

## **SPRING NEWSLETTER 2003**

of the

**Research Committee (RC11) on the Sociology of Aging**

of the **International Sociological Association (ISA)**

### ***Content of the Spring Newsletter 2003:***

1. Welcome + about this newsletter	2
2. News from the Executive Board	3
3. Country report: Argentina ( <i>by Ramon Gutmann Springer</i> )	7
4. Special reports "Second World Assembly on Ageing" and regional implementation conferences	12
4.1. SWAA in Madrid, April 2002 ( <i>by Tetsuo Ogawa</i> )	12
4.2. UNECE in Berlin, September 2002 ( <i>by Stefan Pohlmann</i> )	13
4.3. UNESCAP in Shanghai, September 2002 ( <i>by Tetsuo Ogawa</i> )	15
5. Work in progress	17
6. Publications	19
7. Conferences + Calls for Papers	21
8. Outlook	27

Dear colleagues,

Welcome to the *Spring Newsletter 2003*! I hope that you had a perfect start into this year. May it be a good year for all of you and may you and your families enjoy good health throughout 2003! May it also become a successful year for RC11 that encourages mutual exchange of ideas and expertise in our discipline, across all continents.

Let me begin with a few general remarks about this newsletter. First, a very basic one concerning the layout of the newsletter: The rapid development of information technology in recent years has provided us with the tools to create very impressive graphics and to incorporate them into newsletters using HTML, Java, etc. However, I will stick to the good, old text-based newsletter since some of us may rely on the good, old dial-up email connection – and it takes an awful lot of time and costs an awful lot of money to download large files from the internet if you happen to use your private phone line. Unless you as the recipients of this newsletter demand a change of this policy I will keep it as it is in the newsletters to come.

Secondly, I am sure that you will have noticed a few changes compared to the previous newsletter in the outline above. The Autumn 2002 newsletter was mainly dedicated to introducing the new executive board of RC11 that was elected at the XV World Congress of Sociology in Brisbane, Australia in July 2002. With this newsletter I want to begin to establish a reliable structure of contents for coming newsletters, following the outline on page 1. By doing this, I intend to make it easier for you to read the newsletter, knowing what to expect:

Next, I will briefly comment on this outline: Following a general welcoming message by the newsletter editor, you will learn the most recent “News from the Executive Board”. This will be followed by two new sections that are intended to become a platform for spreading news on specific issues in the field of the ‘Sociology of Ageing’: (a) ‘*Country Reports*’ and (b) so-called ‘*Special Reports*’.

(a) The intention of having a specific ‘*Country Report*’ in each newsletter is to focus our attention on countries that are somewhat left out of the mainstream academic debate on the sociology and ageing. I am very grateful to Professor Gutmann Springer from Buenos Aires who authored the first country report on the situation of the elderly as well as the role of gerontologists in Argentina, a country where many people have experienced extraordinary socio-economic hardship recently. Professor Gutmann Springer produced an excellent report that I highly recommend to your attention. I regard this as a very good start of what will hopefully become a series of reports from countries all over the world that tend not to dominate the headlines.

(b) The idea of having a ‘*Special Reports*’ section is to inform members on recent and/or ongoing developments of common interest in the field of social gerontology. The development of global commitments to address the interests of old-aged people in ageing societies was identified as such field of general interest. Following 20 years of silence after the Vienna summit in 1982 a second *International Plan of Action on Ageing* was established last year. I am delighted that two colleagues who were actively involved in this global enterprise volunteered to report from the three events marking this extraordinary historical achievement and its regional implementation: I would like to thank Tetsuo Ogawa of St Antony’s College Oxford and Stefan Pohlmann of the German Centre of Gerontology very much for their contributions to the newsletter. Tetsuo Ogawa who was speaker at the UNRISD Public Meeting at the Second World Assembly on Ageing in Madrid and attended the ESCAP Regional Seminar in Shanghai as observer reports from both the *Second World Assembly on Ageing* in Madrid and the regional implementation conference for the Asian/Pacific region, the *Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)* in Shanghai. Stefan Pohlmann who was director of the Liaison Office of the *Ministerial Conference on Ageing (MiCA)* of the *United Nation’s Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)*, i.e. the first regional implementation conference to take place last year reports on that historical event in Berlin.

These reports are followed by a section entitled “*Work in progress*” that provides fellow colleagues with the opportunity to share their ongoing work with a broader audience. This may be particularly helpful in cases where there are no publications available yet. But mainly it shall serve the purpose of exchanging news on current research projects. In this newsletter, Caroline Glendinning provides some information on her ongoing work in the Audit Commission: Promoting Independence Among Older People in the UK.

Sections 6 and 7 contain information on publications and conferences/calls for papers respectively. (Please note that conference announcements or information on conferences other than those specifically sent to me for inclusion in the newsletter will be kept to a minimum, providing basic information on dates and content, and where to look for more details.) I would like to take this opportunity to thank those of you who provided me with information on conferences and publications – and I would like to encourage all of you to share your knowledge on conferences or relevant publications (Why not your own work?) with others. Exchange of information is our main asset as a global network of academics working on the sociology of aging. Every contribution will be very welcome!

## 2. News from the Executive Board

Quite a few issues of interest have emerged since the publication of the previous newsletter. The following information was provided by a hands on core group of the executive board who communicate regularly and are very much committed to building RC11 into a vibrant group for now and the future.

Membership update: First of all, we are delighted – well, ‘excited’ is probably the better word – to announce that our membership has significantly grown since the Sociology World Congress in Brisbane last year. According to the longer serving members we haven’t had a similar boost in membership numbers for many years. We now have 84 paid up members (and a few more who have not yet paid). Hopefully, we will be able to announce the 85<sup>th</sup> full membership in the not too distant future since this will take RC11 into the next higher funding category with the ISA (see below).

Financial support: Apart from the benefits of having a wider network for information exchange this also entitles us to more financial support from the ISA. According to the ISA’s ‘*Rules on Allocating Grants to Research Committees*’ the ISA provides small grants to assist with organising inter-congress meetings. The amount available varies according to membership numbers. Mind you, there is no wealth to distribute – we are merely talking about a few hundred Euros or US Dollars. Right now, we have 1,480 US Dollars (1,350 Euro) in the kitty.

More news from the ISA: Beside these ‘*Rules on Allocating Grants to Research Committees*’ the ISA recently also announced the publication of a booklet on ‘*ISA Aims and Requirements for Research Committees*’, which is available from the ISA. Furthermore, we proudly confirm that the ISA invited our president, Lars Andersson, to join the new Editorial Board for the ‘*Current Sociology*’ monograph issues.

New executive board member: We are very pleased indeed to inform you that we now also have an executive board member from Argentina. Liliana Gastron joined the executive board last October to represent our fellow colleagues in the field of the sociology of ageing from Latin America. Liliana has played a very active role ever since, and we are very happy to have her on board.

In the following email Liliana introduced herself and asked me to send her best regards to you all:

*"I'm very grateful to hear and to receive information about RC11. As you surely know, Argentina is a country with severe economic and financial troubles. Thus, it was impossible for a great number of academics and researchers, obviously not only in our field, to go to Brisbane. But we have to continue working, learning and teaching. We have so much to do!!! In this moment, I am the head of a Research Programme on Social Representations of Ageing. This research is developed in five different public universities in our country (Buenos Aires, Tucumán, Mar del Plata, Jujuy and Luján). Please, send my best wishes to the members of RC11. Regards from Liliana Gastron, PhD."*

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International co-operation: We established a closer co-operation between the *Ageing-in-Europe Research Network* of the European Sociological Association (ESA) and ISA RC11. Many of us have personal links with Ageing-in-Europe, so it was only a small step to establish a formal co-operation. From now onwards, we will inform each other of ongoing developments of mutual interest. Moreover, we added links to each others' websites – if you visit our RC11 homepage at <http://www.ucm.es/info/isa/rc11.htm> you will find a link to the Ageing-in-Europe Research Network and vice versa you will find a link to RC11 at their website <http://www.ageing-in-europe.de/>.

