

INTERGENERATIONAL JUSTICE Review



Index of Contents

Special: Documentation of FRFG Event

Young Leaders Congress, 22nd - 26th June, 2005 in Berlin:
„Ecological Generational Justice into the Constitution?“ 4

Topic: Institutionalisation of Intergenerational Justice

Responsibility for Future Generations: Scope and Limits
by Prof. Dr. Dieter Birnbacher 22

John Rawls on Rights of Future Generations
by Prof. Dr. Claus Dierksmeier 23

Intergenerational Justice
by Ass. Prof. Emmanuel Agius 24

Justice Between Generations: Limits of Procedural Justice
by Prof. Michael Wallack 25

Principles of Generational Justice
by Prof. Dr. Christoph Lumer 26

The Impossibility of Intergenerational Justice
by Prof. Dr. Wilfred Beckerman 27

Towards a Pragmatic Approach to Intergenerational Justice in Germany
by Dr. Johannes Meier and Dr. Ole Wintermann 27

A Constitutional Law for Future Generations - The “other” Form of the Social Contract: The Generation Contract
by Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Peter Häberle 28

The French Constitutional Charter for the Environment: An Effective Instrument?
by Prof. Dominique Bourg 29

Establishment of the Rights of Future Generations in National Constitutions
by Dr. Jörg Tremmel 30

Rule Change and Intergenerational Justice
by Dr. Axel Gosseries 31

Institutional Determinants of Public Debt: A Political Economy Perspective
by Prof. Dr. Robert K. von Weizsäcker and Dr. Bernd Süßmuth 32

The Economic Sustainability Indicator
by Dr. Peer Ederer, Dr. Philipp Schuller, and Stephan Willms 33

Institutional Protection of Succeeding Generations – Ombudsman for Future Generations in Hungary
by Dr. Benedek Jávör 34

The Role of CPB in Dutch Economic Policy Making
by Rocus van Opstal and Jacqueline Timmerhuis 34

Commission for Future Generations in the Knesset – Lessons Learnt
by Prof. Shlomo Shoham and Nira Lamay 35

The Committee for the Future - Future policy
by Dr. Paula Tiibonen 36

Book Recommendations and Reviews 38

Internal matters 40

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Editorial

Dear reader,

In this third English issue of *Intergenerational Justice Review* (IJR), we present to you an elaborate documentation of the "Young Leaders Congress - Ecological Generational Justice into the Constitution?". This highly successful event took place in Berlin, Germany, from 22nd to 26th June 2005. Almost fifty participants from all over Europe and beyond took part in the Congress, and discussed together with twenty international experts on environmental policy, law and economy persistent problems, developments and solutions. The unique spirit of the Young Leaders Congress can probably best be reflected by some lines of the final declaration which was formulated by all participants:

"One vision shared by the youth of Europe is that of Sustainability and Intergenerational Justice throughout the world. We came together to seek solutions for one of the paramount problems of our time: political short-termism. ...We agreed to form a network to further pursue these goals. We want to put Intergenerational Justice and Sustainability on the political agenda. Being young people from different countries, we will start initiatives to overcome the problem of political short-termism."

As a preparation, the participants were provided with a reader consisting of articles written by distinct experts of the topic, among them speakers of the Congress. In this issue, we also include these essential viewpoints. The complete versions of these papers will be published in an upcoming "Handbook Intergenerational Justice". For the IJR issue at hand, we provide you with precise and concise summaries of the papers.

As a starting point, Prof. Dr. Dieter Birnbacher, teaching at Heinrich Heine University in Düsseldorf, Germany, approaches the topic by analysing the ethical appropriateness of actual procedures to institutionalise generational justice. He reveals daily complacency to be a special hindrance within the attempt to take responsibility for future generations. Tying up to the ethical aspect Prof. Dr. Claus Dierksmeier, who teaches Philosophy at Stonehill College in Easton/Boston, USA, pleads for a moral-based, metaphysical explanation. In his article he criticises John Rawls's rather rational theoretical approach in his work "A Theory of Justice". Prof. Emmanuel Agius from the University of Malta sets a framework of ethical principles that should be taken as a guide when realising intergenerational justice. Moreover, he also takes John Rawls into account, especially his 'just saving principles'. Michael Wallack, Associate Professor of Political Sciences at Memorial University of Newfoundland, broadens the critique on Rawls and proposes a principle of "Minimum Irreversible Harm". In this context, Prof. Dr. Christoph Lumer, Professor of Philosophy at the University of Osnabrück, Germany, then develops five concrete moral axioms which come directly under practical scrutiny. Prof. Dr. Beckerman renews his critic from the last IJR that a theory of intergenerational justice is not only impossible but also unnecessary. Dr. Meier and Dr. Wintermann describe a pragmatic approach for reaching the aim of sustainability. Therefore German politics should look beyond national borders. To realise and assure the need of generation protection, a reform of the social contract into a 'generation contract', as well as its constitu-

tional anchorage is needed. This is the demand of Prof. Dr. h.c. mult. Peter Häberle, who is director of the Bayreuth Institute for European Law and Law Culture. Häberle's demand would imply a drastic rule change. The article of Dr. Jörg Tremmel from the Foundation for the Rights of Future Generations justifies the need to institutionalise Intergenerational Justice. Focussing on changes of constitutions, it deals with Beckerman's argument that future generations cannot have rights. Prof. Dominique Bourg elaborates further on the constitutional anchorage of Sustainability by evaluating the effects of the French Constitutional Environment Charter. The entailed impact on current and future generations, namely transition losses, are discussed by Dr. Axel Gosseries, permanent research fellow at the Fonds National de la Recherche Scientifique in Belgium and for the Chaire Hoover d'éthique économique et sociale at the University of Louvain. Having introduced a 'morality test', he applies his theoretical framework to three exemplary rule changes. To continue with practical problems that hint at the desperate need for institutionalising Generational Justice, Prof. Dr. Robert K. von Weizsäcker and Dr. Bernd Süßmuth, both teaching at the Faculty of Economics of the Technical University of Munich, outline the gravity of public debt for Germany and other states. Especially the short-sightedness of politicians who prefer being re-elected rather than tackling fundamental issues constitutes an obstacle in solving long term problems. In order to raise the public's awareness concerning this lack, Dr. Peer Ederer, Dr. Philipp Schuller, and Stephan Willms, founders of the think tank 'Deutschland Denken!', developed the 'Economic Sustainability Indicator'. Another possibility to institutionalise generational justice is the establishment of an ombudsman for future generations. Dr. Benedek Jávör, Assistant Professor of Environmental Sciences at the Department of Environmental Law at Pazmany Peter Catholic University, Budapest, describes how this was initiated by the Hungarian NGO 'Protect the Future!'. Having dealt with two non-governmental initiatives, the article by Rocus van Opstal and Jacqueline Timmerhuis from the Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis (CPB) introduces how a rather independent governmental institution can trigger more long term thinking. Another successful governmental institution is the Commission for Future Generations of the Knesset, the Israeli Parliament. Shlomo Shoham, Professor at the Faculty of Law of Tel Aviv University, and Nira Lamay, Deputy Commissioner for the Knesset Commission for Future Generations, evaluate this young and worldwide unique establishment. Finally, Dr. Paula Tiuhonen discusses origins, history and main tasks of Finland's Committee for the Future and evaluates its work. Beyond this, we inform you about current activities of the FRFG and YOIS and further important literature to the topic.

We hope you will enjoy our third English issue of *Intergenerational Justice Review*

Dr. Jörg Tremmel



Frauke Austermann



Yanti Ehrentraut



Documentation

"Young Leaders Congress - Ecological Generational Justice into the Constitution? Europe's Green Future in the 21st century"

- Berlin, 22th June - 26th June 2005 -

Contents:

1. Introduction
2. The Elements of the Congress
 - 2.1 Simulation Game Fish Banks Ltd.
 - 2.2 Speech: "Ecology as a luxury - a good initiative at the wrong time?"
 - 2.3 Presentation of members of the German Parliament
 - 2.4 Debate: "13 years after Rio - how far are we in achieving ecological Generational Justice in Europe?"
 - 2.5 Lecture: "The Idea of Generational Justice in an ecological sense. Possibilities of its institutionalisation"
 - 2.6 Study Groups:
 - 2.6.1 Criteria for Intergenerational Justice
 - 2.6.2 Constitutional Change
 - 2.6.3 Commission for Future Generations
 - 2.6.4 Ombudsperson for Future Generations
 - 2.6.5 The European Union Strategy for Sustainable Development
 - 2.7 Panel Discussion: "Bad news are good news - The image of ecology in the media?"
 - 2.8 Presentation of the intention of participants for a campaign in their own country or Europe
 - 2.9 Presentation: "How to start a campaign in Europe" Ann Mettler, Executive Director, Lisbon Council asbl.
 - 2.10 Panel Discussion: "25 years after Johannesburg - visions of an ecological Europe in a sustainable world"
3. Feedback
4. Declaration of the Congress
5. Biographies of the speakers and moderators
6. Epilogue
7. Participants, Organisers, Sponsors

1. Introduction

Young Leaders Congress 2005 - one leap forward

"Ecological Generational Justice into the Constitution? Europe's Green Future in the 21st century" was the topic of the Young Leaders Congress, which took

place from Wednesday, 22nd to Sunday, 26th June in Berlin. Almost fifty participants from all over Europe and beyond took part in this great event. Twenty international experts on environmental policy, law and economy discussed persistent problems, developments and solutions.

The Congress was structured as follows: the first main debate on Friday with the title "13 years after Rio - how far are we in achieving ecological Generational Justice in Europe?" examined the current situation of our continent. Markus Knigge, Fellow with Ecologic, moderated the debate between Dr. Karsten Sach of the Federal Environment Ministry of Germany and Dr. Manfred Bergmann of the European Commission.

The next day, the panel discussion "Bad news are good news - the image of ecology in the media?" took place and created a lot of stuff to talk about. Edgar Göll from the Institute for Future Studies, guided the discussion between journalist Matthias Urbach from the newspaper TAZ, Jörg Geier, Deputy Secretary-General of the Club of Rome, and the Press Officer of Greenpeace, Svenja Koch.

The final panel discussion on Sunday marked the end of the Congress and addressed the topic "25 years after Johannesburg - visions of an ecological Europe in a sustainable world".

Furthermore, five workshops were organised. Dr. Jörg Tremmel of the Foundation for the Rights of Future Generations (FRFG) held the workshop "Constitutional Change" and Torge Hamkens, the Vice Chairman of the Global Contract Foundation, explained "The European Union Strategy for Sustainable Development". The participants could also join a workshop about "Ombudsperson for Future Generations" which was managed by Benedek Jávör from Hungary. Prof. Dr. Wallack from the Memorial University of Newfoundland, introduced "Criteria for Intergenerational Justice" and Nira Lamay of The Knesset informed about the "Commission for Future Generations".

Beyond the level of political and environmental education, we tried to create a friendly atmosphere between participants,

organisers and speakers. The simulation game "Fish Banks Ltd." was one of the more relaxed parts of the Congress. Furthermore, a Case Study Trip to the German Parliament "Reichstag" including a short speech about the energy systems of the building gave the chance to discover some sights of the wonderful city Berlin. The "Country Fair" sought to show typical features as well as symbols of Sustainability in each country and presented the different nationalities in a humorous way.

Between the three main debates, we could also hear other presentations such as a speech by Prof. Dr. Weizsäcker, the Chairman of the Bundestag Committee on Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, about "Ecology as a luxury - a good initiative at the wrong time?". Also, we heard a lecture and a presentation by Dr. Jörg Tremmel on the "Handbook Generational Justice". Last but not least, Ann Mettler, Executive Director of Lisbon Council asbl, gave a very enthusiastic speech on "How to start a campaign in Europe". One afternoon, the participants presented individual campaigns for their own country or for the European Union. The participants, among them several members of parliament, examined different constitutions regarding their "long-termism". The proposals for reform ranged from new paragraphs for Intergenerational Justice to new institutions. The Congress was a very important step forward, because the developed concepts can indeed be realised by many of the participants.

In this documentation of the Young Leaders Congress, we would like to present summaries of the different events written by participants for participants and everybody who is interested in the topic of the Congress. At the end of this documentation, the reader can find the "Declaration of the Congress", which was formulated together with the Young Leaders. It includes basic problems and aims of Sustainability and tries to provide a thought-provoking impulse to develop own solutions and ideas. Just be willing to make one leap forward in the fight for a



Photo: The Participants of the Congress

more fair-minded world.

Authors: Tobias Kemnitzer, Jörg Tremmel, Kristin Tecles, Yanti Ehrentraut, Frauke Austermann, Caterina Bressa, Andrea Heubach und Thomas Wiechers from the FRFG

2. The Elements of the Congress

2.1 Simulation Game "Fish Banks Ltd."

Thursday, 23rd of June
managed by Tile von Damm, "Per Global" and **Johanna Brinkmann**, PhD-Candidate at the Chair for Economic Ethics, University of Halle-Wittenberg

The Simulation Game took place in the Friedrichstadt Church and started with an introduction given by Johanna Brinkmann and Tile von Damm on the game's rules. The experts explained that the participants had to divide up in seven groups of about seven people. After that, each group got some information sheets and the game leaders explained that every group constitutes one fishing company. As a next step, everybody got to know that the aim is to make as much profit as possible. Each company had the same starting conditions of six boats and the equal amount of capital. Then the participants had to evaluate how to act. It was possible to send the boats into the deep sea, to the coast or to the harbour, but everywhere different costs had to be paid. Moreover, every group could buy further ships in different manners, e.g. from the bank or from other companies. As in real life, advantages and disadvantages occurred with each decision. In addition, the Simulation Game contained some surprises, e.g. nobody could know how the weather would develop, how much fish would be left in the sea and how other companies would react.

The game was structured in ten rounds

and after each round every group got an individual information from the bank about their profit or loss. At the beginning of the game, everybody caught a lot of fish and was more or less successful, but already in the second round, fish got very little and in the 7th round the participants received a press release, which announced the status of overfishing. A discussion

followed about the absolute and relative quotas, but without an agreement. After the last round, there was a group, which had the most capital, but they could not really be called "winners" because if we had continued the game, everybody would have been a loser. The lack of fish in the sea was just irreversible. The better solution would be an agreement between the companies, to catch only that much fish, that it is still possible to keep the balance. Fish is limited and "Sustainability" was the conclusion of the game. It became clear, that natural resources are not able to grow as fast as economy in a capitalistic society. An agreement between companies is necessary to make fish-catching efficient for everybody. One proposal is to create limits of fishing in order to create a natural balance between men and nature.

(Summary by Kristin Tecles and Yanti Ehrentraut, organisation team)

2.2 Ecology as a Luxury - a good Initiative at the wrong Time?

Friday, 24th June

Speech by Prof. Dr. Ernst-Ulrich von Weizsäcker, Chairman of the Bundestag Committee on Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety

The Young Leaders Congress 2005 enjoyed a presentation by Prof. Dr. Ernst-Ulrich von Weizsäcker about remedies against dangerously ignorant attitudes concerning ecological and social rights of Future Generations, mostly threatened by political short-termism derived from voting cycles.

Von Weizsäcker offered a beautifully fresh

bunch of observations concerning topical social debates: We have been captured by the hegemonial speech of economic growth as the only rational means of advancing and developing our societies; all intentions, action and promises we direct to it with no other criteria. From a financial point of view, from the resource side, sustainable growth would have been possible for a long time. During the 19th and the 20th century, optimism gained space from the conservative viewpoint towards social change. Optimism got its first remarkable hit worldwide in form of the book *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson in 1962, followed by the Club of Rome with its alarming book *Limits to Growth* of 1972.

Talking about economic Sustainability in the European context, or the lack of it, von Weizsäcker mentioned the chronic financial deficit suffered by Eastern Germany, as well as the unsustainable



Photo: Markus Götz-Guerlin (left) of the Protestant Academy introduces the two leaders of the Simulation Game Fish Banks Ltd.

financial flow between the north and the south of Italy. In Germany, regardless of the party in power, there is 45 % more of consumption compared with production. This situation is far from being sustainable, even though examined just from the financial point of view.

