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### **On “Ageism and intergenerational fairness”**

To address the topics of “intergenerational fairness” versus “ageism” it might be a quite useful and productive approach to try to somewhat define what is at stake and ask a series of questions in order to better understand their various aspects – facts, processes and possible strategies - that need to be dealt with.

“Intergenerational fairness” is mainly understood as a political, material and social concept aiming at providing people of different age brackets with what they specifically need in the general life situation in which they presently are and also ensuring that they can enjoy a high degree of independence, self-determination and general decision-making power over time. It may concern the availability and accessibility of goods, services, opportunities, influence, living conditions, etc. This approach should give careful attention to a balanced and acceptable distribution of rights, benefits, burdens and responsibilities between generations. In many aspects it may and should point into the future and aim even at the not-yet born generations.

#### Questions:

- Which areas of human existence are particularly concerned and why?
- How may the importance of availability and accessibility change along the age-line?
- Which institutions or/and persons decide on the distribution of society’s resources?
- What could be the most appropriate processes for a fair allocation to the generations?
- Where lie the greatest problems in the area of intergenerational fairness?

“Ageism“ is predominantly understood as stereotyping, discriminatory or even hostile convictions, judgements, opinions or behaviour towards persons or groups of people on the ground of their advanced age. It can become manifest in negative assessments of their intellectual and physical capacities, in considering them as non-productive members of society, in judging them as a source of high expenditure for the social protection systems, in suspecting them as a general burden on society, and alike. The underlying attitudes consist in a non-recognition of the dignity and value of older persons, in a general disrespect, in the denial of certain fundamental rights to them, in disadvantaging them in socio-economic matters, in their intrinsic exclusion from “normal” societal processes, and alike.

#### Questions:

- Which are the most important areas of ageism and age discrimination?
- What are the precise reasons for these negative attitudes towards older persons?
- Which dangerous effects have ageism and age discrimination for society at large?
- How can such negative judgements and behaviors be effectively prevented?
- Which institutions and decision-makers have key responsibilities in this area?

Obviously, the above listed questions are only a start and should be more developed in targeted expert meetings and brought to a large public through thematic conferences.