Jay Ginn of the Centre for Research on Ageing and Gender (CRAG), University of Surrey, UK who – along with Andreas Motel-Klingebiel, German Centre of Gerontology, Berlin, and Ricca Edmondson, National University of Ireland, Galway – co-ordinates the Ageing-in-Europe Research Network sent us the following message: *"It would make sense for the ISA RC11 and the ESA Ageing Research Network to liaise. I co-ordinate the Ageing RN, with Andreas Motel-Klingebiel at DZA Germany and Ricca Edmondson in Ireland. We are planning a stream for research papers on Ageing at the ESA conference in Murcia, Spain, Sept 23-26 2003 and would welcome participation from colleagues in RC11 of the ISA. We have an email list to keep colleagues informed and to facilitate collaboration and exchange of ideas in the field of ageing. To join, send an email as follows to [jiscmail@jiscmail.ac.uk](mailto:jiscmail@jiscmail.ac.uk) : join ageing firstname lastname . We also have a website - [www.ageing-in-europe.de](http://www.ageing-in-europe.de)".*

We are very happy about this close link and look forward to a fruitful collaboration. Having said that, I think it is crucial to extend similar links to research networks in other regions, such as the Asian/Pacific region, Latin America, North America, Eastern Europe, or Africa.

Inter-congress meeting RC11: Finally, the news I am sure you were all eagerly waiting for. Thanks to the hard work of Kate Davidson and Sara Arber there will be an inter-congress meeting in 2004. We are delighted – and I cannot say it too often how grateful we are for Kate's and Sara's hard work that enables us to hold our inter-congress meeting prior to the Annual Conference of the British Society of Gerontology (BSG), held at the Centre for Research on Ageing and Gender (CRAG) at the University of Surrey, Roehampton, UK in September 2004. Please take note of the conference flyers that were created by Sara Arber and Kate Davidson respectively on the following pages:

**International Sociological Association  
RC-11 Sociology of Aging  
Inter-Congress Conference**

**Ageing Societies and Ageing Sociology:  
Challenges and Possibilities**

7-9 September 2004

**University of Surrey Roehampton**

Hosted by the Centre for Research on Ageing and Gender (CRAG),  
University of Surrey, UK

Members of RC11 and other sociologists interested in ageing are invited to organise a session on any topic relating to the sociology of ageing, and where appropriate addressing the theme 'Ageing Societies and Ageing Sociology: Challenges and Possibilities'. We also welcome offers to organise other types of sessions, e.g. panel discussions, critical debates on a current or controversial topic, or 'meet the author' sessions. A session should last 90 or 120 minutes, and have four to six papers. The session should be as international as possible, and may contain theoretical or empirical research papers.

Persons wishing to organise a session should email a proposal by **1 October 2003** to Sara Arber, Chair of Organising Committee at [S.Arber@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:S.Arber@surrey.ac.uk)

Proposals should include:

- a title of the proposed session
- an abstract of approximately 200 words
- name(s) and affiliation(s) of possible authors

There will also be an open call for papers, with a deadline for receipt of abstracts for papers of **1 February 2004**. Papers by researchers earlier in their career and doctoral students are particularly welcomed.

The Inter-Congress Conference will immediately precede the British Society of Gerontology conference held at the same venue from lunchtime on Thursday 9 September to Saturday 11 September. The venue at Southlands College, University of Surrey Roehampton is within easy reach of the centre of London by public transport, see <http://www.roehampton.ac.uk/southlands/conf.asp>

If you have any queries about the RC-11 Inter-Congress Conference, please contact Sara Arber, by email: [S.Arber@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:S.Arber@surrey.ac.uk)

Organising Executive Scientific Committee: Lars Andersson, Sara Arber, Kate Davidson, Susan Feldman, Michael Fine, Andreas Hoff, Anne Martin-Matthews

## **BSG Conference, September 2004**

**Hosted by the Centre for Research on Ageing and Gender (CRAG)  
University of Surrey**

**The British Society of Gerontology (BSG) is holding their 2004 annual scientific meeting between 9-11 September at Southlands College Campus, Roehampton, University of Surrey.**

### The Conference

The theme of the conference is: '*Challenging Perceptions of Later Life*'. The 'challenging' aspect is on several levels: we are indeed challenged by ageing - on a societal, organisational and individual level, but we also seek to challenge societal, organisational and individual perceptions of the meanings of ageing. Professor Neal Cutler from the American Institute of Financial Gerontology and Professor Kees Knipscheer from the Free University of Amsterdam have agreed to be keynote speakers and we are in the process of inviting other prominent speakers from the United Kingdom to address the meeting.

We plan a series of Symposia and well as free papers and a robust posters session. Our intention is to bring together policy, practice and research and aim to attract a wide variety of international expertise in the field of ageing, including older people themselves. We anticipate an exciting and stimulating meeting.

### The Venue

Southlands campus <http://www.roehampton.ac.uk/southlands/conf.asp> is in south west London and offers very good student accommodation, including some en-suite facilities. The campus is set in large, beautiful grounds yet is within easy reach of the centre of London by public transport. London Heathrow airport is about 30 minutes and London Gatwick airport about an hour away.

Professor Neal Cutler: <http://www.nextagespeakers.com/ncutler.htm>

Professor Kees Knipscheer: <http://www.nias.knaw.nl/Knipscheer.htm>

Professor Alan Walker: [http://www.shef.ac.uk/sisa/Staff\\_Walker.shtml](http://www.shef.ac.uk/sisa/Staff_Walker.shtml)

### 3. Country report: Argentina

#### ***Argentina and the role of the gerontologists : Similar or different to the rest of the world ?***

Prof. Ramon Gutmann Springer  
Buenos Aires – Argentina

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In the view of many social and political experts, Argentina is now living through the worst crisis in all its history. I intend here to share with the NEWSLETTER readers some basic information and ideas on the various aspects of the problems of the elderly people in our region that can eventually become a modest contribution to a major discussion among the colleagues of the different countries. At the same time, I guess and hope this can be a way to learn about the different approaches in which professionals face problems, and mitigate old age difficulties, although each of us must find proposals and solutions within our own countries. In Latin America, we have learnt not to make universally general diagnostics any longer, and try instead to get to know as best we can the orientation, the potential and the possibilities of each people's own culture and abilities in terms of solutions, or at least of possible options.

There is a good reason to believe that the huge gap between the poor and the rich is today a catastrophe, even more taking in account that richer people in Argentina usually declare a lower income for tax related reasons, while the poorer people, do not usually hide their income, or even a part of them, declare a higher income under the "shame effect", also paradoxically present in a middle class that is subject to the stress of survival. (in February 2003 almost 60% of our total population are under the poverty level and circa 21% are unemployed ).

A regressive pattern of income distribution was established, on account of the FALL OF MIDDLE SECTORS BELOW THE LEVEL OF POVERTY (80% of the new poor has a middle class origin). Such sectors have not been able to maintain their family income over the monthly 120 pesos (currently around 40 U.S. dollars) minimum amount per member.

The social security system presents a dismal picture. Only 32.8% of the population made in 2002 regular contributions to the system, which would entitle them to a retirement pension. This means that around 70% of the population will not be entitled to pension payments upon retirement, and if a small number of them were so entitled, their pension will be very low. In the 2002 budget the 13% cut down from monthly retirement pensions over 500 pesos (U.S. dollars 166) was extended, an absolutely unconstitutional, and accordingly illicit, trimming.

