

Meeting in Graz, 15 -16 March  
2010 WG 5 „Generation  
Dialogue“

Cities for Children

Keynote by Dr. Eveline  
Hoenigsperger

“Is the war of generations a real  
threat?”

## Generation Dialogue

### **The Basic principle of the European Network Cities for Children**

The demographic changes in Europe constitute an enormous challenge for the long-term viability of our cities. Therefore, by developing more child and youth-friendly city environments, cities place not only the well-being of children, young people and parents in the heart of their actions but these cities also create frameworks in which - as a final outcome - family life is facilitated and encouraged. Gender equality of men and women, adults and children should be integrated into every policy.

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- Is in the long run an amendment of the basic principle advisable or even inevitable?
- Is there not an urgent need for developing city environments that take into account the changing age structure of the population?
- Can the upcoming trend of multigenerational habitations and the new forms of encounters between the young foster intergenerational solidarity?

## Generation Dialogue

What do opinion leaders among international gerontologists think about the probability of a generation conflict?

- Professor Dr. Dr. h. c. Ursula Lehr  
Past-Director of the Institute of Gerontology at the University of Heidelberg
- Professor Dr. Andreas Kruse  
Universität Heidelberg, responsible person for the German Seniors Report
- Professor Dr. Leopold Rosenmayer  
University of Vienna, Head of the Ludwig-Boltzmann-Institute for Social Gerontology and Lifecycle Research
- Professor Kurt Lüscher  
University of Konstanz

# Generation Dialogue

## Lehr

- A burning question , which has to be answered in the near future , relates to the cooperation between generations.
- Due to the population development sometimes the risk of a conflict between generations is seen , which could lead to dissolve the generation contract and by this endangering cohesion in the society.
- This conflict does not exist according to the unanimous opinion of representatives of the younger and the older generation.
- Nevertheless a future positive relationship between generations needs dialogue and exchange of information between them. To this end we are all challenged.

Quelle: „Generationensolidarität und Generationenkonflikt in Zeiten des demografischen Wandels“, Mai 2004

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## Kruse

- Demographic change is marked by a rapidly growing number of older persons and a decreasing number of young people. It can be felt already today in its consequences .
- The social protection systems can not be maintained in future due to the dynamics of change in the population structure.
- The future of social protection systems is closely linked to the question whether the relations between the old and the young generation will last in future or will possibly lead to a generation conflict.

Quelle: SÜDWESTRUNDFUNK  
„Verteilungskämpfe oder Solidarität?“  
SWR Schwerpunkt: *alt gegen jung*, Mai 2003

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Lüscher

„Generation policy should create social conditions, which allow people to shape intergenerational relationships in a manner that fosters their individual development, at the same time having in mind the responsibility towards the others – irrespectively of gender, age, social, economic and cultural means.

Quelle: Generationenbericht Schweiz

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**Rosenmayr**

- „We have to be aware of the coming developments. During the next 40 years the population aged over 80 will increase tremendously Europe-wide, and these 80 years old will be different from today.
- Additionally those who are helping will be fewer. Today grandmothers still help full time working mothers. This will not be the case to this extent in the future. Also family care will decrease.
- Knowledge from the past is transported to the young by TV and the internet, the traditional transfer from grandparents to grandchildren does not take place any more. Knowledge acquired by the grandchildren frequently is in contradiction with experiences that grandparents themselves had made.
- Principles and guidelines for life in advanced age are not available. The older population has to change.“

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Caritas – President Küberl , Austria

- „ Of course there are areas of conflict between the old and the young: older people seek for continuity , young people search for change. Here the world of the young and the old may collide.
- We have to built age friendly societies , as well as youthfriendly societies .“**

Quelle: Podiumsdiskussion: „Generationen zwischen Konflikt und Solidarität“.  
MAA Geriatriepraxis 2006

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**Swiss National Fund for fostering research  
Generation conflicts – passionately discussed, but barely in existence:**

- In the public debate conflicts between the old and the young attract interest.
- The stereotype of older persons as winners and the stereotype of young people as rebellions is not dominant anymore.
- In fact , ageing of the society concerns the life of all generations, but has no negative consequences on the relations between generations in Switzerland.

Quelle: Generationenbericht Schweiz, 2008

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What are the basic parameters of living together in the society?

1. The greying societies: increasing life expectancy and low fertility
2. The increased participation of women in the labour market

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Demographic trends in Europe

- In Europe are living 116 million people in the age of 65 and over, corresponding to 16 % of the total population.
- In demographic terms Europe is twice as much older than the population of the whole world (with an proportion of 7 % in the age group 65 +).

