



Conference on active and healthy ageing Logroño, Spain, 29-30 March 2010

Summary of the presentation given by Jean-Pierre Goor
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The challenge of intergenerational relationships

Already active for many years in the field of ageing, the King Baudouin Foundation launched its intergenerational solidarity project in 2006.

Starting from the facts that ageing is far too often approached from the aspect of social welfare and the viability of pension systems and that older people are too often considered in terms of vulnerability and dependency, the Foundation wished to highlight the potential offered by old age for society as a whole and to encourage intergenerational solidarity.

There is in fact a real risk that solidarity between the generations is not questioned and that generations become inward-looking if no effort is made to preserve dialogue and social cohesion between them.

We have yet to see the full impact of ageing and its consequences are certainly greater than they appear. This obliges us to re-think the organization of our society: the organization of work and free time, the planning of housing and public spaces, mobility, the cohabitation of different generations and the repositioning of their respective roles.

Aware of these challenges, the King Baudouin Foundation has been conducting, since 2006, a programme that combines a number of methodologies:

- Wide-ranging discussion, through a cycle of seminars and research projects;
- Financial support for numerous projects;
- The mobilization of relevant actors in an Intergenerational Circle, charged with jointly developing a new vision on the question of intergenerational relationships and to implement new activities.

The results of the Intergenerational Circle's work and a project typology, illustrated by examples, will be presented.

200 projects on the themes of getting together, handing down memories, artistic and cultural creativity, solidarity with disadvantaged groups, and "living together" have been supported.

In 2009, to mark the occasion of the European Day for Intergenerational Solidarity, the Foundation launched an awareness campaign in the French Community of Belgium, under the name "Generational Crossroads". During its first year, this operation brought together 30 towns and communes in Brussels and Wallonia. Almost 60 communes will participate in the 2010 operation.

The aim of the campaign is to raise public awareness at local level of the various intergenerational initiatives and to highlight everything that is being done on a daily basis to encourage relations between the generations and to stimulate new initiatives.

Thanks to this project, we have seen new initiatives being developed and new partnerships being created at local level even after the first year. Citizens have been involved in intergenerational projects and activities throughout the year.