In relation to the private retirement system, at the time it was launched in 1994, according to official statements not less than 75% of the population was expected to adhere to the system. Of 8,800,000 members in January 2002, only 2,600,000, that is, only 29.8% paid their contributions.

Due to the decreasing prices of shares and public bonds as from July last year, the annual average profitability of the AFJPs (Retirement Pension Fund Administrators) was negative by -7.2%.

Such AFJPs charge workers a commission that amounts to around 45% of their individual contributions. I do not know whether such lack of proportion exists in any other country in the world. While the goal of the AFJPs was to strengthen the capital market, more than 70% of the investments they made was in loans to the Government, and used to finance the public

deficit. In such a way, the AFJPs came to have in their portfolios 16,000 million dollars in secured loans, which were then “pesified” (that is, compulsorily converted into pesos). In Argentina, “pesification” is the process by which banks forced all the citizens who had made deposits in American dollars to have them translated to pesos at a \$1.40 exchange rate, recoverable within 10 years in the form of bonds, when the U.S. dollar parity is currently at three pesos, and has already temporarily reached four pesos. A seriously illicit confidence trick, and one that has amazed the world.

In such a way, the 1994 reform of the retirement pension system, intended to remain in force for several decades, has become extremely unpopular in a country where everybody is daily deceived out of their money. The major concern of our current President is to make strident announcements of a social assistance program. Its general guidelines are expressed in bombastic words: all-inclusive salaries to be allocated on a universal basis, direct income redistribution from higher to lower income sectors, unemployment insurance, and work training. But the funds being contemplated are under one billion dollars, an amount already contemplated in the 2002 budget, before the devaluation. Only that now, expressed in pesos, the amount sounds larger. The monthly 50 dollar amount that he says will be distributed to unemployed breadwinners by still undefined mechanisms will be paid on the basis of non-existing population registers, and after a savage struggle among the Nation, provinces and townships. In harmony with a time-honored corrupt tradition, the policy of assigning grants to “friendly parties” will probably survive. The peso devaluation lowered Argentine costs as measured in U.S. dollars. The average income in the country, which before January 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002, was a monthly equivalent of \$ 506, has now fallen to \$ 168, salaries in the formal economy fell from \$ 735 to \$ 245, and informal, unrecorded payments from \$ 334 to \$ 111. All this led Argentina, which last year ranked first in the Latin American context, to rank tenth by mid 2002 and it decreases almost every month since then. In Argentina, by the end of last year, 99 million tons of basic food products were produced, an amount enough to feed 330 million people. However millions of Argentineans are unable to get indispensable nutrients, and this situation worsens now effectively every month.

I would like to comment on some ideas derived from our field studies and works, which we believe are valid not only for Argentina, but also for other Latin American countries and maybe also other regions in the world. It would be surely interesting to confront it with colleagues. They may be summarized as follows:

1. Elder people as an age group in our society do neither receive nor see any responses that may contribute to create social identity feelings, getting instead vague messages that express some concern in their respect, in the context of an aggressive and uncertain reality.
2. The most frequent positive stereotypes regarding elders, which emphasize values such as experience or wisdom, are seen by them as neither too credible nor consistent, and it is not trustingly that they accept popular beliefs in the positive old-age qualities arising from the sole course of time.
3. Older people trust their own personal resources and capabilities as survival strategies which they have learnt in the course of life, more than abilities acquired through old age.
4. The vast majority of old people are deeply mistrustful of aged people occupying leading positions in senior citizens’ organizations, as they generally believe that such people take personal advantage and benefit from their position, in connivance with politicians or government officers that manipulate them, often in an openly manner.
5. They accept to be organized as a social force, but essentially for social, cultural and sporting activities. They oppose strong resistance to any offers to organize them as a political force on the basis of age discrimination.

6. Old-age leaders generally assume leadership positions in our country have rarely been reliable leaders for senior citizens, due to their scarcely significant, and quite often non-existing background.

7. The preceding assertion is usually the most frequently reason mentioned as a cause for the low level of active participation of elders in matters and problems that affect them.

8. Many old people emphasize the confusion created by gerontology experts, who assume a generalizing and universal approach to elders, and offer inadequate proposals to satisfy their needs. No categories of analysis have been identified to determine additional modes of action on the basis of "satisfaction indicators", setting forth particular forms of satisfaction according to both the cultural and socio-political-economical context of the times, the region and the specific culture.

9. In this respect, it is urgent to develop reliable criteria or options on the basis of the social, cultural, economic and political complexity of each geographical region (within the country) in subjects as essential as health, nutrition, housing, income, family relationships, forms of death, and other matters.

10. The major subjects, the proposals and mottoes of the national Gerontology Conferences provide a rich material to examine the manner in which gerontology experts prioritize the problems affecting older people. It may also be interesting to prepare a list of the subjects consistently ignored and avoided in the professional agendas of meetings, symposiums and Conferences.

Though these social issues (amongst which the problems affecting the elderly are a constant) end up by being hot coals on the verge of exploding in the hands of governments. Changes are, nevertheless, rare, whilst the need for new approaches is permanently on the rise. I can mention at least seven aspects, most surely amongst others, that are present in the economic and social context in which the day-to-day life of the elderly in our countries takes place, namely:

1. In Argentina and surely in the other Latin America countries, the elderly, particularly the poorest and most vulnerable, have at their disposal systems devised to protect their interests that rarely work

2. Social and economic systems reflect similar levels of neglect of a sector of the population composed of social beings with scanty possibilities of affecting the operation and interests of these systems

3. The concentration of power contributes to increase the number of people living in submerged social conditions, that becomes increasingly vulnerable populations. These populations do not normally line up with other underprivileged groups simply because they share a similar social destiny. On the contrary, internal disputes often arise amongst the different sectors of the poor population. There are few exceptions to the contrary within the general framework of unemployment and sluggishness of the labor markets

4. As it was said before only a small number of elderly people participate actively in issues and problems concerning the everyday life of the aged themselves meanwhile demagoguery and political manipulation in the field of old age have become increasingly refined and sophisticated in keeping with the growing importance of the elderly as a voting segment of the population, essential to win elections. Many leaders of senior organizations are manipulated. Fortunately, however, many others simply refuse to be manipulated.

5. State-run organizations in Latin America normally show very little creativity in developing programs aimed at improving the living conditions of the elderly. Public officers generally counter requests by mechanically replying that “there is not money”, thus frustrating the many or few initiatives that crop up. Similarly, political parties substantially limit the actions they take in connection with the elderly to the possibility or not of increasing the amount of their pensions.

6. A growing number of elderly people are faced with restrictions affecting their access to social and medical services and this situation leads to a shortened life span and premature death and finally

7. Social security systems handle extraordinarily large sums of money that are far higher than ever before in the past. In Argentina and in other countries of our region, these sums of money are managed by politicians and bureaucrats with dubious political foresight and by economists with extremely questionable sensitivity in connection with social issues.

There are some other general aspects to be pointed out in relation to Argentina, and maybe other regions in the world, if we wish to make advances in the framework of actual restrictions, and build a citizenship of elders that will not be a false, lying or imaginary dream of elder empowerment. We have verified several regular occurrences in a society that has lived many years now under a plundering system where the State is privately owned by the officers in tenure, and international agencies as the International Monetary Fund act as international auditors over an accumulated foreign debt that is choking our country.