Von Weizsäcker remembered and challenged the words of Indira Gandhi (1972) stating poverty to be the worst polluter. The statement of Gandhi was following the then actual perception, where the wealth growing by advance of time was believed to automatically guarantee an end to pollution after it would have reached a certain peak. Von Weizsäcker disagreed to this: "It does not work like this, not in the world as we now know it. Actually, they are the richest and "cleanest", in environmental classic terms, who nowadays most amend and destroy environment due to the volume of our consumption."

Von Weizsäcker named the indicator of ecological footprint as a descriptive tool in order to piece together "the western impact" on global threats, such as climate change and loss of biodiversity. According to calculations behind the concept of ecological footprint, a wealthy European citizen consumes four hectares of the surface of the globe; an average North American consumes more than eight hectares, and an average Chinese or Indian less than one hectare.

Environmental problems are not just a question of pollution; they are a question of resource usage. Von Weizsäcker was actually just heading for China, for the Chinese have just become conscious of the meaning of the effective use of resources, a concept called "factor four", and they want to change the patterns of their resource usage. The actual ideological battle is being fought between trade unions and representatives of different industrial sectors. In Germany, for example, the industry is demanding more rights for CO₂-emissions presenting themselves as the safeguard of jobs.

Why does it sound that sarcastic, asked von Weizsäcker. He elevated the Nordic

of technological development: In Japan refrigerators are on the market that are seven times more effective than the ones sold in Europe. Another example is the car industry. While General Motors is living hard times, Toyota falls from one victory to another. Arnold Schwarzenegger, the governor of California, has declared his intention to enhance the carbon effectiveness of California until 2040 to 80 per cent from actual levels. Further themes requiring prompt action are, inter alia, effective usage of water and metal resources.

Unfortunately, Germany is not yet on the right track, as stated by von Weizsäcker. Still, this message has not broken through; there is a lack of information and awareness with respect to which questions. We need to start focusing on genuine factors affecting social dynamics, for example, the actual structure of incentives provided for architectures spur construction of expensive houses and *not* being energy efficient. Von Weizsäcker appealed to us to bring this message further, and to work for its practical implementation.

(Summary by Tuuli J. Lehtinen, participant from Finland)

2.3 Initiative of Members of the German Parliament to Institutionalise Generational Justice

Friday, 24th June

Moderator: Dr. Jörg Tremmel, FRFG, Foundation for the Rights of Future Generations,
Speakers: Michael Kauch, FDP, Liberal Free Democrats party and Anna Lührmann, German Greens.

Kauch told us about the work of the German Parliamentary Council on Sustainable Development, of which he is a member. The Council was founded in 2003 but only started functioning in 2004. The founding meant a remarkable change in the parliamentary work concerning Sustainable Development, for before responsible persons were only named by the German Councillor. The new Council consists of members from all the main parties and has brought matters of sustainable development closer to the daily work of the Parliament. The next topics that are planned to be treated in the Council's work are biodiversity and the growing public debt. A new issue is the relationship between public investments and demographical change.

The Council had made a study visit to Sweden and Finland, where generational accounting is already being practiced. In Finland, very different from the German situation, experts are calculating how to maintain the public surplus the next 40 years. Germany is still lacking a sustainable accounting system for future effects of pensions, social security subsidies and public debt. The Council has been preparing action concerning internalisation of the external costs of our actions (indirect costs for instance the negative impacts of traffic to the public health; impacts which are not taken into account in fuel prices), but due to the premature German elections, Kauch stated he is wishing the next Council to retake the topic. With respect to this kind of initiatives of wide repercussions, the importance of (at least) European wide networks is paramount.

To conclude, Kauch gave two responses on how to tackle the actual exploitation of Future Generations' rights: 1) Adjusting the criteria for public subsidies. 2) Creating an independent organ to alarm of economic crises and safeguard public economic Sustainability.

Anna Lührmann presented to the Congress the work of a group of young MPs for the Rights of Future Generations in the German Parliament. The idea and the initiative was given two years ago by Dr. Jörg Tremmel from the FRFG. Lührmann stressed the importance of a cross-party approach and cooperation in order to take up the challenge. The two years' work has been intensive and marked by good spirit and common effective synergies to struggle for Future Generations. The group of young MPs has been



Photo: Jörg Tremmel, Michael Kauch Anna Lührmann (from left to right)

Countries as a promising example representing the possibility for better future prospects: here, the best environmental and competitiveness indicators are met. Other examples can be found in Asia, more precisely Japan, where the top runner-principle for effectiveness leaves companies four years of transition time in order to switch to the most effective technology: if a company does not comply, first it suffers a shame punishment and then, if needed, a fee.

Furthermore, von Weizsäcker appealed to Europe to face its backwardness in terms

Kauch from the German Liberal Democrats congratulated the organisers for the entire Congress, especially its theme: environmental concerns have gained their position on every party's agenda. The problem is the way in which each party picks up certain themes that fit best to the rest of their political program. In real (political) life it is common that different groups share the same objectives, but then disagree on practical ways of heading towards their realisation. The topic of Intergenerational Justice is a good example for these disputes.

preparing a law to change the constitution.

A new paragraph 20b should be added to the German Constitution, reading:

"The state must observe the principle of sustainability and safeguard the interests of future generations."

Moreover, the existing paragraph 109 of the German Constitution shall be sharpened to constrain public debtmaking (changes underlined).

"When making decisions with regard to the budget, the Federal Republic of Germany and its states have to pay attention to the economic equilibrium, to the principle of sustainability and the interests of future generations."

Lührmann pointed out how difficult it is to make the party leaders cooperate. Still, the group working for the constitutional change in favour of Future Generations has found 50 supporters from different parties for the initiative of changing certain parts of the German Constitution in order to safeguard rights of Future Generations. Very efficiently, the idea of the constitutional change was first kept secretly from the public in order to prepare it well. At some point, the existence and the work of the group broke through to the public and there were already remarkable titles drawn about it. Following a *Spiegel* report, several press articles were written. Even more journalists had to be rebuffed because of the premature elections. The premature elections in 2005 have forced the group to postpone the release of the campaign. Lührmann feels, though, confident with their cause also what becomes to a possible new Parliament; public support is on their side.

Lührmann clarified the differences concerning the means to fight for the shared goals: For the Greens, public debt does not necessarily mean a burden for Future Generations; it needs to be considered on what the money is being spent. There are many investments waiting for their realisers giving their benefits in years to come. Lührmann told us about her surprise about the Bundestag's Budget Committee: until 70-80 per cent of each year's budget has already been bound up by past decisions.

During the plenary debate following these presentations, Ramil Aliyev (participant)

rose the question of the role of a national constitution with respect to the actions of national and international enterprises. How could ecological values be promoted on an international level? Kauch, giving an answer, emphasised the need to avoid practicing any kind of environmental imperialism, in the sense of the economically and politically strong countries going to dictate codes of conduct in weaker ones. Tuuli Lehtinen (participant) pointed out that national constitutions can, of course, also refer to the concerned nation's acts internationally respect to certain value base. So does, for example, the Finnish Constitution in its first chapter.

In Germany, there was just going on a debate about the agreements on so-called "flexible mechanisms" of the Kyoto Protocol in order to mitigate climate change: Should the foreign project developers apply their national legislation or the one of the receiving country? The strict German legislation concerning the packing materials of different products is an example of this debate on relationships and differences between national and foreign standards. With regards to other aspects of climate change, there is an acute need for an international tax on kerosene, at least on EU level. Transport emissions in general, as well as the emissions derived from the residential sector, should be included in the existing emission trading systems.

Further in the debate, Nira Lamay (speaker) raised a question about the importance of international trade conventions and the role the European Investment Bank with respect to Sustainable Development patterns on the international level. In international trade relations, the more industrialised partner usually benefits most from the competition. It seemed to be affirmed that nowadays there is too much competition and too little cooperation and technology transfer in international relations.

Lamay, Deputy Commissioner for the Knesset Commission for Future Generations of Israel, was also interested in the possibilities of working somehow objectively in a model like the German one, where a Council formed by politicians, is tackling rights of Future Generations. In Israel, by contrast, the Commission is formed by professional experts without direct links political the parties. In Germany, as stated by Mr. Kauch, there are actually two commissions for Sustainable Development: one

formed by MPs, and a consultative one, formed by scientific professionals. According to Kauch's evaluation, the two Commissions enjoy good cooperation.

Referring back to the session's title, the debate concluded with a rhetoric question: Could it not be the right time for ecological initiatives? The argument concerning protecting people's jobs does not need to be adverse to the principles of ecological Sustainability and vice versa.

Catherine Lippuner (participant) raised an important question concerning the possible inclusion of rights of Future Generations in national constitutions: What would it mean in practice? What actions might be taken in order to efficiently promote these rights in every day functions of our societies? Would that mean new directions to curriculum of the schools? Kauch responded that education is mainly a topic being dealt on a state (Länder) level, but there would be place and demand for consultations and awareness rising campaigns at national level as well.

The MPs were asked how to build bridges for cross-party cooperation. Their answers revealed that cooperation for them is not an objective per se. But they stressed that ability to compromise is essential, as well as personal contacts across party lines.

(Summary by Tuuli J. Lehtinen, participant from Finland)

2.4 Debate: 13 years after Rio - how far are we in achieving Ecological Generational Justice in Europe?

Friday, 24th June

Moderator: Markus Knigge, Fellow with Ecologic, Institute for International and European Environmental Policy,

Speakers: Dr. Sach, Federal Ministry of the Environment, Deputy Director General "International Cooperation" and **Dr. Manfred Bergmann**, Head of Evaluation of Transport, Environment and Energy Policies, European Commission

Dr. Manfred Bergmann and Dr. Karsten Sach discussed the actual state of affairs of ecological concerns raised to the public consciousness at the UN Rio Summit in 1992. The debate was moderated by Markus Knigge.

Dr. Sach stated that the environmental

policy of the EU has been a success story, for example in terms of cleaning polluted waters. Lately, this success has, unfortunately, turned into an obstacle for further improvements. The EU has dropped off to sleep, and there are many challenges waiting for a solution: the proper implementation of the Kyoto Protocol, more regulated use of chemicals (REACH-decree), new water politics, etc. It is also important to reflect concerning EU actions with regards to the so-called third countries. In the EU, it is also important to remember the dual system of environmental policy at national and community level. Implementing certain EU directives mean high challenges at the national level. An example is the implementation of the EU directive on integrated pollution prevention which demands a change of various national laws in Germany.

Dr. Sach stressed a case-sensitive pondering between different legal manners and voluntary actions by pointing to differences in business and private sector. It is essential to take the internalisation of external costs seriously. We need stronger environmental impetus for future environmental EU-policies.

Dr. Bergmann stressed the need of keeping open different but competitive conduct options for private selection for example in the transport sector (offering equal subsidies for different ways of public transportation, etc.).

There is a need to balance environmental and social costs. There is also a huge extend of inappropriate behaviours towards nature: for example only one per cent of all the water treated to be suitable for drinking is finally really drunk. It would be important to better sort out different social functions taking into consideration respective costs and effects on competitiveness.

The question of EU-wide (environmental) taxes is important, though taxes are still widely considered a strictly national topic. If implemented, they should base on unanimity, for example CO₂-emissions, it does not actually matter where they are emitted, but how much is produced. Anyhow, Dr. Bergmann estimated there would not be any EU tax on energy in the next five to ten years. Regulation needs clear fields of responsibility, and there is an equal need for more re- and deregulation in the field. It is also important to consult different stakeholder groups before really regulating something.

Dr. Bergmann finished his presentation by defining the optimal procedure to solve ecological problems: Defining of the problem; analysing of different possibilities to solve it; synchronising the chosen mean to other actions and future investments; arousing public awareness for a successful implementation in practice.

During the common debate, issues were raised like managing risk societies and business pressure, ill-proportioned prices of flight and train tickets even in the EU, and peak-oil. Dr. Sach agreed with the participants that there is a "perverse system of subsidies" for example in aviation sector at the expense of other modes of transport. The two panellists contradict about the need of assigning everything a monetary and neglecting ideal and international value. Dr. Bergmann stressed the need for always considering future losses of "loser-parts" of each environmental dispute. Winners ought to compensate losers.

Finally, Dr. Sach emphasised the importance of a socio-ecological tax reform. He assigned the Congress participants an important task: we should turn all these good intentions into reality...

(Summary by Tuuli J. Lehtinen, participant from Finland)

2.5 LECTURE: "The Idea of Generational Justice in an ecological sense. Possibilities of its institutionalisation"

Friday, 24th June

Speaker: Dr. Jörg Tremmel of the Foundation for the Rights for Future Generations (FRFG)

At the beginning of the lecture, Jörg Tremmel described the foundation FRFG as a Think Tank for Generational Justice. He mentioned its goals, which are to achieve and fight for Generational Justice and Sustainability. We got to know that the foundation does scientific, but generally intelligible research on the interface between social science and politics. Furthermore, Tremmel informed us that the Think Tank has already published five books (the next will be the "Handbook Intergenerational Justice") and numerous position papers. After this introduction, the speaker gave a definition of how the foundation understands Intergenerational Justice and it says: "To FRFG, Intergenerational Justice means that today's youth and Future Generations must have at least the same opportunities to meet their own needs as the generation governing today.". In addition, Tremmel put the focus on the ecological aspect and pointed out some alarming facts, such as the daily destruction of 55.000 hectares Tropical Rain Forest or the daily extinction of ca. 100-200 animal species. So he asked the audience, "Why is institutionalisation necessary?". He gave many reasons for it, for example, that all mature democracies face a paramount structural dichotomy, namely the tendency to preserve the present at the expense of the future. According to Tremmel, it is more and more important to protect Future Generations because presently living generations are capable of effecting the future for thousands of years. Furthermore, he told us that in key areas, such as fiscal, environmental or educational policy, as well as in the social security system, it is likely that today's shortcomings will have detrimental effects on Future Generations and today's youth. "The principle of democracy can conflict with the maxim of Intergenerational Justice", said the expert, "politicians have to fulfil the desires of the present citizens - their electorate". Furthermore, Tremmel pointed out, that the neglect of the interests of Future Generations is not a mistake of the politician, but of the system. So, which ways are there, to implement Generational Justice? The speaker had the idea of a legal barrier, which is needed to protect the overexploitation of nature. Generally, Tremmel sees two routes of improving the Constitutions worldwide and with the focus on Europe: The first one is to provide the protection of Future Generations through textual changes directly in the Constitution (South Africa, Germany, Uruguay). The Constitutional



Photo: Thomas Wiechers (standing), member of the organisation team, Dr. Sach and Mr. Knigge (sitting from left to right)

Court would then become a watch-dog for the interests of Future Generations. The second one is to set up a new institution like an Ombudsperson, an Commission, a Council or the like (Israel, Switzerland, Hungary) and to create thereby a new watch-dog. In addition, he became more detailed and explained strategies how to start a campaign or an initiative in order to achieve his aims. Finally, Jörg Tremmel finished his motivating presentation with an impressive quote, which was: "If one person has a dream, it is a just a dream. If many people have a dream, it is tomorrow's reality".

2.6 STUDY GROUPS

Saturday, 25th June

2.6.1 Workshop "Criteria for Intergenerational Justice"

Workshop leader: Prof. Dr. Wallack, Associate Professor of the Memorial University of Newfoundland

The assumption throughout the workshop was that the criteria for justice between generations can be established within a liberal democratic set-up. Professor Wallack briefly analysed the key ideas of a number of theorists in the liberal tradition, starting with seventeenth-century philosopher John Locke. For Locke, legitimate and just institutions are those which a rational, free person would accept. Locke's philosophy calls for a kind of impartiality which requires us to reflect on whether someone else in our position would make the same choice.

For Locke, the implicit notion of equality does not run counter to private property, which he favoured believing that one could acquire private property from nature through work, provided that there is "...at least as good and as much..." left. This early formulation of Generational Justice failed to consider a number of

important variables, such as changes in population patterns.

