



## Cercle des Seniors Actifs Europe

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### 12th Session of Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing Submission of Endorsed Written Statement from 2Young2Retire **Economic Security**

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## **Global Policies for Productive Ageing with Economic Security**

### **About Us**

In 2013, the global Pass It On Network (PION) was created by the Paris-based NGO, 2Young2Retire. Founded by Moira Allan (France) and Jan Hively (USA), the digital network of Active Ageing advocates now includes liaisons in 55 countries who collaborate with partner organizations, regional networks, and website subscribers and spread use of “what works” to combat ageism and support healthy, active ageing.

Accredited to the OEWGA in 2018, PION sent delegations to the 2018 and 2019 New York City meetings, and submitted comments regarding the Right to Education/Lifelong Learning, and Right to Work/Access to the Labor Market. In 2020 when COVID hit, PION pivoted its planned April Side Event to Zoom and followed-up with four workshops connecting the two session topics with the title, “Lifelong Learning and Earning.” During 2021, PION focused on promoting “Age with Rights” as expressed through 30 videos from PIONeers around the globe, including two of our liaisons who are now Steering Group members of Global Alliance for Rights of Older People, Margaret Young (Canada) and Vijay Naraidoo (Mauritius).

Throughout 2022, PION expects to focus on what is needed globally to sustain the promise of extended longevity by advocating for access to equitable health care, a subsistence income, and pathways for meaningful work, paid or unpaid, throughout life. The time is now to advocate for a UN Human Rights Convention for Older Persons that will undergird our commitment as elders to the wellbeing of the generations that follow us.

### **Sustaining Extended Longevity**

The European Union’s *Green Paper on Ageing* shows how people of all ages could benefit from the extended productivity of older persons, made possible by extended longevity – IF older persons remain relatively healthy and active, with basic sustenance and access to lifelong learning. As the Green Paper states, high levels of education and good health and continuing productivity are mutually reinforcing.

### **Four Policy Objectives to Achieve the Goal of Economic Security**

The Pass It On Network advocates for four policy changes to claim the rights of older adults to remain independent, develop their full potential and sense of self-worth, and participate fully in a multi-generational and multi-cultural society. For the goal of Economic Security, it



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is necessary to achieve the following four policy outcomes which can be claimed as rights in the UN Convention:

- 1. Combatting ageism that affects all aspects of life.** There are countless examples worldwide of barriers to economic security generated by discrimination that focuses on age rather than skills and experience. Comprehensive protection for the human rights of older persons is essential.
- 2. Elimination of barriers to continuing employment** Support is essential for extending productivity along with extended longevity because the birthrate has been going down in 50+ countries while longevity has been going up. Countries that already are having difficulty supporting the volume of payouts from pension systems to expanding numbers of retirees may soon face a shortage of adult workers paying into public pension systems. In too many countries, older workers have been prevented from ongoing access to the labor market by regulations such as mandatory retirement age. A first step for global advocacy should be to advocate elimination of a mandatory retirement age.
- 3. Access to free or low-cost skills-based education.** Extending employment in later life is inhibited by the lack of free or low-cost older adult education for digital literacy and other 21<sup>st</sup> century skills. The lack of action to assert the rights of older persons has limited the potential for education to empower productivity. This speaks to the importance of a UN Convention asserting the rights of older persons, including the right to lifelong learning.
- 4. Access to a basic subsistence pension plan for those who are not earning income.** Countries like India and China are having to develop welfare systems while their populations are ageing. Farmers in areas facing drought caused by climate change may live in countries without pension systems. Even in countries with pensions and health care benefits for older employees, workers who are no longer able to keep up with the physical demands of their jobs are being laid off while still too young to claim pensions. An increasing percentage of workers are earning income in the informal economy, without membership in a pension plan. An organization such as the World Economic Forum should develop a basic subsistence income plan with a global incentive fund for member countries.

## Seeing the Potential

Whether paid or unpaid, the productivity of older adults contributes to local economies. We must design policies to meet our needs for self-determination, economic security, and community participation lifelong. And we must collaborate purposefully and globally to realize the potential of extended longevity.