awareness Week organised in Budapest by the Hungarian Presidency. The Commission also presented the results of a Eurobarometer survey on new Europeans. The survey was commissioned to gain insight into peoples' connectedness to other countries. Those data will feed into the debate ahead of possible communication on demography and the European Year 2012 dedicated to active ageing.

More information

Video News Release: Bridging Europe's pensions gap :

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=671&langId=en&videosId=2450&vI=en&furtherVideos=yes>

Video News Release: Ageing population:

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=669&langId=en&videosId=161&vI=en&furtherVideos=yes>

Demography and the social situation in the EU

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/main.jsp?catId=502&langId=en>

Demography Report 2010: More, older and more diverse Europeans :

<http://ec.europa.eu/social/BlobServlet?docId=6688&langId=en>

Eurobarometer on new Europeans :

http://ec.europa.eu/public_opinion/archives/ebs/ebs_346_en.pdf

Commissioner Andor's website:

http://ec.europa.eu/commission_2010-2014/andor/index_en.htm

See also: [MEMO/11/209](#)