John Stuart Mill, the major exponent of classical utilitarianism, posits the idea of the long term interests of mankind as a progressive being. According to Mill, mankind's long term interests are safeguarded if we keep liberal economics working, leaving everyone to make his own choices. One of the dangers of the utilitarian view, however, is that there are instances in which Future Generations are not effectively in a position to make their own choices. Economic liberalism does not necessarily allow Future Generations to make their own choices. The idea that the market produces the best situation is reflected in the thought of liberal economists such as Pareto, who believed that the market decides what is just between generations through a progressive move towards the optimum level of utility through time for every generation.

John Rawls' conception of 'justice as fairness', first put forward in *A Theory of Justice* (1971) is very useful for the formulation of a theory of Intergenerational Justice since it highlights the priority of equality, basic liberties and fair opportunities for all citizens. He reiterates the need for impartiality ('the veil of ignorance') and states that economic and social inequalities should be directed towards offering the maximum benefit to the least advantaged. Rawls' argument explicates the necessity of a fair system of social cooperation. In his later work, *Political Liberalism* (1993), Rawls places a further emphasis on the conception of justice based on shared moral ideas and consensus.

The workshop also briefly considered the criteria for justice between generations as formulated by Tremmel and Beckerman. For Tremmel, the main criteria for Generational Justice are the intergenerational equality of life chances, and an intact and varied ecology. For Beckerman, justice between generations occurs when Future Generations are protected from grievous harm and poverty while being guaranteed with adequate "primary resources" such as breathable air and clean drinking water.

Wallack's own position proposes the notion of the *minimum irreversible harm* as a constitutional principle within a *fair system of social cooperation* (see Rawls) based on the principles of social justice and solidarity. The minimum irre-

versible harm is seen as a criterion for fairness which requires the balancing out of an action and the harm it causes. Prof. Wallack emphasises the distinction that ought to be made between reversible and irreversible harm, which he insisted should not be given the same value. The question of what the '*minimum*' irreversible harm is presents itself as the subject of political discussions.

One could perhaps argue that political liberalism provides the opportunity for a better formulation of Intergenerational Justice than economic liberalism. Following Rawls (especially in *Political Liberalism*), Wallack acknowledges that the task is to select criteria that can become the basis for an overlapping consensus, since it has to be acknowledged that in the pluralism of liberalism citizens do not always share a common conception of what is just and what is good. Through democratic institutions, the liberal democratic framework should provide the opportunity for the public to discuss and share ideas of justice. This further underlines the initial assumption of the workshop that criteria for Intergenerational Justice can be established within a liberal democratic set-up. Discussion and shared ideas of justice can lead to consensus, which then acts as a basis for political obligation and the legitimisation of policy. This, in turn, leads to concrete action such as the institutionalisation of the shared concept of justice (including Generational Justice). It is in this way that the discussions about abstract concepts such as justice and fairness in political theory lead to the formulations of designs in the political sphere. The criteria, or theory, focused upon in this workshop ultimately require a transition from theory to practice, or from criteria to policy. What emerged very clearly in Prof. Wallack's workshop is that the notions of justice and fairness should relate closely to political practice and that such abstractions have to be concretised through political action. As Aristotle reminds us in his *Politics*, people go, but constitutions remain - they transcend time. The discussions of justice between generations need to move towards the institutionalisation of Intergenerational Justice and its insertion as a constitutional principle.

(Summary by Jean-Paul de Lucca, participant from Malta)

2.6.2 Workshop "Constitutional Change"

Workshop leader: Dr. Jörg Tremmel, Foundation for the Rights of Future



Photo: Prof. Dr. Wallack (right) with participants

Generations (FRFG)

At the beginning of the workshop, Tremmel outlined constitutional change and its difficulties in general. He reflected about the role of Constitutions for states and peoples and their binding power to succeeding generations. In the long run, written law always follows the change of ethical beliefs of a people. After this short introduction, the workshop leader opened the discussion with the participants about their country's constitution, its deficiencies and how to improve it.

We recognized, that the Ukrainian constitution contains a consciousness towards past, present and Future Generations in the preamble. Moreover, the articles 3, 13, 14, 16, 50, 66 deal with environment. Although, there are references towards environment in the constitution, they don't have any impact on daily life. Big companies rather pay taxes instead of trying to avoid damage to the environment. "Green tourism" is supported by government, but not many other projects. For a constitutional change, one third of parliamentary deputies have to agree and, in addition, the court, too. A change of the Constitution is thus very hard to achieve.



In Switzerland, the federal constitution preamble mentions the responsibility of the Swiss people towards Future Generations and national strategy. Article 73 mentions Sustainability with the words "to establish a durable equilibrium between nature and its capacity for renewal and its use by humans." The aspect of Sustainability is also mentioned in Article 2. A constitutional change in Switzerland needs a double majority, which means 50 per cent of the people (Switzerland organises at least four referendums per

year) and 50 per cent of the members of parliament. People can propose an initiative if 150.000 people agree.

As a third nation, Finland was analysed. The Finnish constitution was lately changed in 2000, with the focus on environmental protection (section 20) and in chapter 2 about basic rights and equality of people. Here it would be possible to add the rights of Future Generations. Nevertheless, a change of the constitution needs the agreement of 5/6 of the members of parliament or two sequences of a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority.

Estonia has already an article about environmental Sustainability (article 5) which says, that the one who damages nature has to pay for it. But it applies more to companies than to individuals. In this nation, 1/5 of the members of parliament have to take part in the initiative.

Furthermore, a $\frac{2}{3}$ majority is needed and a referendum is facultative for a constitutional change.

In Bulgaria, article 18 of the constitution deals with environment and article 54 defines a healthy environment to be a human right. The Bulgarian parliament consists of 240 members.

After discussing the different situations in several European countries, the participants talked together with Jörg Tremmel about different routes for constitutional changes. MP Tynkkynen T. Oras from Finland announced that he will gather young colleagues from all parties to discuss a multi-partisan initiative of younger MPs. The Romanian MP George Baesu announced an initiative to lower the voting age to 16. This brought the discussion to the relationship of adolescents' rights and the rights of future generations. Unlike children, Future Generations are not born yet and can thus never speak for themselves. Older children, however, are able to stand up for their rights but they are not allowed to vote. As a tendency, lowering the voting age can help to implement Intergenerational Justice.

A counter argument is, that if a person younger than 14 years can not be entirely guilty for committing a crime, he should also be unable to vote. However, in the US 11 year old kids can be sentenced to prison. Obviously the courts believe that they are very capable to oversee the consequences of their actions. People are in some countries able to vote in local elections at the age of 16. First studies of this experiment reveal, that there aren't any negative outcomes. One positive effect is that pupils learn more about politics in school because they get prepared for elections. There are 90 million children living in the EU. Yet children as a group and adolescents up to 18 years are comparatively invisible as citizens or as subjects throughout the EU. They are excluded from the political decision-making processes which have an impact on them. A fair chance for participation for adolescents could be one step forward in the struggle for intergenerational justice.

(Summary by Laura Memmert, organisation team)

2.6.3 Workshop "Commission for Future Generations"

Workshop leader: Nira Lamay, Deputy Commissioner for Future Generations, The Knesset

"Straight away", maybe that is the most distilled message the participants could keep in mind from Nira Lamay's workshop. The development of the Knesset Commission for Future Generations, in which Lamay heads the department of Law and Legislation, is a means for a short-cut towards institutionalising the rights for Future Generations. Initiated by a member of the Knesset in 2002 the commission was put into reality shortly afterwards and since then gained considerable influence on the legislative process.

Although it is a commission of the Parliament, it does not consist of members of Parliament but of experts. The Commissioner is chosen by an adhoc committee of professors and members of the Knesset. As defined in the Knesset law, he or she has the authority to deal with every topic except for defence and security. The commission acts as an advisory body within the legislation and is thus fully embedded in this process. This means, that as soon as a law proposal is issued in Parliament, the Commissioner will be informed, that members of the commission are authorised to take part in

the respective committee and that its opinion is attached to the bill when it comes to voting.

According to Lamay the proximity to the decision-makers in parliament turned out to be the key to success. The access to information, the ability to address people directly and the chance to intervene at a very early stage are powerful means to exert influence. The Commissioner plays a rather delicate role as she/he has to remain objective and needs to cope with all parties in parliament. That is why the person taking over this position needs to embody integrity and neutrality. At present, it is Shlomo Shohan, a former judge with high prestige across the whole politic spectrum.

Nevertheless, some aspects which came up during the discussions in the workshop remain to be debatable. Especially the question of democratic legitimacy and control. It is a matter of fact that people who are not elected influence the issuing of laws. Competence is another aspect as the seven members of the commission cannot be experts in every field they deal with. Lamay explained to us that most of the things to be done are known. Still, in some cases the issues are so complex that trade-offs have to be considered carefully and well-advised priorities have to be set, especially when it comes to budget.

The Knesset Commission for Future Generations is a very pragmatic and therefore effective institution to protect the rights of Future Generations. During its three years of existing the commission has already achieved a lot. But it needs to be backed by comprehensive approach including a governmental strategy, operative execution by a ministry as well as a constitutional change (Nira: "There cannot be enough protection for sustainable development").

Thus, for the outcome of the conference Nira Lamay's workshop delivered a clear

message: Tackle the institutionalisation of the rights for Future Generations on various levels. An advisory commission thereby serves as a watchdog for civil society within the parliament.

At the end of the workshop you could see many surprised faces expressing "good to know some shortcuts". The way to implement long-termism in politics will be long enough, though.

(Summary by Alexander Hauk, participant from Germany)

2.6.4 Workshop "Ombudsperson for Future Generations"

Workshop leader: Dr. Benedek Jávör, Ombudsperson for Future Generations

The aim of this workshop was to develop a suitable concept for a body/an organisation that would take care of the rights of Future Generations. We tried to feature its powers in detail.

The first problem we clarified was whether a commission or an Ombudsperson would be more suitable. We made a short pro/contra analysis. The result favoured an Ombudsperson. Although a Commission has the advantage that it is an established tool within democracies, we nevertheless had some doubts about its flexibility and capacity to really implement long term aims. Moreover, it is rather problematic that too many commissions exist.

An Ombudsperson generally exists in most democracies as well, being proven as an effective tool. Still, one has to admit that an additional Ombudsperson, next to the existing one, for defending the rights of Future Generations could create difficulties for the public: It is difficult for people to distinguish his powers from the general Ombudsperson.

Nevertheless, we agreed that the best choice would be to create an additional, specialised Ombudsperson. His/her position should be located externally to existing parliamentary systems and, furthermore, he/she should not be attached to any existing body. However, the person should be elected by the parliament for a longer period than the parliament itself. The main reason is to be able to implement long term policies. His role should be of consultative

nature, mostly examining and monitoring the implementation of respective bills and policies. He should have the right to be informed by various other bodies and foreign states.

The concept of protecting the rights of Future Generations is rather questionable from a legal point of view as Future Generations do not exist yet and from today's perspective they are not a legal personality. As an ideal legal personality we can only assume what Future Generations will need. From today's viewpoint, we agreed that their rights include



Photo: Benedek Jávör (right) with participants

the right to participate, the right of free choice and the fundamental human rights. This helps us to have at least a general idea in whose name an Ombudsperson acts. The right of free choice is very important because we don't know what Future Generations really need. Therefore, they should be guaranteed the choice to say what they need during time when they really exist. In other words, current generations may not leave burdens of any kind to Future Generations. The basic human rights are elementary and articulated in current documents. Examples are the right for life, right for health, etc.

Furthermore, we discussed existing international documents and movements from which rights of Future Generation can be derived directly or indirectly. Examples are the UN Charta of 1945, widespread ecology movement in the 1970s and 1980s, the Brundtland Commission, the document "Our common future" of 1987, the UNESCO declaration of responsibility of present generations towards Future Generations of 1997, the International law association, or the "New Delhi declaration" of 1999.

Another question which we discussed was



Photo: Nira Lamay (right) with participants

from which level (international, European, or national) these rights can be implemented. We had a look at several sample states (Israel, Finland, and Poland) that implement or try to implement them from national level. Taking into account the European context, and thus the different civil societies, we agreed on a bottom-up implementation in more developed civil societies and a top-down approach for less developed countries (e.g. the CEE). However, this presumes that the existing legal frame on international (European) level could be implemented. We just need to start the realisation as soon as possible.

(Summary by Jan Handl, participant from Czech Republic)

2.6.5 Workshop "The European Union Strategy for Sustainable Development"

Workshop leader: Torge Hamkens, Vice Chairman of the Global Contract Foundation

The workshop was divided in two parts: In the first part Torge Hamkens gave a brief summary on the history and content of the EU Sustainability strategy. In the

taken. In the end, he gave his personal evaluation: On the one hand, many positive results have been achieved already, as for instance in the field of organic farming. On the other hand, there is much that still needs to be done. He made some suggestions: The EU Sustainability strategy needs to be integrated into the Lisbon Agenda, the internal aims must be coordinated more properly with the external aims, and global developments such as terrorism or further globalisation must better be taken into account.

In the second part of the workshop the group mainly came up with the following "amendments" to the EU Sustainability strategy:

Internally, it is important to promote local initiatives (applying a bottom up approach) and establish the EU as a fore-runner leading the global environmental process. Furthermore, a friendly legislative base (i.e. institutions, laws, processes) has to be created. We should internalise the external environmental costs and close the gap between rich and poor. In addition, it is necessary to support the free movement of people worldwide. And, last but not least, we have to promote the rights of Future Generations and justice in world trade.

On the other hand, we also have to regard some external facts, such as the promotion of Sustainable Development via education and public participation.

We need to agree on sustainable development principles in the EU Constitution and to foster cross-border environmental cooperation. In this context, the promotion of long-term thinking and the provision for

second part the group looked for possible improvements of that strategy.

The EU Sustainability strategy, said Torge Hamkens, was not one single document but rather the result of a multilayer process. As parts of that process he named Cardiff 1998, the Lisbon Agenda 2000, and the results of the Gotheburg Summit of 2001. He subdivided the focal points of the EU Sustainability strategy into internal aims, such as public health, natural resources and social exclusion, and external aims, such as the Millennium Development Goals. In both areas he described the measures that are currently

the rights of Future Generations is one basic step forward. After the explanation of internal and external aspects, Torge Hamkens summarised some points which should be regarded as general tasks, such as "How is it possible to connect internal with external parts?" and "How can we integrate Sustainable Development strategies into the Lisbon Agenda?". Furthermore, we have to ask ourselves how to integrate recent global developments.

With these thought-provoking impulses, our workshop leader confronted us with the following task: "Imagine, you are a member of an advisory team to José

Barroso, President of European Commission, and he asks you to develop guiding principles for Sustainable Development for to renew the EU strategy."

Some solution proposals were, for example, the cooperation with local communities, the combination of different governmental structures and the integration and promotion of environmental education. Hopefully, the participants could get some ideas and will help that these proposals will find their way to realisation.

(Summary by Julia Schlüns, participant from Germany)

2.7 Panel Discussion: "Bad news are good news - the image of ecology in the media?"

Saturday, 25th June

Moderator: Dr. Edgar Göll, Institute for Futures Studies and Technology Assessment Berlin

Speakers: Jörg Geier, Deputy Secretary-General, Club of Rome; Deputy Chairman, Think Tank 30

Svenja Koch, Press Officer Greenpeace
Matthias Urbach, Correspondent of the German daily newspaper TAZ

All that we know about the contemporary world, we know through the mass media. This is the opening claim of German sociologist Niklas Luhmann in his book on the 'Reality of the mass media' from 1996. If he is just partly right, ecologists should better adapt this news media reality. Many ecologists, however, seem hugely disappointed by what they find there. But what exactly is the problem with the news media when it comes to ecological issues? And what can we do to change this?

Set off by these opening questions from the moderator, one representative of Club of Rome, one media coordinator of Greenpeace Germany and one journalist of the newspaper TAZ gave us their version of the drama. Listening to their widely differing viewpoints, one might conclude that they live in different worlds, with little hope of ever meeting. However, it might be better to acknowledge the very different sets of demands imposed these people from their work contexts. Admittedly, when all is said and done, the journalist and his colleagues have all the cards on their hands. Ecologists have better learn that lesson.