After a 19-year long process during different Justice administrations, Argentina is the only country in the world where it has been proven in court that the external debt is illegal, untrue, and where no evidence for it can possibly be provided from an administrative, economic or financial point of view. No documents supporting such debt are kept by the Central Bank. It was shown that when Argentina, years ago, for instance, was said to owe 50 billion dollars, it actually owed 5 billion. The current debt amounts to 160 billion, and all borrowings are designed to pay the interest and service of a debt that has mortgaged the hopes of several Argentine generations. During many years, Argentina became indebted and finally did not grow, and naturally enough, corrupt government officers pocketed a large portion of such funds. In recent years we have frequently seen politicians approaching gerontology experts, and vice versa. Very often second and even third level political officers come between technical experts and top ministry levels, because such officers have their own personal projects in relation to their own increasing benefits. A few years ago, Anthony Giddens said that mature age is a new risk that passes in the disguise of an old one. Getting old used to be a more passive experience than nowadays: a fragile or even decaying body was simply something to be accepted. Undoubtedly, it must be said that in a more active, more reflexive society, getting old has become a much more open process, both in the physical and the psychological spheres.

I think there are some questions that must be posed or posed anew, and they have to be worked upon both in the field of social theory and in fieldwork. Our scientific societies ( Gerontological, Sociological, Social Workers Societies, etc. ) at least in Latin America have a task to accomplish in this respect. They are societies with a scientific agenda, but also with a social conscience in a dramatic historical period.

No doubt that elder people organizations need to grow in number, look inwards at their own workings, and make a definite stand vis-à-vis political organizations, demanding that their rights be respected, notwithstanding the fact that old people leaders may have a legitimate identification with governing or opposition political parties.

Perhaps we should develop in our minds the habit of looking at elders more as a resource than solely as a problem. This will no doubt lead us into an Old Age that should not be seen as a period of life having rights but no responsibilities.

Have we stopped to seriously debate this, among whom, in front of whom, raising which subjects, and aiming at which goal? May gerontology experts be an effective factor, and contribute to give old age the rank of a state policy issue? May they play a role in the face of the corruption of some officers? Or is it naïve just to think of it? Undoubtedly, among politicians and lawmakers this subject is much more frequently talked about, and gerontologists are called upon more frequently than in past times. But are gerontology experts interested in creating a framework of agreements designed to promote old age programs as an urgent need for our elders? Are they interested in demanding, giving it the rank of a governmental issue, larger budget allocations to ensure the operation of such programs? In other words, to rephrase the question, are gerontology experts interested in senior citizens from a social and political standpoint, or is this to be a subject naturally restricted to politicians and government officers? The simple paradox here is that many people believe that if this subject continues to be restricted to political parties, such parties will mutually attempt to knock each other down every four years on occasion of political elections, and the condition of people will increasingly worsen. And this will be so as a result of the possible deterioration of the Social Security system, both from the decay of the system, and from the differences among the provinces in a country, like ours, where future economic and financial commitments are excessively high. In a country where, for instance, only a very small number of autonomous workers pay their social security contributions, which as we already said can derive in serious difficulties upon retirement, or upon the inability of many people to retire. Also, an increasing number of people are losing their access to the medical care system, which means that their lives are shortened

We would not be too daring if we say that the meetings that senior citizen leaders, politicians, government officers and gerontology experts usually hold are not enough serious in these latitudes, given the manipulating will of some politicians, the personal interests of many government officers, the ambitions of some professionals, and the inclination to accept favors from some elder leaders. But the true and encouraging fact is that all these groups include able, honest, and concerned people, concerned to make from the elderly needs a State issue.

## 4. Special reports “Second World Assembly on Ageing” and regional implementation

### 4.1. SWAA in Madrid, April 2002

**Report on the Second World Assembly on Ageing (Madrid, Spain, 8<sup>th</sup>-12<sup>th</sup> of April 2002), and United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) Regional Seminar to follow up the Second World Assembly on Ageing (Shanghai, People’s Republic of China, 23<sup>rd</sup> - 26<sup>th</sup> September 2002)**

Written by Tetsuo Ogawa,

Speaker at the UNRISD Public Meeting at the Second World Assembly on Ageing in Madrid;  
Observer at the ESCAP Regional Seminar in Shanghai

#### *From Vienna to Madrid: the Second World Assembly on Ageing*

**Venue:** Madrid, Spain

**Time:** the 8<sup>th</sup>- the 12<sup>th</sup> of April 2002

The Second World Assembly on Ageing was held in Madrid from 8<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> of April. It adopted the Political Declaration and a new International Plan of Action aimed at addressing the challenges of population ageing, which have been brought about by the rapidly growing number of older people around the world, particularly in the developing countries.

The main task of this Assembly was to agree on the ageing policy strategy, for which work had been organised by the Plenary and the Main Committee. From the 8<sup>th</sup> to the 12<sup>th</sup> of April, a series of round-table discussions sponsored by the Government of Spain were held in conjunction with the Assembly by attendance of independent experts, eminent persons and groups with special interest in issues relating to ageing. The goal was all to promote a broad dialogue between governments and civil societies on key issues and challenges related to ageing. This series of round table discussions was complemented by two other meetings, a scientific meeting, the Valencia Forum (1<sup>st</sup> – 4<sup>th</sup> April), and a NGOs meeting, the World NGO Forum on Ageing (5<sup>th</sup> -9<sup>th</sup> April).

H.E. Mr Kofi Annan, Secretary General of the United Nations, addressed the opening speech, in which he claimed that ‘ageing is definitely no longer just a “first world issue”. What was a footnote in the twentieth century is on its way to becoming dominant theme in the twenty-first century’ because ageing is a global issue now. He stressed that ‘while governments have the primary responsibility towards their older populations, they need to work through effective coalitions engaging all actors: from NGOs to the private sector, from international organisations to educators and health professionals, and of course, associations of older people themselves. They need do this, according to Mr Annan, by sending a wider message to the world that older people are not a category apart.

This Assembly was not the first time that the international community examined the challenges of individual and population ageing. At the first World Assembly on Ageing, held in Vienna in 1982, countries adopted the International Plan of Action on Ageing, which had guided thinking and action on ageing over the past 20 years. The Plan recommended a variety of initiatives in employment and income security, health, housing, education and social welfare. Since twenty years have now passed, the Second Assembly re-examined the initiatives and reached agreements on them.

Nonetheless, ageing is an achievement of longevities and low mortality rates all over the world in both the developed and developing member states, and this is regarded as a revolution of human beings, which presents enormous challenges of the HIV/AIDS crisis and Welfare State Crisis in a world already transformed by globalisation, migration, and economic

change. These phenomena bear implications for every community, institution, and individual, young and old. As Mr Annan emphasised in his message, 'the world has changed almost beyond recognition. What has not changed is our fundamental objective: *building a society fit for all people of all ages*', which was the main motivation behind the Second World Assembly.

As the result, as it has been reported that the new International Plan of Action contained over 120 recommendations to respond to growing concern over the speed and scale of global ageing, and it has been accompanied with the Political Declaration the 'crucial' importance of incorporating ageing issues into all development plans as a way of coping with what has been billed as the main demographic challenge of the 21st century. All the U.N. member states have been making the new Plan of Action into practice.