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- The European population in the age group 80 and 80 + amounts to 26 Million people.
- This corresponds to a proportion of 20 % of the entire older generation in Europe.

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Life expectancy at birth in Europe 2007

	male	female	average
Europe (15)	<b>77,5</b>	<b>83,1</b>	<b>80,3</b>
Europe (27)	<b>75,8</b>	<b>82,0</b>	<b>78,9</b>
<b>Compare:</b>			
USA	75,4	80,7	77,8
Japan	79,2	86,0	82,21

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### European countries with high Life Expectancy at birth, 2007

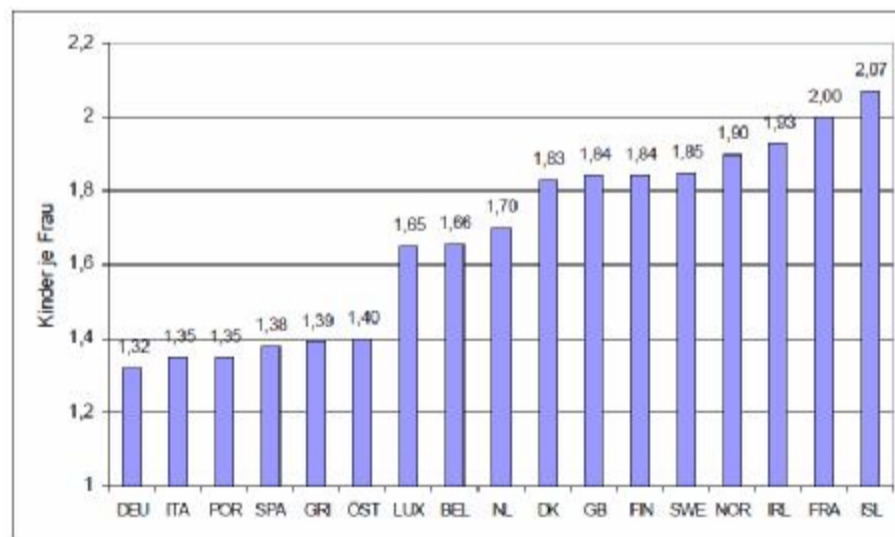
• Italy	81,4
• Spain	81,1
• Sweden	80,9
• France	80,8
• Cyprus	80,6
• Austria	80,0
• Netherlands	79,9
• Germany	79,8

### European countries with low Life Expectancy at birth, 2007

• Latvia	70,9
• Lithuania	71,2
• Romania	72,7
• Bulgaria	72,8
• Estonia	73,0
• Hungary	73,5

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Total Fertility Rates(children per women) in Western Europe(2006)



Quelle: Eurostat. Werte für Italien, Belgien und Island: Statistikamt Italien, Statistikamt Belgien, Statistikamt Island.

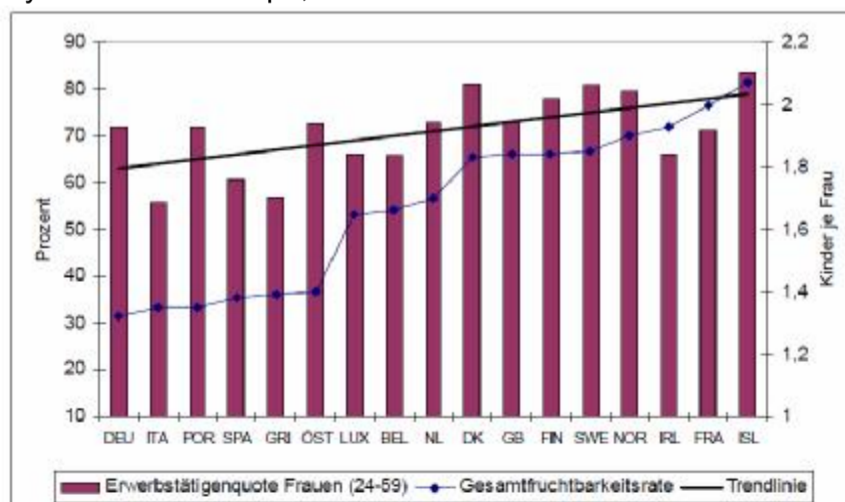
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Turning away from the „ demographic- economic paradoxon“

- Since the 1990s there is scientific evidence that low fertility rates in Western Europe do not correspond with the socio-economic standards of a country.
- Richer countries in Western Europe like Iceland (2,05 children per women) or Norway (1,90 children per women) show higher numbers of children than poorer countries like Greece (1.39 children per women) and Portugal ( 1,35 children per women)