As a member of a 'Think Tank', Jörg Geier from the Club of Rome probably had less of a stake in the day-to-day business of



Photo: Torge Hamkens (left) with participants



Photo: Matthias Urbach, Edgar Göll, Svenja Koch, Jörg Geier (from left to right)

news media than the other two panelists. Perhaps for this reason, his presentation was more an overview of some of the problems in today's 'information overload' society. Information and news are evermore abundant, but they are increasingly coming from the same centralised sources, with high dependency on advertising revenues etc. In this situation, it is not surprising that ecologists find it hard to attract media attention. Picking up from here, Svenja Koch from Greenpeace provided some practical examples of the short-lived media attention cycle: who remembers nowadays BSE? Of course, Greenpeace is famous for their spectacularly media events, such as Brent Spar.

However, as Koch would insist, these cases only serve to explain more far-reaching problems to the public, and besides, they have no connection to fundraising. Worst of all, she complained, good news are ignored: Greenpeace-sponsored refrigerators at McDonalds or Harry Potter printed on recycled paper are simply ignored by journalists. With the criticism lined out, it was time for the TAZ journalist Matthias Urbach to defend himself. Everyone complains about the media, he said, all lobbyists are the same, including the ecologists. However, environmental issues actually do get reported, German voters still find them important, and Greenpeace is actually good at using the media. But how can you expect to have good news accepted when standard news criteria dictate that only bad news enter newspapers? And how can you expect a small German newspaper to report upon all small oil spills all over the world, if they are insignificant and do not involve Germans? All journalists learn these news criteria at school. Bad news drive the political agenda, just think about the fear of job loss to China and the East-Asian Tsunami. But ecologists have real trouble finding an enemy these days, since we have all become part of the problem. Picking George Bush as the culprit behind

global warming just will not do.

From a personal perspective, I somehow had the feeling that I had heard these viewpoints before. It would be a strange day, after all, if one heard a lobby organisation such as Greenpeace saying that they were satisfied with the level of attention they get from the media. Their job is to strive for more attention to ecological issues, after all. Likewise, you will not expect a journalist, out of sheer moral com-

mitment to the good ecological cause, to give up on his or her professional standards. These kinds of debates tend to get you nowhere. Furthermore, there might be more sensibility in listening to some suggestions from the audience. One member of the audience made the point that, instead of complaining about the news media, ecologists need to come up with attractive stories to tell. Backing this point, another participant of the Congress told about an American PR company, which succeeded in raising the level of environmental awareness by working with local-level news media. It seems, we have to work together with the news media and journalists that we have if we want to promote ecological thinking. After all, environmental issues have always been bad news, they have always been problems; this is their fundamental image. With such a 'good' product on their hands, ecologists really only have to blame themselves if they fail to attract media attention! And by the way, I still remember both: Brent Spar and BSE.

(Summary by Anders Blok, participant from Denmark)

2.8 Presentations of the participants Sunday, 26th June

The participants grouped according to their home countries in order to devise feasible models for several countries and for the EU in order to safeguard the rights of Future Generations.

The presented solution for the EU level doesn't include a change of the draft constitution, given the fact that its ratification is jeopardized. Instead a combination of an Ombudsperson and a parliamentary committee was proposed. The existing Ombudsperson who is engaged with complaints about the present will not be replaced. He has enough work to do and he has very limited resources. Instead of creating an extra Ombudsperson, it is also

possible to elect an "guardian" or "counsellor". The new counsellor should act on a European level but should also be connected to national ombudsmen/institutions in order to be interlinked with the countries. The general public can either address the European Ombudsperson/Counsellor directly or with the help of national representatives. In addition to the Ombudsperson, a Committee for Future Generations should be created on the European level as a body within the European Parliament itself. This Committee should have the power to freeze the law-making process with regard to proposals which will have detrimental effects on Future Generations. A possibility to lobby in the European Parliament is the presentation of the English "Handbook Intergenerational Justice" and after this, a parliamentary committee, consisting of members of each party should be formed. Which committees are there right now in the European Parliament? We have committees for Education, Culture, Sports, Fisheries, Environment and Agriculture, Budget, etc. Probably it is controversial if we really need two institutions (Ombudsperson and committee). A alternative solution could be to give the present Ombudsperson more rights.

In Finland, a Committee for the future does already exist, but it should adopt a more active role. The realisation of an amendment in the finish constitution is very complicated. Many Ombudspersons for different things do exist, but maybe a check-list for decision makers is needed or more researches on long-term effects has to be done.

In Greece, Intergenerational Justice is not mentioned in the constitution, but the protection of environment, forests, monuments and the historical sights is referred.

Small steps are necessary because the proper implementation of regulations is more important than a new legislation. From the demographic point of view, more children are needed. If there aren't any children, we won't have a Future Generation. The constitution should refer explicitly to Future Generations. Committees already exist and a new one for Future Generations has to be created. Furthermore, an Ombudsperson, with controlling and auditing competences should be created. He should be elected by parliaments and should be a scientist with experiences in Sustainability. In addi-

tion, we have to raise awareness for future problems.

What can be done to improve Generational Justice in Malta? There are different ways: for example, references in the constitution and/or the setting up of an institution. We won't achieve much if there are no specific laws that is why changes also must affect laws below the constitution level.

The best solution is a new institutional set-up, but in this case, there is some reluctance by the decision-maker. The second-best solution is an office in the prime ministry to vet all laws to their long-term effects. A third solution can be an amendment of the existing structure, namely to enlarge the responsibilities of the commissioner for the children. However, this institution has been established only recently so it will not be changed, soon. National Sustainability is already implemented in Malta by an Ombudsperson for sustainable development. His tasks are to devise a national strategy together with key government entities. He is well respected, but he could need an assistant.

The constitutions of Poland and the Czech Republic don't need to be changed. Instead, a new Ombudsperson should be created for Future Generations. This Ombudsperson has to be consulted mandatory and every law should pass through his office. He can delay, not veto bills and add his opinion to it. The Ombudsperson should cooperate with NGOs and civil society opinions and decision-making concerning Future Generations and sustainable development.

Further rights for him could be to claim the constitutional court if the rights of Future Generations are infringed and the right to propose laws.

He needs constant financial support because the financial status might be the most important one. An Ombudsperson should be selected by the Sejm. (In Poland, Sejm and Senate together form the parliament). Furthermore, an Ombudsperson has to have a PhD and good competences, should be independent and should have experience in sustainable development. His term should be 5 years and it should not be possible to dismiss him unless he/she committed a crime. A way of realisation could be influenced by associations and lobbying or an initiative that comes from citizens. In addition, it is possible to start a campaign with advertisement in order to raise public

attention. It is necessary, that we have several Ombudspersons for sustainable development and Intergenerational Justice. So, we need at least two specialised Ombudspersons and one general.

For Russia, a change of the constitution is no good idea, because it takes too much time and it is a bad period for making change (3rd term of Putin). In the current constitution, you can find a lot about health, but not about sustainable development and Intergenerational Justice. However, a change in the Federal Constitutional Law is imaginable. This law would be created by the Commission. There have to be initiatives in 89 regions, in city parliaments and local governments. One important aspect is to raise awareness, e.g. by media campaigns.

In the constitution of Slovenia and Switzerland Future Generations or Sustainability are not mentioned, but there is a strategy for sustainable development. Don't make laws that can be broken, better invest more in education. The idea is to change first people's mind and then the constitution.

Summarising these different solutions, it can be recognised that the participants want to make top-down as well as bottom-up initiatives. For e.g. the Swiss participants, it seemed more appropriate to stir up a broad public debate *before* approaching MPs. In other countries, the public debate would kick off *when* MPs present a proposal to change the Constitution (like in Germany). It has to be considered whether or not a society is already prepared for the new ethical goal of ecological intergenerational justice. But in *all* countries, campaigning will be necessary to reach the final goal: a better protection of the Future Generations.

(Summary by Jörg Tremmel, Yanti Ehrentraut and Kristin Tecles, organisation team)

2.9 Presentation: How to start a Campaign in Europe

Sunday, 26th June

Speaker: Ann Mettler, Executive Director of the Lisbon Council asbl.

Ann Mettler told the participants of the



Photo: Ann Mettler gave a very enthusiastic speech

Congress about her personal experience in the world of EU lobbying in Brussels. The Lisbon Council is a small but by far very vivid Think Tank focusing on public finance and Sustainability of the social, and especially the labour sector. The actual situation in the EU is at all satisfying: there are 90 million unemployed, and 18.6 % of them are young people. There are also countries like Poland, where this percentage is above 30. The Lisbon Council's motto is: "Something needs to be done!".

Mrs. Mettler was listing some success-triggering factors of the Council's work: The work was effectively focused from the very beginning: the EU needs an economic reform. It is important to outline a lobby or campaign theme. "Better environmental policies" is too broad of an objective. It is also highly essential to know the ways of media-functioning.

In the Lisbon Council only two people are working full-time, nearly each day one of the both gives an interview. Mrs. Mettler told us about an open letter from Lisbon Council to Councillor Schröder, when Lisbon existed only one month. The letter was successfully received even by bigger newspapers. Mettler teaches us, that it is important to have the courage to talk frankly and directly instead of being so polite that the very point of the message gets lost.

It is also important to analyse carefully the political day-to-day gossip, and then stay in phase of news cycle. Press releases are to be done quickly and distributed at the right moment. It is not enough to bring in rational voices. We should take use of the emotional power guiding human behaviour! We have to prepare ourselves for leading roles of our struggles, because why should always the same old eminent faces be invited to share their established ideas at each forum and board?

Mrs. Mettler also encouraged women to gain ground in different fields of tradi-

tional male power. What we need now is advocacy and clearly formulated opinions on practical questions.

According to Mrs. Mettler's observations, EU-politicians are "afraid" of pensioners. The challenge is to get the young people vote! The young should become aware of their actual marginal societal position and start acting in order to change it. The EU needs watch-dogs for the interests of the youth.

Intellectual freedom would also be important in EU-lobbying. It is possible to have success with a small team, but on the other hand it would be important to have full-time workers in order to maintain the path of the media cycle, inter alia. Mrs. Mettler emphasised the importance of working with the business; it should not be our enemy, and the ideas of sustainable development need to be widened from the environmental sector to other sectors.

(summary by Tuuli J. Lehtinen, participant from Finland)

2.10 Panel Discussion:

"25 years after Johannesburg - visions of an ecological Europe in a sustainable world"

Sunday, 26th June

Moderator: Jun. Prof. Dr. Bernd Siebenhüner, Carl-von-Ossietzky University Oldenburg

Speakers: Timo Mäkelä, Director Sustainable Development and Integration European Commission

Dr. Benedek Javor, Hungarian Initiative for an Ombudsman for Future Generations

Anna Lührmann, German Greens and member of the German Parliament

Nira Lamay, Deputy Commissioner for Future Generations, The Knesset

Timo Mäkelä emphasised one fact which is dangerously ignored by so many actors nowadays: There is simply no sustainable growth without real acknowledgement of the ecological limits of our world. Mr. Mäkelä told us about his discussions with Robert Watson, responsible of the UN Millennium Ecosystem Assessment; the actual situation of our planet does not look too promising - we need to face it!

In the EU, for example, 20 per cent of all the waste flows are illegal. Even 40 per cent of all our energy consumption is due to the housing sector, which is growing strongly. It is important to mediate, which things go first and on which level. There is only one way ahead: we need to face problems, realise them and, above all, take

action.

Waste is a good example for the crucial need to change our mentality: it needs to be understood as a crucial resource. We need mental switches also respect to technology and services. Innovation is the only sustainable way towards job creation and growth. We need to start rethinking the planning of products.

How should we proceed?, asked Mr. Mäkelä. It would be very simple to start: we need to implement all those appropriate decisions we have already made, but which have rested on theoretical level. Second, we need to search actively for all possible synergies among economic, environmental and social development. We need clear targets. We also welcome global thinking in European decision-making. We are to heal up our administrative cultures. Among the citizen are clear signs, expressed in different opinion polls, concerning worries and awareness of the people towards environmental issues. 64 per cent, for example, of the Europeans place the goal of clean environment before gaining competitiveness.

Anna Lührmann and Benedek Javor stressed the importance of checking the soundness of global relations and rules. Nira Lamay called for genuine watch-dogs for sustainable development. We have already heard enough talks and fancy objectives. Promoting rights of Future Generations is a good and fresh angle, from which to approach, again and with new powers, sustainable development in all of its sectors.

During the final debate of the Congress, importance and weight of our very own visions and responsibility was stressed: We need to face own sacrifices and compromises in order to make a change. Everybody agreed on the need for rights of Future Generations to be included in European legislation. The new strategy for sustainable development of the European Commission is a proper tool strengthen these themes, for example through an extended impact assessment procedure.

With in the EU, actions for gender equality are already well advanced. Similarly, it is time to start campaigning for intergenerational equality. There are several signs of



Photo: Benedek Javor, Nira Lamay, Prof. Dr. Bernd Siebenhüner, Anna Lührmann, Timo Mäkelä (from left to right)

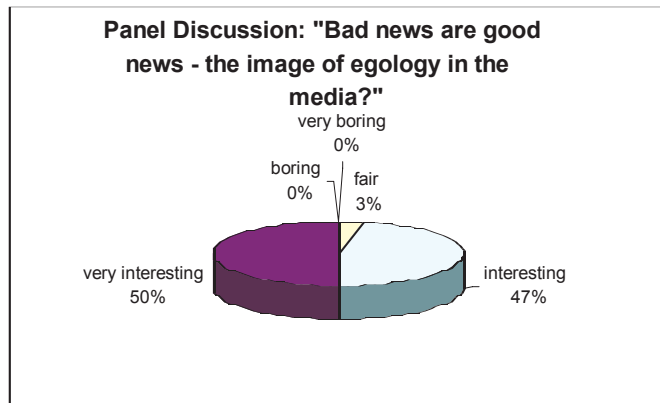
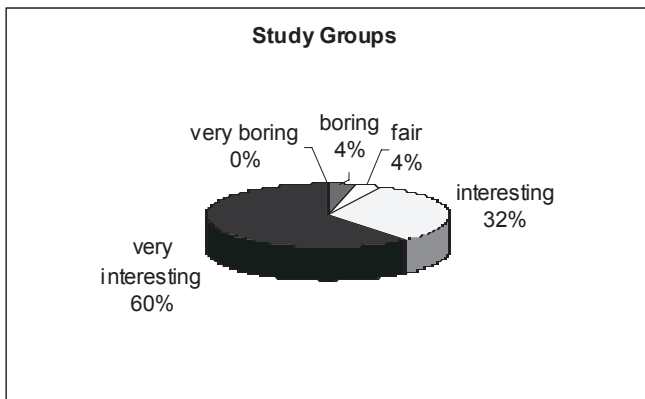
hope: Mr. Mäkelä referred to the strong right-wing religious groups in the United States starting to turn against the devastating environmental politics of the President Bush: the Bible states we were created in order to cultivate and safeguard the environment, not to destroy it. With respect to the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP), the European Commission is preparing a reform where rural development is given special emphasis, and the whole focus of production is turned from sheer production volumes towards real needs.

Mr. Mäkelä appealed to us that we need to understand economics. Economics is a universe with partly irrational lines. We are, for example, spending each year some 21 billion euros on oil subsidies. At the same time we keep on complaining about costs of some 3 billion, which we would need in order to mitigate climate change. The sheer numerical economic indicator, the Gross National Product (GNP) is a dangerous development indicator. We need to ask ourselves clearly: which and what is the growth we want? We might start by writing a letter to the Environment Commissioner, Mr. Stavros Dimas, in order to point out the necessary focus on rights of Future Generations.

(summary by Tuuli Lehtinen, participant from Finland)

3. Feedback

Above all the evaluation forms show that the entire Congress was a great success. Especially the study groups and the panel discussion "Bad news are good news - the image of ecology in the media?" were considered very interesting by the participants. The debate "13 years after Rio - how far are we in achieving ecological Generational Justice in Europe?" got the evaluation "fair". The Panel Discussion "25 years after Johannesburg - visions of an ecological Europe in a sustainable world" was even more popular and was



described as interesting". 48 per cent liked the "Simulation Game Fish Banks" and 28 per cent liked it even very much. One aspect, that was a great compliment for the organisers, was the result of the question: "Do you have the feeling you have learned something more about the possibilities to institutionalise Intergenerational Justice?" which was answered with: "Yes, completely" by half of the participants. The Congress met the expectations of 39 per cent of the participants absolutely and of 58 per cent quite well. People decided, that the study groups "Commission for Future Generations", "European strategy" and "Constitutional change" were most interesting of all.