## **4.2. UNECE in Berlin, September 2002**

### ***The influence of research on the international ageing policies of the United Nations***

Stefan Pohlmann,

Director Liaison Office Ageing, German Centre of Gerontology

Relevant forecasts point to massive shifts in the age structures in all continents (United Nations 2002). Although varying in speed and intensity from one country to the other, a historically unique ageing process is currently underway. The resulting global challenges necessitate enormous social changes. Governments, civil society and the scientific and research sector in particular must play their part in tackling this vital undertaking. Awareness of fundamental structural shifts in population developments is not new. The first International Action Plan on Ageing of 1982 pointed clearly to the factor of demographic change, and areas of political action were identified which are still valid today. This remarkable document thus recognised the ageing of society as a central political issue at an early stage. But United Nations member states nevertheless found difficulty in finding a common, cross-border approach to the recommendations contained in the 1982 Plan. There are a number of reasons for this. Not only the social heterogeneity of the member states stands in the way of finding concrete approaches. The financial aspects involved impose caution on many governments. As a consequence, the recommendations and commitments in UNO documents often remain vague. Another obstacle is the lack of any internationally legal obligation in the International Action Plan on Ageing. It contains no sanction mechanisms in the event of non-fulfilment by parties of the requirements in the document. There are no in-built automatic elements that would lead to regulations being adopted at the national level. At the same time, the International Action Plan on Ageing has no mechanism to monitor the manner and timing of the adoption of its objectives. The application and implementation of the Plan is, however, not possible without an independent evaluation scan. Another factor is that to date ageing policies were invariably regarded as a separate policy area.

After a long period of stagnation, the United Nations have now put ageing back on their agenda and thus paved the way for workable international ageing policy to be put in place. In April 2002 a revised Plan of Action, the so-called Madrid Plan was adopted. This document addresses all those global challenges resulting from the shifts in age groups in the world population (cf. [www.un.org/esa/ssocdev](http://www.un.org/esa/ssocdev)). On the basis of the Madrid Plan, the UN regional organisation to which Germany belongs – the Economic Commission for Europe of UNECE – set about putting into effect the recommendations anchored in the Madrid Plan. This project was supported by all 55 members of the Commission. The German Government in particular gave active financial and staffing support to the concrete development of the International Action Plan on Ageing and acted as host country to the UNECE Ministerial Conference on

Ageing (MiCA) which was held in Berlin. On 13 September the UNECE member states agreed on a regional implementation strategy (cf. Pohlmann 2002).

In a total of ten commitments the regional implementation strategy focuses on various key topics and fields of action. The term commitment underlines the will of the member states involved to morally bind themselves to implementation (cf [www.unece.org](http://www.unece.org) ). The regional implementation is designed to overcome the structural difficulties associated with the global application of a UN document. The Regional Commission for Western Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) adopted a similar approach at a conference held in Shanghai.

The UNECE process was exemplified by the participation of representatives from *research* and *civil society*. In a total of three expert seminars, experts from various ECE member states and from a balanced selection of disciplines drew up the framework for a regional implementation strategy. The text negotiations of the member states could draw on this expert input and at the same time stay in close consultation with those working on revision of the global process of the International Action Plan on Ageing. In all phases of UNECE preparation, participation by experts and non-governmental organisations was maintained at an unprecedented level. Deviating from the normal process of governmental conferences, representatives of NGOs and gerontologists were present not only at expert meetings but also during the text negotiations. At the Ministerial Conference itself, contributions by NGOs and experts were explicitly requested. Forward-looking, sustainable social policy calls for an “*Alliance for Demographic Change*” involving those international bodies already in existence in an intensified exchange of know-how and in a qualified advisory role to those carrying political responsibility. In this process, the socio-political participation by all members of society is both a privilege and an obligation.

In the view of the UNECE, successful follow-up involves increased cooperation between UNECE member states and calls for an effective exchange of information between the countries involved. In utilising existing structures, the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research (Vienna) will play a coordinating role. Joint seminars exploiting the specialised knowledge of such international organisations such as ILO, WHO, the Council of Europe and the OECD will provide the forums for the involvement of government representatives, non-governmental organisations, industry and trade unions. Here such topics as, for instance, the implications of demographic change on labour markets, housing and living environments and gender aspects of older persons could be examined, as well as providing the opportunity to learn of national experiences and best practices. The last phase of this far-reaching plan takes place on the national level. In Germany the Federal Government has announced a “National Plan of Action on the Demographic Challenge”. German experts will continue to make constructive input to this national implementation process.

#### **References:**

United Nations (2002a). World Population Ageing 1950-2050. Population Division, DESA (ST/ESA/SER.A/207). New York : United Nations.

Pohlmann, S. (Ed) (2002). Facing an Ageing World – Recommendations and Perspectives, Regensburg: Transfer.

### 4.3. UNESCAP in Shanghai, September 2002

#### *From Macao to Shanghai: the UNESCAP Regional Seminar to follow up the Second World Assembly on Ageing*

**Venue:** Shanghai, People's Republic of China

**Time:** the 23rd to the 26th of September 2002

**Participants:** 19 members (Australia, Bangladesh, China, Fiji, Hong Kong SAR (China), Indonesia, India, Islamic Republic of Iran, Lao People's Democratic Republic, Macao (China), Malaysia, Mongolia, Myanmar, Pakistan, Papua New Guinea, Philippines, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Viet Nam; UN Agencies (UNDESA, UNECE, UNIFEM, UNFPA, WHO and ISSA) and 25 NGOs.

In order to follow up the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing adopted by the Second World Assembly on Ageing (Spain, April 2002), governments, inter-governmental organisations and non-governmental organisations in Asia and the Pacific region met at the 'Asia-Pacific Seminar on Regional Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing' in Shanghai, People's Republic of China from the 23<sup>rd</sup> to the 26<sup>th</sup> of September 2002. This was also to review the Macao Plan of Action on Ageing for Asia and the Pacific, the first regional plan of action on ageing in 1999.

The United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) is the largest organisation of the five United Nations regional commissions, comprising fifty-two members and nine associate members, representing about 60 per cent of the world population. This body is the main organisation for the United Nations' activities in Asia and the Pacific region. The commission had proposed to share the experience from co-operation on ageing issues in Asia and the Pacific, which illustrates the need for a policy approach encompassing the economic and social dimensions of ageing following the Second World Assembly on Ageing. It was also to raise the awareness of the member states that the ageing challenges across the region is diverse because of the diverse cultures, various stages of social development and political systems. For example, within the region, there are differences in the significance of population ageing. In general, the elderly population is higher for industrialised member states (Australia, Japan and New Zealand) as compared to newly industrialised members such as Indonesia, Malaysia, Philippines and Thailand. An important dominion at this point is that although the rate of ageing may be slower than in the latter countries, though the absolute numbers are multi-fold. Thus, there are varying rates in the increases in the ageing sector in the region, with most rapid growth in East Asia (People's Republic of China, Japan and the Republic of Korea).

At the meeting, the Shanghai Implementation Strategy: Regional Implementation Strategy for the Madrid International Plan of Action, together with the Macao Plan of Action on Ageing for Asia and the Pacific 1999, was adopted with priority areas such as Ageing and Development, Health and Well-being into Old Age, Enabling and Supportive Environments, and Implementation Progress and Review. Since then, ESCAP has been promoting the realisation of the Shanghai Implementation Strategy, through technical support and assistance to members and associate members of ESCAP, close partnership with NGOs and other members of civil society and all concerned actors. It has also been planned that regular regional surveys on ageing will be conducted, in line with the Macao Plan and the Shanghai Implementation Strategy.

However, there seem to remain several questions in implementing the Strategy in Asia and the Pacific region. At first, there is no particular funding for the implementation purpose out of the member states in the region and ESCAP itself. Even now in term of funding issues, the Commission is much relied upon a member state's contribution to the organisation. It was regretted that the largest contributor with a 55.3 per cent of funding for the ESCAP budget and the second largest contributor with a 19.51 per cent for the U.N. core-funding budget,

Japan (!), did not participate in discussions in the regional seminar unfortunately. Secondly, there is another initial question about the roles of industrialised, newly industrialised and developing countries in implementing the Strategy, as compared with the roles of IGOs and NGOs. This issue is inevitably related to financial assistance, e.g. the Official Development Assistance (ODA) from developed countries to developing countries. These financial arrangements are still subject to each member state's real action. Even though the Madrid Plan of Action 'urges developed countries that have not done so to make concrete efforts towards the target of 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) as ODA to developing countries and 0.15 per cent of GNP of developed countries to least developed countries and encourages developing countries to build on progress achieved in ensuring that ODA is used effectively to help achieve development goals and target (Paragraph 108)', so far member states do not have the legal obligation to do so as this has not been made as mandatory under a legal frame work. What Asia and the Pacific region needs are immediate and real actions in eradicating absolute poverty and combating challenges of the global ageing issues by international co-operations amongst member states, with IGOs and NGOs together. So we, academics, might have the important duty to get involved with this process by international social policy research.

