

Statement by Denmark

Open Ended Working Group on Ageing – 18th April 2011

Introductory remarks + Alignment EU Statement

For decades, Denmark has been a strong advocate for social protection for all. We hold the firm belief that social protection is the necessary foundation on which to build a strong and inclusive society with sustainable economic growth.

The commitment for social protection is underpinned by an existing solid international framework, including, inter alia, the convention on economic, social and cultural rights, the convention on civil and political rights, the convention on women's rights, the convention on the rights of the child, the convention on rights of persons with disabilities, the ILO conventions, and The Madrid Plan of Action on Ageing from 2002.

Universal social protection – both in terms of cash transfers and social services – is a key component of the Danish welfare model.

For instance, the Danish Consolidation Act on Social Services stipulates that all adults with impaired physical or mental function or with special social problems must receive the necessary assistance based on an individual needs assessment.

The purpose of such initiatives is to prevent a deterioration of the problems facing the individual, to improve the individual's social and personal functions and development potential as well as the individual's potential for self-expression and finally to provide all-round services addressing the particular needs of the individual in his/her own home or in other accommodation facilities.

Long-Term Care services to elderly persons and people with disabilities cover assistance with, for example, personal hygiene, getting in or out of bed, or getting dressed. Practical assistance in the home may in the form of cleaning, laundry or shopping assistance.

In the future, Denmark – as many other countries – is faced with the challenge of an ageing population. In the coming years – due to current demographic changes – there will be more elderly and fewer employees in the workforce. This provides a strong motivation to try new ideas and solutions.

We have to find better ways to support the elderly in making an active contribution to society. At the same time, the Danish public sector will be in need of new ways to structure and deliver welfare services.

The Danish approach to this challenge has three main elements, which are:

- o to fully utilise the potential of civil society in the social sector
- o to support elderly persons' opportunities to stay longer in the labour market
- o to invest in new solutions in long-term care, including welfare technology.

Final remarks