"yes" but 61 per cent said, that this depends on external conditions like time, their personal priorities, the support of other organisations and the interest of politic parties.

We analyzed 37 evaluation forms of 48 participants.

Voices of the Participants:

4. Declaration of the Young Leaders Congress "Ecological Generational Justice into the Constitution?"

One vision shared by the youth of Europe

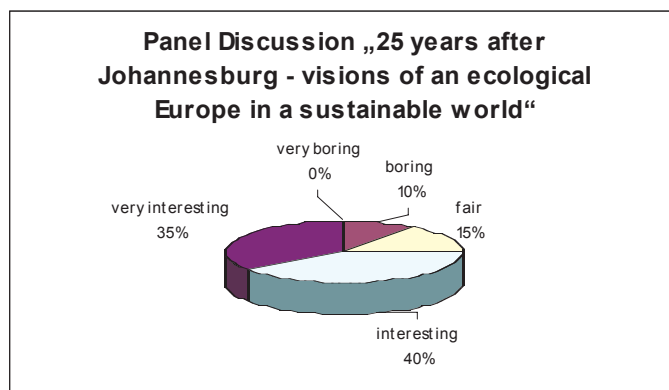
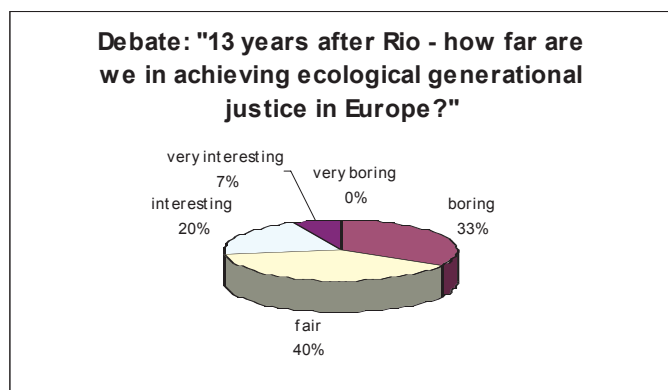
is that of Sustainability and Intergenerational Justice throughout the world. We came together to seek solutions for one of the paramount problems of our time: political short-termism. Democracies face a structural problem, namely the tendency to prefer the present and to neglect the future. Every party tries to obtain votes, and has therefore to concentrate itself on the short term perspective, namely the preferences of the present electorate and the short-term interests of influential groups. In this run for votes the Future Generation may be neglected. Insofar politicians of all parties,

One aspect, that was described as "fair" was the accommodation "Alte Feuerwache" in Berlin, while the "Friedrichstadt Church" got the adjective "good". In addition, the Congress venue "Haus Schwanenwerder" was considered as "very good" by most of the people. This was also attributed to the entire organisation before and during the Congress, too. Everybody agreed, that the Congress should be established as a periodic event and 68 per cent would participate again. Finally, everybody answered, that they would like to continue the work for Sustainability at once or probably. The question "Would you like to start a campaign for institutionalising Generational Justice?" was answered in different ways: 39 per cent said clearly

The Congress has been an inspiring experience. Learning together about some important concepts, we used to work with in the context of future, discussing real topics and sharing opinions with interested people. From all over Europe, enjoying very well thought program and perfect environment. All those enriched me with new ideas, motivation to go on more intensively with these issues, and convincing that young people can change the future.
J. Müller (Germany)

An excellent introduction for our contribution to the Congress. The program was very well thought, the observations were very good, the people were great, the organization efficient and the food was very good. I will be spending more time on this topic.
Thomas H. (Germany)

THANK YOU FOR THE GOOD INITIATIVE AND LOVELY STAY OF INSPIRATION AND HATE - LET'S CONTINUE WORKING TOGETHER - LET'S THE FUTURE - LET'S THE FUTURE.



who want to look more ahead than the next election, can have a disadvantage in the competition with their short-term thinking political rivals. Democracy offers the possibility for discussion. A more sustainable intergenerational framework will not end the political competition, because this can also take place in the new framework.

Voting periods must not be too long. Otherwise the influence of the voters becomes so small that it puts at risk the core of democracy. However, as a consequence of the technological progress, the impact of current action lasts long in the future and can have a drastically negative effect for many Future Generations.

The framework for a fair future orientated generational political system could be improved by an institutional establishment of Generational Justice and Sustainability. We agreed to form a network to further pursue these goals. We want to put Intergenerational Justice and Sustainability on the political agenda. Being young people from different countries, we will start initiatives to overcome the problem of political short-termism.

(Adopted by all 48 participants on Sunday, 26th of June 2005)

5. EPILOGUE

Looking back, we can say with a fair hint of pride: the Young Leaders Congress has reached all its goals! The workshops, which were among the most important events, were very popular. Participants did not only listen but they were motivated to do something on their own. The enormous engagement of the Young Leaders was even a little surprising to us. We hoped to attract people, who are interested in Sustainability and Generational Justice, but we did not expect such a high degree of enthusiasm. Participants did not just listen and make notes during the debates but joined the discussions very actively. Moreover, the feedback shows that the Young Leaders Congress was more than just interesting: it created a communication-base for young people throughout Europe. It is important for us to keep a balance between learning something about current problems and having a good time with people from other nations.

Furthermore, interest did not cease when the Congress was over: many people agreed to write summaries about debates

or workshop. This was a pre-condition for this documentation, which consists to 80 per cent of the work of participants.

We are really happy about our achievements. We hope, that we can arrange further congresses or similar events in the future and that our group of speakers, participants and organisers will be as dedicated as they were this time.

6. BIOGRAPHIES OF SPEAKERS AND MODERATORS

Dr. Manfred Bergmann

Head of Unit Evaluation of transport, environment and energy policies, European Commission

- studied Mathematics and Economics at the University of Münster, there he also made his PhD in Economics (Dr.rer.pol)
- since 1988: he has been working as an economist at the Directorate General for Economic and Financial Affairs of the European Commission.
- since 1998: he is head of a unit dealing with the economic evaluation of environment, transport and energy policies
- in this capacity he was - amongst others - heavily involved in the development of the European Union's Strategy for Sustainable Development (presently under review) and the European Climate Policy, where he has - amongst others - contributed to the development of the European emission trading scheme.

Johanna Brinkmann

PhD-Candidate at the Chair for Economic Ethics, University of Halle-Wittenberg

- studied International Business and Cultural Studies in Passau
- publications on Corporate Citizenship/ Corporate Social Responsibility and Partnerships between the Private and the Public Sector
- worked for different Development Aid Organizations in Southeast Asia and in Germany

Tile von Damm

Director of Perspectives on Global Policies (PerGlobal)

- studied Political Science in Berlin and Marburg.
- participant on the UN-Summits on Sustainable Development (WSSD) and on the Information Society (WSIS)
- several publications on the future of the European Union, global sustainable development and the information society

Joerg Geier

Deputy Secretary-General, Club of Rome; Deputy Chairman, think tank 30

- Born in Heidelberg in 1975, Germany
- Deputy Secretary-General at the Club of Rome, a global think tank
- Deputy Chairman of think tank 30, the youth link of the Club of Rome
- Associate board member of the European Support Centre of the Club of Rome
- BA in European Business (European Business Programme: University of Applied Sciences, Muenster, Germany, in conjunction with University of Portsmouth, UK)
- MBA (Golden Gate University, San Francisco, USA)
- Fulbright scholarship (2001-2003); various honours and prizes
- Selection committee of the German American Fulbright Commission (2003)
- Managed project teams, attended and co-organised conferences on various issues concerning international affairs

Dr. Edgar Göll

Institute for Futures Studies and Technology Assessment Berlin

- born 1957
- tool-and-dye-maker
- studied Sociology, Administrative Sciences and Social Sciences at Universities and Postgraduate Colleges in Bielefeld, Madison/USA, Speyer, John-F.-Kennedy-Institute of the Free University Berlin, received his PhD at the University of Goettingen.
- since 1995: works as Scientific Researcher at the IZT within the fields of "Future Studies" and "Sustainable Development"
- major research topics: Sustainable Development, Local Agenda 21, Future Research, Political Participation, Technology Assessment, Globalisation
- is on the editorial board of the periodical "Zukünfte" (Futures), member of the "Agendaforum for Sustainable Development in Berlin und Brandenburg" and was expert in two consecutive Inquiry Commissions of the House of Representatives of the State of Berlin focussing on Sustainability and Local Agenda 21

Dr. Benedek Jávör

Hungarian Initiative for an Ombudsman for Future Generations

- born in Budapest in 1972, MSc in biology from ELTE University
- 1993-1997: he studied cultural anthropology and human ecology
- assistant professor of Environmental Sciences at the Department of Environmental Law, Pazmany Peter Catholic University, Budapest
- 2000: he was a founding member of the environmental NGO 'Védegylet - Protect the Future Society'
- 2000-2002: he worked as secretary of the Society's 'Representation of Future Generations' (REFUGE) programme
- since 2003: he worked as spokesperson
- he is author of several articles, including 'Environmental crisis and the democratic state' (2000), 'To dress it and to keep it' (2003), writer of the handbook 'Introduction to Environmental Ethics' (all in Hungarian), editor of numerous publications, e.g. 'Rights of Future Generations' (2001)

Michael Kauch

Liberal Free Democrats party and member of the German Parliament, certified political economist

- born in Dortmund in 1967
- 1986-93 successfully passed university studies in economics at the University of Dortmund
- 1994 Consultant for Public Relations for FDP- parliamentary group of the state parliament in Mecklenburg-Vorpommern
- 1995-1999 Economic Policy Consultant for Bundesverband Junger Unternehmer (BJU, Federal Association of Young Entrepreneurs)
- 1999-2003: Chief Executive Officer for BJU
- since 1989 Member of the German liberal party FDP and the Young Liberals
- 1990-93 Vice Chairman of the Young Liberals in Dortmund, Chairman of the Liberal Students in Dortmund and Member of Students Parliament at the University of Dortmund
- 1993-95 Vice President of Young Liberals of Germany
- 1995-99 President of Young Liberals of Germany
- 1995-2001 Member of the federal board of FDP Germany
- since 1998 Chairman of FDP in Dortmund
- since 2001 Chairman of the FDP Committee on Social Affairs
- since 2003 Member of the German Parliament

-liberal spokesman for Sustainable Development

- Member of the Parliamentary Council on Sustainable Development
- Member of the Committee on environment
- Member of the Commission "Ethic and Law of Modern Medicine"
- Vice Member of the Committee on Health and Social Security

Markus Knigge

Fellow with Ecologic - Institute for International and European Environmental Policy

- studied Urban and Regional Planning at the Technical University Berlin, Germany and the Instituto Universitario di Architettura in Venice, Italy.
- fields of concentration were: urban planning in developing countries and the urban environment
- 2000: he graduated; his thesis is about urban identity in multiethnic societies, using Penang, Malaysia, as an example.
- As a scholar of the German Academic Exchange Service (DAAD) Markus Knigge enrolled at the School of advanced International Studies, Johns Hopkins University as a graduate student.
- during his two years of studies in Bologna, Italy and Washington D.C. he focused on International Economics, Energy and the Environment.
- he passed his final examines with distinction.
- 2005: he successfully participated at the Bucerius Summer School on Global Governance.
- Markus Knigge gained work experience during several internships in both public and private institutions:
- In Malaysia, he volunteered for a local NGO for which he developed a sustainable development strategy for a historic town centre.
- In 2004, Markus Knigge was John J. McCloy Fellow in Environmental Affairs and in 2005 Research Fellow at the American Institute for Contemporary German Studies, John Hopkins University.
- He is a member of the Tönissteiner Kreis, an association dedicated to the promotion of young international leaders.
- currently working on Economic Globalisation and Sustainable Development.

- main interests: international economics, transatlantic relations, developing countries, renewable energies and urban planning

Svenja Koch

Press Officer, Greenpeace

- born in 1964
- 1984-1986: classic apprenticeship as journalist at a daily newspaper in Northern Germany
- 1986-1988: scholarship holder of Henri-Nannen-Schule (7.course)
- 1988-1995: she worked as editorial journalist for environment amongst others at the news magazine "Der Spiegel" and at NDR-radio
- since 1995: Press Officer, Greenpeace
- since November 2004: provisional "Head of Communications", Greenpeace

Nira (Rachel) Lamay

Deputy Commissioner for the Knesset Commission for Future Generations

- born in Tel-Aviv in 1972
- studied Law at the University of Jerusalem, and is studying for her MA in Political Sciences "Politics, Society and Law" in Tel-Aviv University.
- 1998-2000: she worked for the Central District Attorney as a Criminal Prosecutor.
- 2000-2001: she was teaching assistant at the College of Management Business School.
- 2000: she worked as a legal advisor for the Constitution, Law and Justice committee of the Knesset.
- since December 2001: she works for the Knesset Commission for Future Generations, a commission she participated in the establishing of and in which she is deputy commissioner and in charge of Law, Legislation and International Relations, and coordinates Science and Technology Issues.

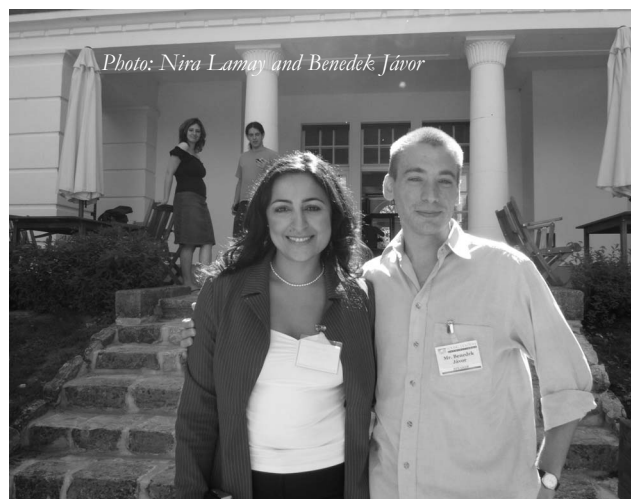


Photo: Nira Lamay and Benedek Javor

Anna Lührmann

Member of the German Parliament;
Initiative to institutionalise Generational
Justice in the German Constitution

- born in 1983
- 1992-1994: she was part of a "Greenteam" (Greenpeace youth group).
- 1993-1999: she was member of pupil's council and in 1998 of the executive committee" of the Hessian Land association of the Young Greens.
- 1997-1999 and 2001-2003: she worked as Spokeswoman of the Hessian association of the Young Greens.
- 2000-2003: she was member of Alliance 90/The Greens county executive committee.
- 2000-2002: she was Delegate of the Young Greens to the Federation of Young European Greens.
- 2002: she was member of the federal executive committee of the Young Greens.
- since 2002: she was chairwoman of the German-Nordic Parliamentary Friendship Group and member of the German Bundestag.
- till 2004: she was also member of the German Bundestag's Committee on the Affairs of the European Union.
- since October 2003: she studies at FernUniversität Hagen politics and organisation.
- since September 2004: she is member of the German Bundestag's Budget Committee.

Timo Tapani Mäkelä

Director Sustainable Development and
Integration, European Commission

- born in 1950
- master of Technological Sciences (civil/water, sanitation and land use) and Post-graduate Diploma in Sanitary Engineering
- 1974-1985: he worked for Regional and National Water and Environmental Protection Agencies, Finland.
- 1986-1987: he was Senior Officer of Ministry of Environment of Finland.
- 1988-1989: he worked for Ministry of Mineral Resources and Water Affairs in Gaborone, Botswana.
- 1990-1993: he worked for Ministry of Environment of Finland in Helsinki, Finland.
- 1993-1996: he was employed at the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development in London, UK.

- since 1996: he works for the European Commission in Brussels, Belgium and in Helsinki, Finland.

Ann Mettler

Executive Director of the Lisbon
Council.