*Related web sites:*

Second World Assembly on Ageing: [www.un.org/ageing](http://www.un.org/ageing)

ECSCAP Regional Seminar: [www.unescap.org/ageing](http://www.unescap.org/ageing)

ODA/GNI figures at OECD (2003): <http://www.oecd.org/pdf/M00040000/M00040655.pdf>

## **5. Work in progress**

### **UK Audit Commission: Promoting Independence Among Older People**

#### **1. Background**

In recent years, services for older people have increasingly focused on the relatively small group who need intensive support from the NHS and social services departments. Older people have therefore been seen primarily as a health and social care concern, rather than as citizens with a contribution to make to the life of the community. Older people's hopes, aspirations and views about the life they wish to lead and the type of interventions they may need to achieve this have rarely influenced the shape of local services.

When asked about the support that they would prefer, older people usually say that they want services that are flexible, person-centred and that promote their independence. In addition, there is evidence to suggest that investment in services which aim to enable older people to live independent lives can reduce crises at a later date, as well as improving the quality of older people's lives.

The Audit Commission has carried out a number of studies on different aspects of older people's services. A consistent theme which has run through all of these is the need to refocus services towards preventative, community based interventions that aim to promote independence. This project will build on the Commission's previous work by exploring how organisations can work together to develop a comprehensive strategic approach that enables older people to live independent lives. It will be carried out in partnership with Better Government for Older People.

#### **2. Aim and Objectives**

This project aims to encourage the development of a more comprehensive, strategic approach to promoting independence among older people.

We will achieve this by:

- mapping the complex policy context on promoting independence
- developing a framework that lays out the range of factors and interventions that need to be in place
- describing how best to develop and sustain a comprehensive, whole system approach to promoting independence
- focusing on the interventions that are available to enable even the most frail older people to live as independently as possible.

#### **3. Scope and Approach**

The project will take a broad, whole system view of promoting independence. Its starting point will be the views of older people themselves, drawn from research with older people that will be carried out by Age Concern. It will span the spectrum of activities and services, from transport, community safety and social interaction, to interventions which support frail older people to live as independently as possible. It will therefore touch on the work of a wide range of organisations, including local government, the NHS, the police and the voluntary sector. A central theme will be

the engagement of older people in shaping public services, both as users of services and equally importantly, as citizens.

The project will be carried out in partnership with BGOP, who will play a key role in influencing the strategic direction of the project and will also second a member of the Older People's Advisory Group (OPAG) to the team to focus particularly on the engagement issues. We will work jointly with the Department for Work and Pensions to commission the research with older people and the literature review, which will inform both this study and the development of the Third Age Service.

We will use workshop sessions to encourage learning across fieldwork sites and to gather data from participants, to supplement site visits. The sites will also contribute towards the development of products and will therefore play an important role as partners in the project.

#### **4. Methods and Products**

The project will explore the issues outlined below. We will also produce an overarching national report which will draw together the findings of all four strands.

##### **1. A comprehensive approach to promoting independence includes a wide range of activities and interventions.**

We will:

- Commission Age Concern England to work with older people to identify the factors that help them to live independent lives and those that act as barriers to independence.
- Work with the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) to commission a literature review from the Oxford Institute of Ageing (OIA) on promoting independence.
- Draw the themes from these two initiatives together to set out the range of activities and interventions that make up a comprehensive approach.

##### **2. This wide span of activities is reflected in the number of government departments with an interest in this area, so policy on promoting independence is complex and cross-cutting.**

We will:

- Produce a map of the policy terrain, illustrating the opportunities this offers through local examples and case studies drawn from fieldwork.

##### **3. Developing and sustaining a strategic approach locally requires well developed whole system working and the ability to embed the work in new structures and policy areas.**

We will:

- Carry out fieldwork in a number of communities that are currently working on promoting independence by observing key meetings and events, including older people's fora.
- Deliver two workshop sessions, bringing together fieldwork sites to share experience of common concerns and to contribute to the development of products.
- From this, produce a resource for communities that wish to develop a strategic approach locally, including case studies and tools.

**4. Investing in interventions that promote independence, including for frail older people, can not only improve older people's quality of life, but can also reduce pressure on the wider system .**

We will:

- Produce a short paper summarising current experience of interventions to support frail older people in the community, including quality of life and cost effectiveness data and examples of the benefits of investment.

## **5. Timetable**

The anticipated project timetable is:

Dec 2002 – Jan 2003	Develop methodology and select sites
Jan – Mar 2003	Carry out desk research
Jan – May 2003	Fieldwork
July 2003	Circulate draft
Oct/Nov 2003	Publish final report

## **6. Project Team**

Jane Carrier, Project Manager, Audit Commission

Rajesh Kishan, Research Manager, Audit Commission

Linda Spencer, Independent Consultant

Prof. Caroline Glendinning, National Primary Care R&D Centre, Secondee

David Gardiner, BGOP/OPAG, Secondee

(Dave Martin, of BGOP will also work closely with the project team).

For more details please contact Caroline Glendinning at [Cglend@fs1.cpcr.man.ac.uk](mailto:Cglend@fs1.cpcr.man.ac.uk) .

## **6. Publications**

### ***GROWING OLDER IN SOCIALLY DEPRIVED AREAS: SOCIAL EXCLUSION IN LATER LIFE.***

*Tom Scharf, Chris Phillipson, Allison Smith (Keele University) and Paul Kingston (University of Wolverhampton). London: Help the Aged. Reports on a survey of 600 older people in areas of severe deprivation in Liverpool, Manchester and Newham. The survey examined issues relating to poverty, experiences of crime, perception of the neighbourhood, and social integration and loneliness. Report concludes with a number of policy recommendations in relation to improving the lives of older people in inner city areas.*

Available from Help the Aged, 207-221 Pentonville Rd London N1 9UZ Price: £15.00.

#### **Contact:**

Chris Phillipson, Professor of Applied Social Studies and Social Gerontology, Centre for Social Gerontology, Keele University, Keele, Staffs, UK

Tel. +44(0)1782 584062 or email: [c.r.phillipson@keele.ac.uk](mailto:c.r.phillipson@keele.ac.uk)

**JOURNAL OF MARRIAGE AND THE FAMILY – SPECIAL ISSUE:  
“INTERNATIONAL PERSPECTIVES ON FAMILIES AND SOCIAL CHANGE”**

I will be guest editing a special volume of *Journal of Marriage and the Family* this year. The topic of this special issue is "International Perspectives on Families and Social Change" and the deadline for submissions is August 1, 2003.

Laura A. Sanchez  
Director  
Center for Family and Demographic Research  
Bowling Green State University  
Bowling Green, Ohio 43403  
U.S.A.

