

subscriptions and an enlargement of the editorial board with delegates from Asian, African, and South-American countries. We are also looking for a 3<sup>rd</sup> editor to cope with the growing number of manuscripts to be processed. All these is meant to make Gerontechnology an accepted real WORLD journal. We expect you all to help to attain this goal.

*J.E.M.H. van Bronswijk, H. Bouma, editors*  
e-mail: [j.e.m.h.v.Bronswijk@tue.nl](mailto:j.e.m.h.v.Bronswijk@tue.nl)

---

## News - World News

### WORLD NEWS

#### European Year of People with Disabilities

European Council Decision of 3 December 2001 calls for 2003 to be designated as 'The European Year of People with Disabilities'. Although older persons are usually not disabled in the classical sense of the word, declining capacities are also taken into account in the decision of the European Council. Earlier we reported on the start of the activities; see Gerontechnology 1(3):213-214. The year should support progress towards achieving equal rights for people with disabilities. Across Europe attention is focussed on the many areas of European society where barriers and discrimination still exist for the 1 in 10 Europeans with a disability. A dedicated website [www.eypd2003.org](http://www.eypd2003.org) shows all completed and future events for both professionals and consumers. It also has links to the national campaigns websites.

---

## News - Other News

### Members of European Parliament write European Commission

*"For a better coherence of ageing issues"*  
Statement to the European Council Meeting

The Intergroup on Ageing is an informal discussion group within the European

Parliament. It brings together MEPs from all political groups and nationalities to discuss ageing related issues. Created in 1984, the Intergroup is now chaired by a bureau composed of 8 co-Presidents : Guido Podestà (PPE, Italy); Stephen Hughes (PSE; UK); Maria-Liese Flemming (PPE, Austria); Marieke Sanders (ELDR, Netherlands); Bartho Pronk (PPE, Netherlands); Jean Lambert (Green, UK); Gerard Collins (UEN, Ireland);and Jan Andersson (PSE, Sweden).

The Intergroup on Ageing calls on the Member States:

- I To follow up and build on the Lisbon Strategy in these areas and commit themselves to reaching its targets;
- II To prepare fully for both the social and economic consequences of the ageing of the European population, to better co-ordinate the different ongoing policies, and to mainstream ageing issues in all EU policies;
- III To commit themselves to give the European Parliament and civil society a real voice in the further developments of the Open method of Co-ordination between member states on social and ageing issues;
- IV To ensure a decent level of pensions for all men and women irrespective of their social status (married/separated/divorced) and eliminate gender discrimination in pension systems;
- V To develop innovative and creative solutions to redefine the role of older workers on the labour market and to fight age discrimination;

- VI To take account of the specific situation of older people in the candidate countries;
- VII To give the European Union better competencies to deal with common demographic challenges.

The Intergroup on Ageing welcomes the fact that ageing issues have a prominent place on the agenda of the European Spring Summit (21<sup>st</sup> March 2003). Discussions on the modernisation of the European social model and the necessary reforms to improve employment and social protection in Europe are key issues for the future of an ageing Europe that need to be commonly addressed.

The Intergroup is convinced that there is an urgent need to adopt a coherent approach between different EU policy processes. The Intergroup believes that to address effectively the challenges of population ageing across the EU, social protection and employment policies must be linked. This streamlining exercise is not about merging existing processes into one, but ensuring there is a synergy between these policies and that their overall impact is better reflected in EU level discussions.

The Intergroup believes that the EU has a key role to play in ensuring a reform of pensions systems which will promote a decent level of pensions for all (including women), giving people a fair share of society's economic well-being, not just preventing outright poverty. Countries need to provide secure, universal and fully adequate 1st pillar pensions, whether or not 2nd and 3rd pillar systems are further developed. In parallel, it is also necessary to adopt reforms to allow and encourage older people to keep working longer. Effective retirement ages can best be raised by providing workers with genuine choices and opportunities for flexible retirement from the labour market, and by combating age discrimination. The Intergroup wishes to stress the fact that employment of older workers is an area

where progress is lagging behind the Lisbon Strategy targets.

For more information on the Intergroup, contact the secretariat (+32 2 280 14 70) to the attention of Mr Podesta. For any additional information, please contact AGE, the European Older Peoples Platform [www.age-platform.org](http://www.age-platform.org) or [catherine.dau-rele@age-platform.be](mailto:catherine.dau-rele@age-platform.be)

## News - Forthcoming

### Calendar of Events

*March 25-28, 2003*

INCLUDE 2003: Inclusive Design for Society and Business

Royal College of Art, London, UK

Organizer: The Helen Hamlyn Research Centre

Info: [www.hhrc.rca.ac.uk/events/include2003/index.html](http://www.hhrc.rca.ac.uk/events/include2003/index.html)

*March 26, 2003*

Gerontechnology Symposium at Gerontexpo exhibition

Parc des Expo, Paris, Porte des Versailles

Organizer: Federation Hospitalière de France, and the Gerontechnology group

of the French Gerontology and Geriatric Society

Info: [www.gerontexpo.com/](http://www.gerontexpo.com/)

*March 27-28, 2003*

Conference on 'Accessibility for All' Acropolis Convention Centre, Nice, France

Organizer: CEN / CENELEC / ETSI; A common initiative by the European Standards Organization

Info: [www.etsi.org/cce](http://www.etsi.org/cce)

*April 3-5, 2003*

Assistive Technology 'Best Practices' Conference

Bridgewater, Nova Scotia, Canada.

Organizer: Assistive Technology