- From 2000-2003, Ann Mettler worked at the World Economic Forum, where she most recently served as Director for Europe.
 - Prior to this appointment, she was responsible for the World Economic Forum's activities in the United States and Canada. During her tenure, Ann handled relations at the highest level with governments of over twenty-five countries, including six members of the G7. She managed a team of six persons and was in charge of the conceptualization, organization and execution of economic summits in Europe and the United States.
 - In addition, Ann provided content input and regional expertise to four World Economic Forum Annual Meetings in Davos.
 - From 1997-2000, Ann Mettler held positions on the Governmental Affairs Committee of the United States Senate, a strategic communications firm in Washington, DC and the Foreign Policy Division of the European Commission, Brussels.
 - Ann Mettler has contributed articles to The Wall Street Journal Europe, Handelsblatt, FT Deutschland, European Voice, USA and Europe in Business, the annual publication of the European Council of American Chambers of Commerce, and the Discussion Paper series of the Center for European Integration Studies. She has also appeared on 'Talk in Berlin', one of Germany's major live TV talk-shows.
 - A dual citizen of Germany and Sweden, Ann Mettler holds Masters degrees from the University of New Mexico, USA, and the Center for European Integration Studies (ZEI) in Bonn, Germany
- Dr. Karsten Sach
Federal Ministry of the Environment,
Deputy Director General "International
Cooperation"
- born in Gruberhagen in 1959, Germany.
 - 1984: First Law Degree
 - 1989: Second Law degree
 - 1993: Doctorate in Law
 - 1984-199: Researcher and lecturer at various universities, mainly on environmental law

- Since 1991: Ministry for the Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety
- 1991-1993: Division "Protection of the Marine Environment, International Water Protection Law"
- 1993-1997: Environment Attaché of the Permanent Representation of Germany to the European Union
- 1998-1999: Deputy Head of Division "International Co-operation, Global Conventions, Climate Change"
- 1999-2004: Head of Division "International Cooperation, Global Conventions, Climate Change"- participated in UNFCCC COPs 5, 6, 6 bis, 7, 8, 9 and 10 as the German chief negotiator.
- since 2004: Deputy Director General "International Cooperation"

Jun. Prof. Dr. Bernd Siebenhüner

University of Oldenburg

- assistant professor of ecological economics and head of the GELENA-research group on social learning and Sustainability at Carl von Ossietzky University of Oldenburg (www.gelena.net).
- deputy leader of the Global Governance Project (www.glogov.org).
- a Ph.D. in Economics and Master's degrees in Economics and Political Science
- his research interests cover social learning, Sustainability, corporate environmental management, organisational learning, linking social and natural sciences, and studies of human behaviour.

Dr. Jörg Tremmel

Foundation for the Rights of Future
Generations (FRFG)

- born in Frankfurt in 1970
- Master's degree in business administration from the European Business School in Oestrich-Winkel,
- Master's degree in political sciences from the Johann-Wolfgang-Goethe-Universität in Frankfurt
- PhD in Social Sciences from the University of Stuttgart. Dissertation title: 'Population Policies in the Context of Ecological Intergenerational Justice'.
- Teaching assignments on several universities.
- since 1997 he is Director of the Foundation for the Rights of Future Generations (FRFG), a non-profit and non-partisan think-tank with the objective of lobbying for the benefit of future generations.

About 70 volunteers and interns work in the foundation every year. FRFG was honored by the Theodor-Heuss-Medal in 2000 and the Medal for Good Citizenship of the town Oberursel in 2001.

- Responsible for the organisation of several symposia and congresses (i.a. the biggest youth congress at the EXPO 2000), the Intergenerational Justice Award of FRFG and other projects. Invitations for talks from German President Johannes Rau, Minister of Justice Herta Däubler-Gmelin (3x), Minister of Labour Walter Riester (2x), Minister of Health Ulla Schmidt, Liberal Party Leader Guido Westerwelle und Rolf-E. Breuer (Chairman of Deutsche Bank)

- his main publications (all in German) are: 'The Generation Fraud' (1996) and 'Sustainability as a political and analytical category' (2003). He edited the "Handbook Intergenerational Justice"

- many other of his articles were published in books and journals, including, 'You have only borrowed this land from us' (1997), 'The generation of 1968' (1998) and 'What is left of the past? The younger generation discusses the holocaust' (1999).
- Member of e-fellows, Futur, tt30 in Germany, Thesis, AEGEE etc.

Matthias Urbach

correspondent of the German daily newspaper TAZ, with the focus on environmental policy

- born in 1967

- learned journalism at the renowned Henri-Nannen-School in Hamburg, and has a university degree in Journalism from the Hamburg University, too.

- is capital correspondent in the field of "Economy and Environment" of the German national daily newspaper TAZ.

- as a trained physicist, he has been following up on environmental policy for eight years.

- reported among others on the international climate talks in Kyoto (1997) and Bonn (2001)

- other focal points of his work: finance and consumer policy, as well as science next to his work for the TAZ he is German correspondent of "Environment Watch", a newsletter for business and policy professionals

- he writes also now and then for scientific magazines.

- at the moment his main focus nevertheless lies on his two little children: he left his TAZ-office in February for a one-year parental leave

Prof. Michael Wallack

- studied at the City College of New York and the Syracuse University, USA

- since 1970 till now: associate professor of political science at the Memorial University of Newfoundland

- published in 2002 an article with the title 'Biological Innovation, Justice Between Generations and the Minimum Irreversible Harm Principle' (in English), for the European consortium for Political Research

- published in February 2004 the article 'The minimum irreversible harm principle: Green Intergenerational Liberalism' (in English) in 'Liberal Democracy and Environmentalism: the end of environmentalism?' published in the European Political Science Serie of Routledge

Ernst Ulrich von Weizsäcker

Chairman of the Bundestag Committee on Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety, Club of Rome

- born in Zuerich, Switzerland, in 1939

- studied Chemistry and Physics (1965 Diploma, Hamburg University) and Biology (Ph.D. Freiburg University, 1969).

- 1969-1972: Interdisciplinary Research in Heidelberg

- 1972-1975: Professor for Inter-disciplinary Biology at Essen University

- 1975-1980: Founding President of the University of Kassel

- 1981-1984: Director at the United Nations Centre for Science and Technology for Development

- 1984-1991: Director of the Institute for European Environmental Policy (IEEP) in Bonn, London and Paris

- 1991-2000: President of the Wuppertal Institute for Climate, Environment, Energy

- since 1991: Member of the Club of Rome

- since Oct. 1998: Member of the German Parliament

- 2000-2002: Chairman of the Parliamentary Commission on Enquiry "Globalisation of the Economy - Challenges and Responses"

- 2002-2004: Member of the World Commission on the Social Dimension of Globalization

- since Oct. 2002: Chairman of the Bundestag Committee on Environment, Nature Conservation and Nuclear Safety

- 1989: he received, together with the Norwegian Prime Minister, the Italian Premio De Natura

- 1996: The Duke of Edinburgh Gold Medal of WWF International

- 2000: Honorary Degree from the Japanese Soka University

- 2001: he received the Takeda Award "Techno-Entrepreneurial Achievement for World-Environmental Well-Being"

7. Participants, Organisers, Sponsors

48 Participants:

Magdalena Abraham, Ramil Aliyev, Alvaro Barrio, George Baesu, Zlatko Blazeovski, Anders Blok, Christina Chronaki, Ljiljana Cumura, Jean-Paul De Lucca, Yuriv Derevyanko, Rainer Engelken, Piotr J. Golebiewski, Jan Handl, Alexander Hauk, Caren Herbstritt, Till Horstmann, Themistoklis Kossidas, Amit Kossover, Aleksandar Kostadinov, Tuuli J. Lehtinen, Michael Liesner, Catherine Lippuner, Olha Lukash, Ilze Millere, Natalya Nesevrya, Peter Nestorov, Konstantina Papadimitriou, Jerneja Penca, Kairit Pöhla, Katerina Perraki, Georgi Petrov, Crina Pungulescu, Yves R.Regez, Carsten Riemeier, Isil Sariyuce, Julia Schlüns, Yaroslava Sennikova, Nancy Serrano, Anna Y. Shirokova, Monika Sokolowska, Ivaylo G. Stoimenov, Robert D. Tesh, Noriko Teranishi, Katrin Tomson, T. Oras K. Tynkkyinen, Martien Van Gool, Steven Wouters, Felix Zurro

23 countries were represented:

Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Czech Republic, Denmark, England, Estonia, Finland, Germany, Greek, Ireland, Israel, Latvia, Macedonia, Netherlands, Poland, Russia, Romania, Serbia, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Turkey, Ukraine

Organisers:

The event was organised by the Foundation for the Rights of Future Generations (FRFG) in cooperation with the Protestant Academy Berlin (EAB), the Institute for Futures Studies and Technology Assessment (IZT), Youth for Intergenerational Justice and Sustainability Europe (YOIS Europe) and AEGEE Europe.

Foundation for the Rights of Future Generations

The FRFG is a non-profit and non-party research institute linking the academic world with the world of politics. Through its practice-oriented research it deepens the knowledge of Intergenerational Justice and Sustainability. Young academics and students from different backgrounds work on different interdisciplinary



Photo: Organisers at work

nary projects within the FRFG, such as the quarterly journal "Generational Justice!", which is published three times a year in German and once in English. The FRFG has published several books and organises seminars and discussions on a regular basis. The FRFG is not a think tank satisfied with describing the current situation, it also wants to change society actively. Its aim is to create more awareness for Future Generations and to spread the ideas of Intergenerational Justice and Sustainability.

(Involved activists: Tobias Kemnitzer, Jörg Tremmel, Caterina Bressa, Thomas Wiechers, Yanti Ehrentraut, Paolo Zucchini, Kristin Tecles, Andrea Heubach, Laura Memmert)

Protestant Academy Berlin

The Protestant Academy in Berlin is an institution of the Protestant Church in Germany that advances dialogues on political, social and cultural problems of today and the future. By running an exchange of ideas between lifestyles, opinions, sciences, religions, philosophies and generations, the Protestant Academy greatly contributes to the political culture and encourages people to be part of a civil society. It also practices a long-term dialogue on sustainable economy, environmental politics and Intergenerational Justice.

(Involved activists: Rosalita Hushke, Marcus Götz-Guerlin, Robert Scheunpflug)

Institute for Futures Studies and Technology Assessment

The Institute for Futures Studies and Technology Assessment is an independent and non-profit research institute, founded in 1981. The mission of the IZT is to conduct

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(Involved activists: Prof. Dr. Rolf Kreibich, Dr. Edgar Göll)

YOIS Europe

YOIS Europe is a European youth organisation for Intergenerational Justice and

Sustainability. A further goal of YOIS is promoting European integration. The organisation was founded in 2000 during a European youth Congress at the EXPO 2000 in Hanover. (Involved activist: Carsten Wenzlaff)

AEGEE Europe

AEGEE is one of the biggest interdisciplinary student associations in Europe; it is represented by 17.000 students, active in 260 academic cities, in 42 countries all around Europe, which presents amazing culture variety. AEGEE is a secular, non-profit organization, not linked to any political party. All projects and activities are based on voluntarily work of its members.

Aims:

- to promote a unified Europe without prejudices
 - to strive for creating an open and tolerant society of today and tomorrow
 - to foster democracy, human rights, tolerance, cross-boarder co-operation, mobility and European dimension in education.
- (Involved activists: Kamala Schuetze, Robert Tesh)



Photo: The participants on top of the German Reichstag

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Responsibility for Future Generations: Scope and Limits

by Prof. Dr. Dieter Birnbacher

Due to technological progress it is ever more possible to assess economic, ecological and other risks for future generations. Thus, we are obliged to face the responsibility and to care for the realisation of intergenerational justice. In the following, Birnbacher approaches the actual procedures including ethical appropriateness. Concerning daily decisions, we especially have to overcome our daily minimalism and complacency in order to take moral responsibility for future generations.

Taking up the responsibility for future generations

Present activities catalysed by modern technologies are affecting the lives of future generations considerably; in a positive as well as in a negative way. More and more things are entering the sphere of human control, and we have a growing possibility to detect early enough future



dangers and risks. These factors lead to an extension of our responsibility for future generations. In spite of the difficulties like opportunity costs, restricted human ability and foresight, modern collective agents (present governments and leading industrial companies) have to take their responsibility for future generations. How to fulfil this task has to be based on fundamental ethics and has to be well defined

regarding different scopes.

How to fulfil this task

To fulfil this task, the entire foreseeable future should be included. Moreover, our

stock of resources without making further provisions. However, ethically, this is not sufficient because we neglect the natural growth of populations and refrain from improving future generations. In reality,

“The best test for the consciousness of man is probably his readiness to make sacrifices for future generations – whose gratitude he will never receive.”

Unknown

parents' responsibility and neighbour love ought to be broadened to distant love. The objects of responsibility can be differed ideally in anthropocentric, pathocentric and biocentric visions. However, in concrete situations these ideal visions are, in case of conflict, focused in favour of the human being.

Regarding the content of our responsibility for future generations, we have to care for a sustained preservation of the resources needed for human survival. Nevertheless, it need not be so extensive that we have to take care of a cultural enrichment for future generations. Comparing the responsibility for present generations with the one for future generations, we can distinguish a maximal and a minimal approach. In a maximal approach, we have to

invest the resources of today, wherever the welfare of future generations can be increased.

Realising generational justice in daily life

In daily life, we follow the minimalist way, whereby we just have to preserve the

even the fulfilment of this minimum standard is not always given. In economic models future utility is often devaluated in favour of present use by pragmatic considerations. This vision can be objected while appealing to the principle of impartiality of the moral point of view. The conflict between pragmatic and moral considerations confronts us with the problem of too little motivation to take responsibility for future generations. We still favour the present and our nearest friends. We have to cultivate the motivation for a future ethic by developing a consciousness of one's own temporal position in the sequence of generations and to create a generation-transcending sense of community. One possible way to fulfil this task is the model of a hypothetical future market. According to this, the needs and interest of future generations have to be represented on an institutional level, by spokesmen, group actions, court decisions and commissions. Hopefully, this would be one effective step towards realising generational justice.



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John Rawls on Rights of Future Generations

by Prof. Dr. Claus Dierksmeier

According to Dierksmeier, John Rawls' theory on justice for future generations fails to explain the need to guarantee the rights of future generations. Intergenerational justice cannot exclusively be explained by rational choice theory and sheer human self-interest. In contrast, a moral-based, metaphysical explanation is essential to justify generational justice.

Reviewing Rawls's Theory

The review of the theory of Rawls, developed in the 1960s/1970s, starts off by situating it within a broader philosophical frame of that time period. In the seventies, there was a movement that saw metaphysics as an obscure and irrational science. Models based on a rational choice theory had to serve a more reason-based explanation of traditional metaphysical topics.

In his book "A Theory of Justice", pub-

lication. To explain this method, Rawls uses several new concepts and principles, namely "the original position", "the difference principle" and "the saving principle". According to Rawls, everyone desires to minimise the risk of losing out, through schemes of a too unequal social distribution. Therefore, we make corrections on the result of the "natural lottery", by guaranteeing a social minimum for everyone. Individual differences are accepted, insofar as every deviation means an advantage for the whole community (= difference principle). We have to save money to organise certain social institutions that arrange this justified distribution (= saving principle).

Detecting the Defaults

The defaults in this theory of Rawls can be summed up as follows: it justifies only quantitative saving rates and not qualitative ones, and the contractual approach is limited to our relations with other 'physically existing' persons. Rawls was con-

In his book "Justice of Fairness. A Restatement" (2001) Rawls mainly deals with the question in how far the present generation is bound to respect the claims of its successors. Rawls refrains from the concepts "mutual care" and "intergenerational agreement", but creates a principle to hand over to others what you also want for yourself. However, this principle means important restrictions for the self-interested rational 'maximiser'. Why should an individual follow this principle then?