Email: [lsanche@bgnet.bgsu.edu](mailto:lsanche@bgnet.bgsu.edu)

*Call for Papers*

International Perspectives on Families and Social Change

Major social processes involving economic and cultural globalization; democratization; and fundamentalist, modernist, and postmodernist clashes are changing family life everywhere in unprecedented, and often unanticipated ways. In 2004, the *Journal of Marriage and Family* will publish a special 5<sup>th</sup> issue on “International Perspectives on Families and Social Change.” *JMF* invites submissions from scholars around the world whose work addresses the interface of families and society. We seek manuscripts focused on the relations between family changes and broad changes or upheavals in social, cultural, economic, and political institutions. We encourage submissions that examine families and social change in a single nation, region, or subregion, or cross-nationally, cross-culturally, or globally. Topics may include shifts in family structure; changes in marriage, cohabitation, and divorce; renegotiations of gender relationships, work/family systems, and intergenerational caretaking; and changes in fertility, longevity, and mortality. Topics also may include how changes in these arenas affect societies in multiple ways, including consequences for social welfare provisioning, economic and social planning, and creating and transmitting culture through religious, civic, and other social institutions. Submissions may include micro-, macro- and meta-level analyses. Preference will be given to manuscripts that foreground race/ethnicity, class and/or caste, or gender stratification. Papers must be postmarked by August 1<sup>st</sup>, 2003. Send manuscripts or inquiries to:

Laura A. Sanchez, Guest Editor  
*Journal of Marriage and Family*  
Department of Sociology  
Bowling Green State University  
Bowling Green, Ohio 43403

lsanche@bgnet.bgsu.edu  
419-372-7252

## 7. Conferences + Calls for Papers

### 2002 addendum

- November 15-17, 2002 Cochin, India

*Third Annual National Conference of Indian Association of Private Psychiatry*

- December 27-29, 2002 Thiruvananthapuram, India

*Annual Conference of Indian Economic Association*

### 2003, already past

- January 3-7, 2003 Bangalore, India

*90<sup>th</sup> Session of Indian Science Congress*

I am very grateful to Prof. Dr. D. Sivakumar who kindly provided me with the information on the above conferences. Dr. Sivakumar participated in all three events and presented papers on "Team Work in Mental Health Practice" (Cochin), "Human Relations and Economics of Imperfect Information" (Thiruvananthapuram) as well as "Societal Role on Waste Management" and "Social Work Perspectives in HIV/AIDS" (Bangalore). Professor Sivakumar retired from the Population Research Centre, University of Kerala, on November 30, 2002 and presently works as Honorary Professor in some institutions. For more details on these conferences and his current work please feel free to contact him at: [dsivakumar0@rediffmail.com](mailto:dsivakumar0@rediffmail.com)

- March 6-8, 2003 Cape Town, South Africa

*Geriatrics Africa '03: Geriatric Care in Africa - Now and in the Future.* Cape Town, South Africa, March 6-8, 2003

The International Conference on "Geriatric Care in Africa - Now and the Future" was hosted by the South African Geriatrics Society (SAGS) and the South African Gerontological Association (SAGA). It was auspiced by the International Association of Gerontology (IAG) and the African Gerontological Society (AGES International). It was convened with the participation of the United Nations Programme on Ageing, the World Health Organisation Ageing and Life Course Programme and the HelpAge International Africa Region Development Centre. For more information please look at:

<http://www.uct.ac.za/research/iaia/geriatrixafrica03.htm>

- March 12-14, 2003 Taipei, Taiwan

*RC6 Family Sociology Taipei – The international conference on "Intergenerational relations in Families' life course"*

I am very grateful to Merrill Silverstein who provided the information on this conference. Merrill attended this conference himself and was amazed to find that RC6 manages to organise inter-congress meetings each year!!! More information on this very good conference with a fascinating theme can be found at: <http://www.ios.sinica.edu.tw/irfl/> .

- March 28-29, 2003      Birmingham, UK

*Ageing Population – Policy Lessons from the East (APPLE)*

The idea behind this workshop was to invite both leading experts from six East Asian countries (Japan, Malaysia, Singapore, Korea, Taiwan, Hong Kong) who presented data on recent developments in population ageing and social policy responses in these societies and experts in the field of Social Policy and Ageing from several European countries. It was the intention of the workshop organisers to mediate an exchange of experiences and expertise to learn from each other. By the way, Tetsuo Ogawa presented an excellent paper on 'Policy Lessons from Japan'. Details on the APPLE workshop can be found at:

<http://www.socialresearch.bham.ac.uk/Research/GlobalSP/Apple/Intro.asp>

## 2003, yet to come

- April 30-May 3, 2003      Mar del Plata, Argentina

*3rd Pan-American Congress of Gerontology - A Hemispheric Conference.*

Conference details can be found at: <http://www.sagg.org.ar/2003/indexcongreso.htm>

- May 5-7, 2003      Antwerp, Belgium

*4th ISSA (International Social Security Association) conference  
'Social security in a long life society'*

For more information, see the conference website: <http://www.issa.int/>

- May 21-23, 2003      Brussels, Belgium

*Dissemination conference of the Project OASIS entitled "Old Age and Autonomy: The Role of Service Systems and Intergenerational Family Solidarity"*

For more information, please contact:

Andreas Motel-Klingebiel: [motel-klingebiel@dza.de](mailto:motel-klingebiel@dza.de)

Hans-Joachim von Kondratowitz: [kondrato@dza.de](mailto:kondrato@dza.de)

- May 24-27, 2003      Tampere, Finland

*4th International Conference in Cultural Gerontology*

More details can be found at: <http://www.uta.fi/konferenssi/cuge/>

- July 1-6, 2003      Barcelona, Spain

*Quality of Life for an Ageing Society - 5th European Congress of Gerontology*

For more details see: <http://www.eriag.com/barcelona2003/index.html>

- July 7-11, 2003                      Beijing, P.R. China

*36th World Congress International Institute of Sociology entitled "Social Change in the Age of Globalization"*

More details can be found at: <http://www.iis2003beijing.com.cn/>

Arvind K. Joshi will be organising a session on "Ageing and Social Support in the Developing Countries" at the 36th World Congress International Institute of Sociology, Beijing (July 7-11, 2003). Deadline for the submission of abstracts was March 30, 2003. (Contact email to [arvindvns@satyam.net.in](mailto:arvindvns@satyam.net.in), copy to [lixiacass@yahoo.com](mailto:lixiacass@yahoo.com)).

More details on [www.iis2003beijing.com.cn](http://www.iis2003beijing.com.cn) .

*In session 64: "The Globalising Ageing World: Policy Challenges to Ageing Societies"* KWOK Hong Kin and LEE Kang-mun, William, will jointly present a paper entitled 'Myth and reality of elderly perceived responsibility between son and daughter in elderly care in Hong Kong'.

- July 20-24, 2003                      Frankfurt/Main, Germany

*5th International Conference of the International Society for Quality-of-Life Studies entitled "Challenges for the Quality of Life in the Contemporary World"*

More details can be found at: <http://www.qualityoflife-2003.de/>

- August 16-19, 2003                      Atlanta, U.S.A.