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Labour market participation of women (aged 25 to59 years) and total fertility in Western Europe,2006



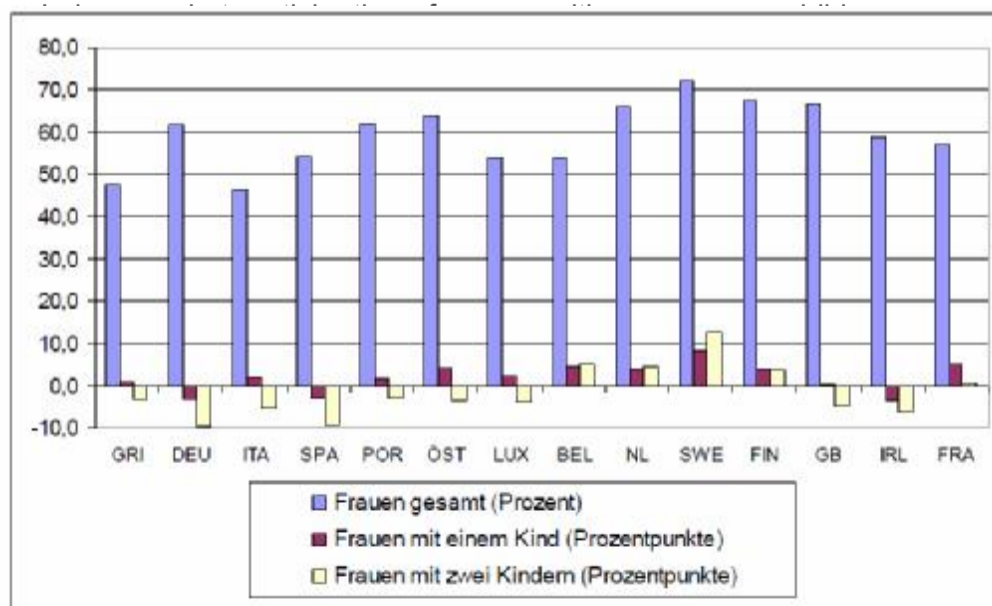
Korrelationskoeffizient Erwerbstätigenquote von Frauen/ Gesamtfertilität = 0,63.  
 Quelle: Eurostat, eigene Berechnung. Werte der Gesamtfruchtbarkeitsrate für Italien, Belgien und Island: Statistikamt Italien, Statistikamt Belgien, Statistikamt Island.

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The possibility of reconciling children and work increases the family friendliness of a society:

- in countries like Spain, Italy and Greece, where only 60% of the 25 – 59 old women are employed in gainfull work the fertility rates are the lowest
- Iceland, where more than 80 % of the 25 -59 years old women are employed in gainfull work has got the highest birthrate with 2,05 children per women
- Exception: Though in Austria and Germany the employment rates of the female population is high, the number of children per women is low (1,4 children per women)
- Explanation: the high proportion of women without children (approx. 29 % ; this is the highest percentage worldwide)

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Quelle: OECD, eigene Berechnungen; die Anordnung der Länder erfolgt mit von links nach rechts steigender Gesamtfertilitätsrate

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Decline of labourmarket participation with 1 child:

- Germany: from 61% to 58 % after birth of the 1st child  
from 58 % to 51,8 % after birth of 2nd child
- In Sweden, Finland and France , countries with a bigger number of children, the rate of labourmarket participation of mothers with with 1 or 2 children remains at the level of employment rates relevant to all women.
- In Austria there is a decline in labourmarket participation, but only 3-5 mothers with 1 or 2 children do not go back to work.

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Influence of educational level and gender equality standards on the decision for or against having a child:

- Where women are equally paid and expand into former male professional domains , fertility rates are not declining (what proves that the assertion only traditional gender roles would secure the reproduction of the population is wrong)
- In the low fertility country Germany only 4,8 out of 1000 women between 20 and 29 years possess a university degree .
- In Sweden , as a country with a favourable fertility rate the proportion of female academics is 9,9 , likewise in France with 12,9 academics per 1000 women.

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Closely connected is with the described development is the theory of declining values versus the theory of changing values:

- Traditional perception
  - Decline of values
  - Decay of the institution Matrimony
- Progressive perception
  - Change of value
  - Everybody has the right to live according to his own will.

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Taking into account the increasing labourmarket participaton of women and the wish to live up to the individual aspirations in professional life , inevitably the question arises whether the intergenerational relationship in the nuclear family can still form a load baring system , offering assistance in situations of emergency and need for help.

The dicussion is now open on the previously mentioned aspects of intergenerational solidarity!