A Need for Metaphysics and Morality

Rawls has divided the rationality concept therefore in "reasonable" and "rational". Rational, refers to the maximising logic; reasonable, is related to value judgments and moral wisdom. Reasonable persons desire a social world for their own sake, free and equal, where they can cooperate with others in terms that everybody can accept. However, this "reasonable" idea - value judgements, moral wisdoms, and the idea of free and equal - is no longer compatible with the methods of logic calculus and game theory. Rawls did not manage to justify responsibility for future generations by mere individual interest.

The conclusion follows that responsibility for future generations, for instance with regards to the earth and its biodiversity, cannot be explained by the theory of Rawls but is still only justified by a higher moral metaphysical principle.

All human situations have their inconveniences. We feel those of the present but neither see nor feel those of the future; and hence we often make troublesome changes without amendment, and frequently for the worse.

/ Benjamin Franklin (1706 - 1790) /

lished in 1971, Rawls examines which societal structure serves the human interest best, based on the fundamental assumptions of rational choice theories. Following Rawls, society is a cooperative venture for mutual advantage, where the mutual advantage is greater than the individual gain so that each and every individual finds its interests better served within rather than without a societal setting. The main problem of a society, continues Rawls, are conflicting individual claims. This issue has to be solved by principles of justice. According to Rawls these principles are not based on metaphysical, moral ideas, but voluntarily chosen by rational beings, applying a method of

conscious of this lack, and tried to enlarge his theory to cover responsibility for future generations. He found a solution by formulating an emotional interest of 'heads of families' for the immediate descendants. This interest results in a continuity from one generation to another. Within this chain, all generations can virtually be represented in the original position. It should be criticised that "an emotional interest in descendants" is not very rational, and that Rawls makes adaptations on his concept "original position" without clearing out the new conditions. Ultimately, it thus needs to be asked whether having no offspring would not be the most rational decision of all?



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Intergenerational Justice

by Ass. Prof. Emmanuel Agius

The article postulates a well-considered use of science and technology at the service of all humankind - guided by the ethical principles of intergenerational solidarity, co-operation, sharing, justice and equity. In this light the concept of 'common heritage' is introduced and the implementations of the Rawlsian 'just savings principle' on generational justice is criticised. Finally, a relational theory of intergenerational justice is proposed.

Common Heritage Concept

Future generations need to be protected because they are in a disadvantaged position with respect to the present generation who has the power to affect badly their quality of life. Natural as well as cultural environments need to be saved for the well being of future generations. Each generation is both a trustee of the planet for future generations and a beneficiary of its fruits.

This implies obligations to care for the planet and certain rights to use it. Such obligations are formulated by the *common heritage concept* that was put forward for the first time by the government of Malta in

Rawls and Intergenerational Justice

In the next section the Rawlsian view on intergenerational justice is sketched and criticised.

Rawls claims that a theory of justice has to apply to all members of a society, whether they are living intratemporally or intertemporally. However, his core principle for the relationship between generations, the *just saving principle*, is counteracting this aim by limiting the duties to succeeding generations. It is explained that according to this principle every generation is expected to hand on to its intermediate posterity a somewhat better situation than they have inherited. So the best way to create a better future is by improving the conditions of life now and passing on the results to its descendants.

Rawls alters the motivational assumptions that he originally made regarding the contractual partners in order to get the *just saving principle* out of the original situation. He has introduced this methodological change because he had reasoned that self-interested individuals in the original position would disregard the rights of future generations and would choose not to save anything for them unless it is assumed that they already have affections for their offspring in the original position.

metaphysics of A.N. Whitehead whose vision of the past, present and future reality as a unified whole implies a new perspective on social ethics, can offer an ethical base for a theory of intergenerational justice. His philosophical system puts emphasis on the fact that the acts of every individual are necessarily social and relational. A person is constituted by its relations and has no other existence than as a creative synthesis of these relations.

Whitehead's philosophical understanding of the universe as an interconnected web of relations as well as the ontological nature of the relational self offer a new paradigm of human society. This new point of view implies that every society is seen as just one sector of a global community. Interdependence does not end with the nation or even the global community. Relations extend not only over space but also across time. Every generation is related to all preceding and succeeding generations which collectively form the community of mankind as a whole.

One of the central notions of social ethics is that of *common good*. Compared to the traditional view the concept of common good is defined from a much broader perspective within a 'Whiteheadian' system: it is the good of mankind as a whole.

According to recent ecological awareness the concept of common good must include also the natural resources

"Future Generations should be inheritors, not survivors."

/George Schaller, (1933-) mammologist, naturalist, conservationist and author/

1967. This concept is not a new theory of property, but in fact implies the absence of property. Its key consideration is access to the common resources rather than ownership of it.

The assignation of a proxy for future generations to alert the international community of the threats to the well being of future generations would be the most appropriate step in the right direction to safeguard the quality of future life. This "guardian" should, as authorised person or body, represent future generations at various international committees, particularly at the U.N. level.

Rawls explanation of intergenerational justice in terms of the *just saving principle* has in a way restricted transgenerational moral relationship only to overlapping generations. His theory lacks the ability to provide an ethical framework to underpin the contemporary moral concern for the far distant future generations. In some cases the *just saving principle* might rather be a threat to than a defence of the rights of future generations.

Whitehead and the Concept of "Common Good"

The weakness of the Rawlsian theory indicates the need of a different approach to intergenerational justice. The relational

of the earth. The atmosphere, the oceans, the outer space and all the natural resources belong to all generations. The duty to share not only with the present but also with future generations has to be based on the concept of social justice, analogous to welfare provisions for handicapped or aged members of the present society. Social justice forbids any generation to exclude other generations from a fair share in the benefits of the common heritage of humankind.

Principles of Intergenerational Responsibilities

To achieve justice between generations, it is important to recognise the following

principles of intergenerational responsibilities. The three principles were developed by Prof. Edith Brown Weiss in her book "In Fairness to Future Generations (1989), Tokyo/New York: United Nations University Press/Transnational Publishers".

First, each generation should be required to conserve the diversity of the natural and cultural resource base, so that it does not unduly restrict the options available to future generations in solving their problems and satisfying their own values.

Second, each generation should be required to maintain the quality of life of the planet so that it is passed on in no worse condition than the present generation received it, and should be entitled to a quality of the planet comparable to the one enjoyed by previous generations.

Third, each generation should provide its members with equitable rights of access to the legacy from past generations and should conserve this access to the legacy from past generations and should conserve this access for future generations.

Let us hope that there will be some gratitude from future generations for the present one for the efforts taken to hand over to them a better world.



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Justice Between Generations: Limits of Procedural Justice

by Prof. Michael Wallack

Michael Wallack investigates the difficulties of liberal theories with respect to the field of justice between generations. He criticises Rawls' remarks on Intergenerational Justice and offers as a solution the Principle of Minimum Irreversible Harm (MIH). He then evaluates Beckerman's thesis on the impossibility of a theory of intergenerational justice.

Modifying Rawls: The Minimum Irreversible Harm Principle

Both utilitarian and liberal democratic contract theorists such as John Rawls have come to the question of justice between generations with the expectation that it could be addressed by a simple extension of the principles used to address distributive justice for contemporaries, but have in the end required special assumptions about the benevolence of present day citizens to provide a plausible account how future citizens are to be protected from harm by those living now. Utilitarians such as J.S. Mill assumed that benevolent citizens would value the long run interests of mankind enough to protect them. But altruistic regard for the future may not be a majority preference when more immediate interests take center stage. The "greatest good for the greatest number" may in practice mean the greatest good for the active and aware participants in a polity.

Rawls contended that fairness always requires that the only inequalities that can

be regarded as just, in the present or between present and future, are those that are to the advantage of the least well off. And Rawls proposed that future harms be valued without reduction for futurity but he allowed as fair discounting for opportunity costs at the interest rate applied to risk free investments. Yet this discounting would reduce all long term harms to zero cost and not protect future citizens. The Rawlsian "difference principle" was intended to establish a right for the benefit of the least well off to see inequalities in the distribution of the most important resources limited to those necessary for the wellbeing of the entire polity. But because of Rawls' support for opportunity cost discounting his difference principle would not protect future generations.

Because I support the Rawlsian account of liberal democratic institutions given in his book, *A Theory of Justice*, but believe that his account of justice between generations is flawed, I offer a modification of his account which I refer to as the Minimum Irreversible Harm Principle (MIH). According to this principle irreversible harm is to be minimized and activities that are undertaken within this minimum are to be limited to the shortest feasible time and smallest feasible loci of application. Cost benefit calculations must be divided between reversible and non reversible costs and the irreversible costs need to be constrained by the MIH principle rather than simply being counterbalanced by benefits. I mean the MIH principle to be one principle among others within a liberal democratic state, and I mean it to apply only to polities that are

reasonably well off-the conditions for liberal justice assumed by Rawls.

MIH Into the Constitution

In response to Wilfred Beckerman's rejections of any effort to include the future citizens in the protections provided by a system of constitutional rights, I note that Beckerman himself offers a theory of justice for future citizens implicitly at least in his contention that we today have a moral obligation to avoid doing severe harm to future people. In my view, the minimum harm irreversible harm principle is an example of such a commitment when and if it becomes part of a constitutional framework. In this way a constitution will provide a fair system of social cooperation that will protect each generation and not simply those now living



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Principles of Generational Justice

by Prof. Dr. habil. Christoph Lumer

From a philosophical point of view, the implementation of generational justice needs to be based on a moral framework. For this purpose, Christoph Lumer develops in his article five principles. The validity of these basic axioms is then tested with a special focus on the gap between rich and poor countries.

The Five Axioms

Generational Justice is justice within a particular area, namely concerning the relations between different generations. Hence, in the simplest case, maxims of generational justice could be seen as the applications of norms of general justice. These general norms are themselves deduced from moral axioms behind them. Five such axioms should be presented and explained to show briefly which demands

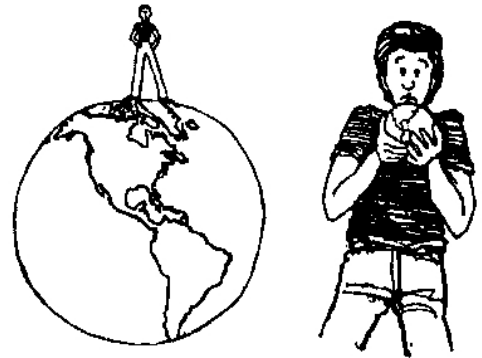
worse off.

Principle 4: *Limited commitment*: Moral commitment should reach at least a bit beyond socially valid moral duties, which are legally or socially sanctioned. A further increase of commitment is not a moral duty. The principle demands the maximum of what can be demanded from rational subjects and helps to maintain achieved standards. At the same time, it raises moral commitment in the historical long term.

Principle 5: *Efficiency or economy principle*: Moral commitment should be efficient and employed where the ratio of cost and moral benefit is the most favourable.

Generational Justice in Real Life? Applying the Principles

The actual developments seem to lead to a reduction of the intergenerational savings rate (referring to pensions politics,



the future generations of the First World will still be better off than the currently dominant ones - and thus, also a lot better off than future Third World generations. Because of this, the ratio of cost to moral benefit within the Third World countries would be the most favourable. Besides this, many damages provoked by the greenhouse effect only become social problems because of widespread poverty. Therefore, direct investments in the Third World's development would probably be an efficient means to considerably reduce damages caused by the greenhouse effect. If these empirical hypotheses are right, it should be concluded as follows: According to the expounded principles, the morally most important and morally obligatory steps towards generational justice are firstly, considerable support for the development of the poorest countries; secondly, the containment of the anthropogenous greenhouse effect; and thirdly, the reduction of youth unemployment. However, it remains unclear how important the reduction of the consumption of resources is in proportion to these three measures.

"If you cannot realise your plans then you should get to know the future while considering the past and recognise the latent through the evident. Planning in this way will lead to understanding."

*/Mo Di (about 480 B.C. until 390 B.C.),
Chinese philosopher/*

arise from these principles:

Principle 1: *Ethical hedonism*: Only the welfare of human beings and more highly developed animals is intrinsically morally relevant.

Principle 2: *Beneficiary universalism*: All human beings - and to a limited degree more highly developed animals as well - should be equal beneficiaries of the morality of a subject, independent from space and time. Thus, beneficiary universalism excludes among other things temporal discounting, that is, a lower consideration of the fate of future generations.

Principle 3: *Prioritarianism*: The moral value of an action or a norm is roughly determined by the thereby produced changes in human welfare. More precisely, though, it should be given more weight is given to changes in welfare of subjects

high youth unemployment, unrestrained consumption of non-renewable resources, hardly restrained emissions of greenhouse gases). This contradicts the principle of limited commitment, as it infringes the informal duty to maintain the intergenerational savings rate existing so far. Hence, it is a forbidden moral step back. Developments seem to lead to a considerable lowering of welfare in the Third World countries. Therefore, the usual justification of the consumption of non-renewable resources, namely that future generations will profit the most from the thus paid progress, is not valid in these cases.

Plausible assumptions concerning the actual developments imply that even if current policies are stuck to further on,



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The Impossibility of Intergenerational Justice

by Prof. Dr. Wilfred Beckerman

Theories of justice imply ascribing rights to somebody or to some institution or group of people thus, if some class of individuals cannot be said to have any rights their interests cannot be protected within the framework of any coherent theory of justice. The crucial argument can be summarized in the following syllogism:

- 1) Future generations – of unborn people – cannot be said to have any rights
 - 2) Any coherent theory of justice implies conferring rights on people, therefore
 - 3) the interests of future generations cannot be protected or promoted within the framework of any theory of justice.
- The crux of the argument that future gen-

erations cannot have rights to anything is that properties, such as being green or wealthy or having rights, can be predicated only of some subjects that exist.

In connection with the more specific justification given for the goal sustainable development, namely that future generations have rights to specific assets, such as the existing environment and all its creatures, a second condition has to be satisfied: this is that even people who do exist cannot have rights to anything unless, in principle, the rights could be fulfilled.

Future generations cannot have any rights now, and when future generations come into existence their rights cannot include rights to something that no longer exists, such as an extinct species. So attempts to

locate our obligations to future generations in some theory of intergenerational justice are doomed to fail. But this would not necessarily mean that future generations have no 'moral standing' and that we have no moral obligations towards them. For rights and justice by no means exhaust the whole of morality. Since future generations will have interests and since it is true that our policies may affect these interests we do have a moral obligation to take account of the effect of our policies on these interests.



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Towards a pragmatic Approach to Intergenerational Justice in Germany

by Dr. Johannes Meier and Dr. Ole Wintermann

Addressing the challenges posed by demographic change in most industrialized countries leads invariably to issues of intergenerational justice: Can we realistically expect future generations to take good care of their many elders? Are we imposing unacceptable levels of debt on future generations?

In most industrialized countries the increase in life expectancy and wealth coincides with a drop of the fertility rate below the sustainability level of 2.1 children per woman. In Germany 1.3 million children were born in 1964. One and a half generations later in 2003 this number had dwindled to 0.7 million children and a fertility rate of 1.4.

Lack of fiscal sustainability of current systems

Life expectancy is certain to rise and the share of older people in society will increase whatever the progress on integrating migrants or increasing fertility rates in Germany may be in the coming years. Thus, the ratio of persons benefiting from the social system to persons contributing to the system is going to change dramatically ceteris paribus. As more and more baby-boomers move from the con-

tributor side to the recipient side of the social security systems, the current systems will be stretched beyond a breaking point. That is why any debate on sustainable financing of retirement benefits and social security needs to focus on the quality of public budgets and the principles of intergenerational justice. It is becoming increasingly accepted that exploding public debt violates the basic goal of intergenerational justice.

A pragmatic approach to intergenerational justice

Experiences from other countries reveal opportunities to break out of this pattern of increasing debt. In Sweden, for example, a mandatory set of royal commissions supports the legislative process in the long term planning process. Long term socio-economic projections form the basis of important laws. Furthermore a reform of budget legislation has led to a number of automatic control mechanisms to prevent overspending. These reforms have resulted in a budget surplus after years of major deficits.