*Annual meeting of the American Sociological Association*

More details can be found at: <http://www.asanet.org/convention/2003/>

- August 21-24, 2003                      Toronto, Canada

*Annual Meeting of the Research Committee 19 on Poverty, Social Welfare and Social Policy of the International Sociological Association entitled New Challenges for Welfare State Research*

For more details contact: [sebastien.starnaud@utoronto.ca](mailto:sebastien.starnaud@utoronto.ca)

- August 26-28, 2003                      Warsaw, Poland

*European Population Conference 2003 entitled "European populations: challenges and opportunities"*

For more details see at: <http://www.eaps.nl/activities/epccom/2003.html>

- September 23-26, 2003 Murcia, Spain

*6th Conference of the European Sociological Association (ESA) entitled "Ageing Societies, New Sociology"*

More details can be found at: <http://www.um.es/ESA/>

*The following sessions are organised by the Research Network on Ageing in Europe (call for papers already passed):*

1. *Ageing Societies and the Welfare State in a Comparative Perspective*
2. *Challenges of Globalisation for Ageing Societies*
3. *Ageing, Diversity and Social Inequality*
4. *Labour Markets and Retirement*
5. *Caring Relationships, Services and Health*
6. *Alternative Discourses of Ageing*
7. *Families, Ageing and Intergenerational Relationships (joint session with Families RN)*
8. *Quality of Life in Old Age: the UK Growing Older Programme (organiser: Alan Walker)*
9. *Young and Old: Linked lives or separate worlds? Research and policy challenges (joint session with Youth and Generation RN)*

For more details please look at: <http://www.ageing-in-europe.de/>

- October 9-10, 2003 Melbourne, Australia

*Ageing Well: The Multicultural Challenge. An International Symposium*

The Alma Unit for Research on Ageing (AURA) and the Inner Western Region Migrant Resource Centre (IWRMRC) have great pleasure in inviting you to participate in the 'Ageing Well: the Multicultural Challenge Symposium'.

The aim of the conference is to bring educators, researchers, policy-makers, and industry practitioners together to initiate dialogue that will enhance our understanding on the challenges of ageing in a multicultural society.

The Program will consist of Plenary, Invited, Contributed Sessions and Poster Presentations with topics that present a broad spectrum of issues and challenges for "Ageing Well".

We are now calling for papers and poster presentations that fit within the symposium themes as they relate to ageing well in a multicultural society:

**Symposium Themes**

**Ageing Well – Factors**

- Physical Health
- Mental Health
- Social Support
- Life Activity (leisure and productive)
- Material Security

**Ageing Well – Strategies**

- Policy
- Education
- Research
- Practice

Abstracts must be submitted **by 6 June 2003**. Authors will be notified of the outcome by 30 June 2003. Please be sure to include: abstract title, name/s of presenting author/s, organisation/s, contact details, abstract (no longer than 250 words), type of presentation (paper or poster). Abstracts should be submitted as a word document by email as an attachment to: [aura@vu.edu.au](mailto:aura@vu.edu.au) or by post on disk to: AURA, Victoria University, PO Box 14428, Melbourne City MC VIC 8001, Australia. For further information please contact: [Jan.King@vu.edu.au](mailto:Jan.King@vu.edu.au) or +61-3-9688 5200.

- October 13-15, 2003 Beijing, P.R. China

*4<sup>th</sup> International Symposium on Chinese Elderly entitled "Responding to the Changing Needs of the Elderly. Building Gerontology Programs in China"*

This symposium is designed to bring together some of the most respected practitioners and researchers from China, the United States and around the world to share and exchange the latest knowledge and experience in the field of aging. The meeting will

- Analyze and discuss current problems and issues of aging in the East and in the West, highlighting what we may learn from one another about policies and programs that now exist and those that are under consideration in many countries
- Address the needs to improve the current situation related to community and long term care services, including assistive technology, workforce issues, aging with disability, aging with cognitive impairment and health promotion.
- Recommend social policies and programs to meet the needs of the elderly and aging society
- Establish a higher education association in gerontology in China

**Organizers** ([alphabetical list](#))

Overseas Chinese Institute on Aging (OCIOA), San Francisco, USA

Peking University- Institute of Population Research, China

Renmin University of China- Institute of Gerontology, China

The University of Hong Kong- Sau Po Centre on Ageing, HKSAR, China

Tsinghua University- Tsinghua Gerontological Research Center, China

Please reply to **Conference Secretariat** by:

Fax: 86-10-62515213

Email: [ageing@mail.ruc.edu.cn](mailto:ageing@mail.ruc.edu.cn)

Please submit the Registration Form and Abstract electronically by 30 April 2003 at [ageing@mail.ruc.edu.cn](mailto:ageing@mail.ruc.edu.cn). The electronic version of the Conference Announcement can be download from <http://ageing.hku.hk/>. For more details see: <http://ageing.hku.hk/>

- November 13-15, 2003 Copenhagen, Denmark

*1st Annual ESPAnet (Network for European Social Policy Analysis)*

More details about that conference can be found at the conference homepage at: <http://www.sfi.dk/sw1348.asp>

Within the programme of this conference two sessions are planned concerning "Social Policy and Ageing". The objective of our sessions is to present insights into constraints and policy options of ageing societies in Europe. Different topics (see below) are aimed at demonstrating how discourses and debates about the historically new phenomenon of society ageing will affect the actual reform activities in European welfare states. The sessions are intended to provide an audience for papers on recent or future developments in strategic, long-term policy making as well as the development of relevant cash and in-kind instruments and policies. More specifically, the following issues will be at the heart of debate in this working group:

- *Restructuring of the work force*
- *Health care, long-term care, and social care for the elderly*
- *Intergenerational solidarity*
- *Interaction between informal and formal support/care*
- *Trans-national migration processes in old age*
- *Role of scientific expertise in ageing societies*

Pension reform and the concept of 'active ageing' will be dealt with in separate sessions convened by Niels Ploug (pension reform) and Steven Ney ('active ageing').

We invite abstracts (maximum of 300 words by 1 June 2003) for any of the topics outlined above or any other topic related to the theme of policy solutions for ageing societies. Papers with a cross-national, comparative focus are particularly welcome. Proposals should be sent, preferably by email, to the session convenors Andreas Hoff at [hoff@dza.de](mailto:hoff@dza.de) or Hans-Joachim von Kondratowitz at [kondrato@dza.de](mailto:kondrato@dza.de).

- November 21-24, 2003 San Diego, U.S.A.

*56th Annual Scientific Meeting of The Gerontological Society of America.*

For more details see: <http://www.geron.org/AnnualMeeting/annual.htm#2003>

- November 24-29, 2003 Tokyo, Japan

*7th Asia / Oceania Regional Congress of Gerontology*

More details can be found at: <http://www2.convention.co.jp/7thaog/index.html>

- December 8-12, 2003 Canberra, Australia

*International Conference on Population Ageing and Health: Modelling our Future*

For more details see: [http://www.natsem.canberra.edu.au/new/information\\_sheet1.pdf](http://www.natsem.canberra.edu.au/new/information_sheet1.pdf)

## 2004

- May 23-26, 2004 Stockholm, Sweden

*17th Nordic Congress of Gerontology*

The plenaries will be in English. About half of the sessions will probably also be in English, and half of them in Scandinavian languages.

For more details please feel free to contact the Congress President, Lars Andersson, at: [lars.andersson@cns.ki.se](mailto:lars.andersson@cns.ki.se)

- September 7-9, 2004 Roehampton, UK

*International Sociological Association. RC-11 Sociology of Aging. Inter-Congress Conference entitled "Ageing Societies and Ageing Sociology: Challenges and Possibilities" (working title) – see advert on p. 5*

- September 9-11, 2004 Roehampton, UK  
*BSG Annual Conference 'Challenging Perceptions of Later Life' – see advert on p. 6*

- November 19-23, 2004 Washington, D.C., U.S.A.

*57th Annual Scientific Meeting of The Gerontological Society of America.*

Washington, DC, USA, November 19-23, 2004

## 8.Outlook

I sincerely hope, the RC11 Spring Newsletter contained information useful for you. Once again, I would like to encourage you to contribute ideas and suggestions of how to improve this newsletter as well as information on work in progress, publications, conferences, and ageing policies to make the newsletter more interesting for you and for our fellow colleagues all around the world.

***Therefore, any comment, critique or suggestion will be very welcome!***

Last but not least, I wish you every success with your work + always good health. Have a good year 2003 – and I look forward to meeting many of you during the ‘conference season’ this year.

Best regards,

Andreas Hoff