We believe that these experiences should be translated into German fiscal policy and into new control mechanisms: First of all, a cross-party consensus needs to be established that intergenerational justice invariably calls for fundamental changes in

fiscal policy. To support the emergence of such a fundamental consensus the Bertelsmann foundation has cooperated with the ZEW, Mannheim, to build a monitoring tool for public debt at national and federal level. Secondly, automatic control mechanisms to prevent excessive debt need to be institutionalized. Specifically, the Bertelsmann foundation is proposing a shared commitment to a permanent combined surplus of 2% GDP for federal and state budgets. Thirdly, the sanctions for failure to deliver on such commitments must be clear and drastic. One example could be the automatic increase in taxes when certain debt thresholds are crossed – a mechanism that has already been introduced in some Swiss cantons. Last but not least, we call for regular and long term evaluation of budget structures at all levels, with special attention to demographic robustness.



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A Constitutional Law for Future Generations - The “other” Form of the Social Contract: The Generation Contract

by Prof. Dr. Dr. h.c. mult. Peter Häberle

To realise and assure generation protection, a reform of the social contract into a ‘generation contract’ and its constitutional anchorage is needed. The essay examines already existing forms of explicit as well as more implicit generation protection in numerous constitutions. Moreover, it sets a theoretical framework for analysing and evaluating already existing text passages and is therefore a basis for future constitutional changes.

Forms of Constitutionalising Generational Justice

As the topic of sustainability and generational justice becomes ever more relevant in various spheres like environment, public debt or our demographic future, it is time for an analysis from a very essential perspective: the constitutional anchorage of generation protection with special emphasis on the ‘time’ aspect.

In the essay, a comparative text stage analysis is applied in order to systematise the recent flood of literature on constitutional rights for future generations. Apart from the explicit use of the formula of “generation protection”, it is also focused on more indirect clauses inhering ‘cultural and/or natural heritage’. The preservation of both, nature and culture - with nature providing the basic resources for culture - is essential to sustain human living conditions for future generations and is thus part of ‘generation protection’.

Concerning the systematic of the constitutional anchorage of generation protection, there is one striking observation regarding different text stages: Innovations towards generational protection often first develop on a regional level, for instance in the German *Bundesländer*, before they enter the state wide level. Another very topical sign of the intensification of generation protection is its expansion on the European level: Whereas its precursors, the treaties of Maastricht and Amsterdam, incorporated generation protection only immanently, the Treaty establishing a Constitution for Europe now mentions it explicitly. Also on the European level, different text stages can be observed in the form of a

mutual influence between member state constitutions and the supranational EU-level. Moreover, sub constitutional legal acts adopted by the European Court of Justice play a role as well.

The special difficulty regarding constitutional generation protection is its ambiguity. The two opposing key notions are obligation and exemption: On the one hand, generation protection implies norms and values that must be eternally valuable. On the other hand, these norms must not constrain the coming generations’ liberty to design their future world. Thus, a compromising middle course between a certain degree of “eternity clauses” and sufficient flexibility is needed for generation contracts.

‘Generation’ as a Concept - Setting a Theoretical Framework

For the interpretation of existing and the formulation of future law clauses on generation protection, a theoretical frame needs to be set. Tying up to the above mentioned human dependence on nature as well as culture, the notion “generation” is defined from a universal, anthropological perspective. Not only *citizens* of particular countries are dependent of the protection of nature and culture but every *human being* all over the world. Thus, generation protection needs to be fixed in the constitution of every state in the world. To illustrate this need for universality, the philosopher Hans Jonas is of great importance, who modified Kant’s well-known Categorical Imperative in terms of generation protection: “Act so that the effects of your action are compatible with the permanence of genuine human life!”.

Taking into account the changing temporal dimension of the notion “generation”, it must be recognised that more and more generations of people live at the same time. Mutual responsibility is therefore ever more topical and needs to be put into practice - which consequently renders the anchorage of generation protection highly essential.

In the last paragraph of the theoretical framework, the importance of ‘culture’ as a tangible constant connecting different generations is once more emphasised. Culture, which unites tradition as well as innovation, is the basis for a generational

contract fixed in constitutional law.

Rendering the more abstract conceptualisations more concrete, there are certain spheres that desperately need a connection to generation protection: the outdated pension system, the demographic change, nuclear waste, growing state debts, (un)employment, as well as education and formation.

Constitutionalising Generational Justice - A Tightrope Walk

The conclusion gives an outlook focusing on constitutional politics. Explicit as well as more indirect forms of generation protection, like the notion of “cultural heritage”, are a normal expression of today’s growing constitutional state. The concluding postulate recommends a balance between an anchorage of generation protection in constitutional law which is neither ‘too tight’ nor ‘too loose’. The living conditions for future generations must be constitutionally protected but not in a way that the freedom of today’s generation to design environment is constrained. Concerning the comparative text stage analysis, a certain degree of competition regarding constitutional law should be accepted. However, the need for all-embracing universality of generation protection - Kant’s ideal of a ‘world citizen’ - may not be ignored.

What remains to be seen in relation to the needed generation contract is firstly its context like patriotism, civil society, or environmental protection, and secondly its forum which could be God, nature, or history.

We can thus be curious of how the “generation contract” will eventually be embedded in the state or even in one ‘world’ constitution.



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The French Constitutional Charter for the Environment: An Effective Instrument?

by Prof. Dominique Bourg

After briefly situating the French Constitutional Environment Charter in the international law context, Bourg introduces the institutional process used to draw up this text and the connections it has with the general theme of future generations. Then, he analyses three articles of this Charter and points out some of the reasons leading to believe its effect will be limited.

The Charter's Origin

France was by far not the first country to include environmental protection and Sustainable Development in its Constitution. However, there is a relative originality about the French approach as it modified the preamble with reference to a new Charter. This Charter affirms the right to a healthy environment and includes a universal responsibility principle for ecological reparations. Despite this universalistic perspective, the effectiveness of the Charter remains questionable. The institutional process of the Charter reaches back to the 1970s. Nevertheless, the 'Coppens Commission' to formulate it was not set up until 2002. Concerning the formulation, the head of state, Jacques Chirac, stepped in twice. The first time, he recommended a modification of the preamble combining two scenarios: The first one referred to a Charter having constitutional value; in the second one, the right to a healthy environment was stated concisely, and an organic law (i.e., a higher level of law than ordinary law) was introduced. In the further course, the government recommended either an organic law specifying the conditions in which the Charter applied, or an extension of the rule of law to the environment. Moreover, it was struggled whether the word 'principle' should explicitly be mentioned, or if a reference back to conditions defined by law would be more appropriate. The debate about the drafting was rather tense, especially concerning the precautionary principle. Thus, there was a time span of one entire year between the adoption by the Council of Ministers and the vote in the *Assemblée Nationale*. This reveals quite a lack of enthusiasm for

environmental issues within the parliament. The Charter was finally passed in February 2005.

Relation to Future Generations: Strengths and Weaknesses of the Charter

With concern to future generations, the preamble is of particular importance. With its global perspective, its object is clearly the future of humanity. The precautionary principle characterises best the spirit of the preamble as it aims at preventing as much as possible the irreversible deterioration of the environment. Almost all other articles are forward-looking. Problematic might be the contrast between the right "to live in an environment that is balanced and favourable to good health" and the set of personal duties and government obligations within the following articles.

Three particular articles, 3, 4, and 5, should be examined in more detail to reveal the Charter's strengths and weaknesses.

Concerning article 3, "Everyone has the right to live in an environment that is balanced and respectful of health", a reference to the notion 'dignity' was erased by the government, which reduces the text to the mere biological dimension. Moreover, 'well-being' was replaced by 'health' which boils down to ascribing a therapeutic virtue to the environment. A third point about article 3 is the redraft of the reference to individual health into public health which can be objectified and controlled.

With regards to article 4, "Every person must contribute to repairing the damage he or she causes to the environment, under conditions defined by law", the polluter-pays principle was broadened to a principle establishing ecological responsibility. A problematic aspect is the usage of the word 'contribute' as it sanctions minimal participation and makes minimalist laws constitutional, which is too weak of an approach.

Article 5 gives a detailed definition of the precautionary principle. It is the only article that is directly applicable under the "conditions defined by law" and does not define a constitutional objective. Moreover, the article identifies two

aspects regarding the assessment of current state knowledge, and the adoption of measures aimed at reducing the risk. Leaving aside the controversies on formulation, for instance about the implementation order, the precautionary principle is most important for future generations and should guide public policy. In addition, for Intergenerational Justice to be realised, action must be taken immediately and without delay.

A Gloomy Outlook

Concerning the effectiveness of there are merely two options: Either it is effective or not at all. Unfortunately, the remedial role of Charter is virtually inexistent. The reason is to be found within the proce-

The future is here. It's just not widely distributed yet.

/William Gibson (1948 -)/

dures in France for referring a matter to the Constitutional Council: The signatures of at least 60 parliamentarians are needed, which makes it a very restrictive procedure. This amount of ecologically vigilant parliamentarians is at the moment not given. Finally, recent bills that were passed by the Senate reveal that the Charter actually changes nothing. The French effort of constitutional anchorage of Intergenerational Justice seems to stay a theoretical opus that is not put into practice.



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Establishing the Rights of Future Generations in National Constitutions

by Dr. Jörg Tremmel

Today's generation has the capacity to affect the future more than ever before in the history of mankind. This article justifies the need to institutionalise Intergenerational Justice. Focussing on changes with regard to national constitutions, it deals with Beckerman's argument that future generations cannot have rights.

The Structural Problem of Democracy: Future Individuals have no votes

The principle of democracy can, in its traditional and narrow form, conflict with the maxim of Intergenerational Justice. However, rather than changing the existing principle of short legislative periods, provisions for the rights of future generations must be introduced into existing institutional practices.

The need to appease the electorate in regular elections in short intervals means that politicians direct their actions towards satisfying the needs and desires of the present citizens — their electorate. The interests of future generations are therefore all too often neglected.

However, today's hi-tech advancements mean that the consequences of our present undertakings, for instance nuclear energy installations, will project into the far future and can have a deeply negative influence on the quality of life of numerous future generations. Until now German nuclear power stations produced 7,196 tons of plutonium waste products (PU-239). Plutonium has a half-life period of 24,110 years meaning that there will still be a gram of today's plutonium remaining in 789,471 years. Yet, even one single gram threatens human health. If one considers that humans have only written down their history since 10,000 years, it becomes clear how long the inheritance of the present generations on the generations to come lasts.

In today's elections, those individuals, who will be born in the future, can not participate. They are not taken into account in the calculations of the politician, whilst he is organising his re-election.

If they could make their interests in the political decision-making process valid, majority conditions in important political decisions would be different. Policy on energy may serve as an example here: At present, the form of power production, based on fossil fuels, as utilised by today's generation, facilitates a uniquely high standard of living, but today's generation is thereby creating serious disadvantages for itself and future generations in the medium-term between the next fifty to one hundred years. We already know today that this energy policy leads to increased levels of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere. As a consequence, the natural greenhouse effect is strengthened and temperatures rise world-wide. Inundations, streams of refugees and new conflicts will be the future results of this short-sighted policy. Even if only the future individuals, who are born in the

In the second solution a new institution is created which, for instance, is designated 'Ombudsman for Future Generations', 'Committee for Future Generations', 'Ecological Council', 'Future Council', or 'Third Chamber'. These kind of new institutions make sense if they really have the power to protect future generations. This means, for instance, that these institutions can veto or at least freeze laws, or that they can propose laws themselves. Without this responsibility the advisory system is merely extended. The two environmental councils of the German Federal Government and the Sustainability Council which was appointed in 2001 do not have the necessary responsibilities.

The question how such a new institution will be staffed through democratic procedures also requires special attention.

Different countries will be more or less

"Every democracy is, generally speaking, founded on a structural problem, namely glorification of the present and neglect for the future."

/ Richard von Weizsäcker, former German president /

next 200 years, could vote on the energy policy, there would be a huge majority for a quick shift to renewables. Due to his limited lifetime a presently acting politician will not have to take responsibility for the consequences of his actions and can also no longer be made liable for them. Therefore the framework has to be changed. Of course, this must happen in such a way that the core of the democratic principle remains intact.

The Conversion of New Future Ethics into Positive Law

Changes to the constitution or the creation of new institutions — what serves the purpose better? In the written law solution, the protection of generations to come is written directly in the Constitution. The Constitutional Court of each country becomes the institution which watches over the rights of generations to come and weighs it against the interests of present generations respectively.

sued to either of the above proposed solutions. This suitability is affected by a country's traditions and existing institutions. For Germany, a change in the Constitution seems more appropriate than a new institution. What is important is the wording.

Do Future Humans "Have Rights"?

According to Beckerman, the general proposition that future generations cannot have anything, including rights, follows from the meaning of the present tense of the verb 'to have'. "Unborn people simply cannot have anything. They cannot have two legs or long hair or a taste for Mozart", Beckerman writes e.g. in the last edition of *Intergenerational Justice Review*. The argument of Beckerman is correct, but of minor importance. It reminds us to use the future tense instead of the present tense, i.e. to say: "Future Generations will have rights" instead of "Future Generations have rights." It is important to understand that

Beckerman's argument cannot be used to denounce the term 'rights' and to replace it by 'needs', 'interests', 'wishes' and the like. If future generations cannot *have* 'rights', they cannot *have* 'interests' etc. either. They *will have* interests, just as they *will have* rights. If we want to favor the term 'interests' over 'rights' we must find other arguments. The hint to using the future tense instead of the present tense in the wording of Constitutional amendments is just a minor aspect. It is more important what nouns, verbs or adjectives

are chosen. The full article analyses different drafts for implementing Intergenerational Justice into Constitutions with a special focus on the initiative of young MPs in Germany. The group working for constitutional change in favour of Future Generations has found 50 supporters from different parties for the initiative of amending certain parts of the German Constitution in order to safeguard the rights of Future Generations.



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Rule Change and Intergenerational Justice

by Dr. Axel Gosseries and Mathias Hungerbühler

When rules change, some lose and others win. Sometimes, losers and winners are distributed across generational lines. This raises a problem of intergenerational justice. The authors argue that, in some cases, the losing generations should be compensated for such losses. And they illustrate it with three real-life examples.

Constitutional Rigidity and Rule Change

Specialists of intergenerational justice have devoted some attention to constitutions. In fact, they may be facing a real dilemma in this respect as constitutional rigidity can be seen both as a guarantee when the rights of future generations are constitutionalized and as a problem since such a rigidity amounts to the imposition of norms by one generation on the following ones. In contrast, there has been less concern with theorizing the problem of *rule change* as an issue of intergenerational justice, rather than of mere coordination. Yet, rule change, whatever its goals, raises general problems of justice. It always produces losers and winners as compared to the pre-change situation, e.g. when new environmental rules are introduced, disadvantaging some while protecting others. In some cases, losers and winners are distributed along a generational axis, which leads to genuine questions of intergenerational justice. For example, if debates about canceling military service arise, the outrage of the last draftees has to do with a sense of injus-

tice. Theories of justice need to address such types of concerns and find out whether they are justified or not.

Transition Losers, Transition Winners

To begin, the proper scope of the problem of justice at stake needs to be identified. We offer a precise definition of "transition losses", restricted to two cases in which either rule change leads to losses in the expected return of investments that were effectively made (when the person invested but would have not done so had the new rule applied at the moment of investment), or in which the losses result from the opportunity cost of non-investment (when the person would have made such investments had the rule applied earlier). Moreover, we circumscribe the issue of justice and rule change to defining

change to take place, the less compensation should be due (predictability component). And the more the pre-existing situation should have been considered as morally unjust by a standard agent, the less compensation should be due (legitimacy component). Each of these components has an underlying logic and the authors discuss the respective weight of each of them as well. This test is then applied to properly intergenerational cases, which requires two steps. The first one is descriptive. We need to analyse the way in which some kind of rule changes generate distinctively generational impacts in terms of transition losses, some winning or losing more than others. Such a generational impact assessment is applied to three examples: cancelling mandatory retirement, phasing out the right to early retirement and cancelling

The future belongs to those who prepare for it today.

/Malcolm X (1925 - 1965)/

whether and when transition losers should be compensated (typically by transition winners).

A Twofold Compensation Test

Having defined the scope of the problem, a twofold test is defended. It is aimed at separating the cases in which compensation would be owed as a matter of justice and those in which it would not. The more the citizen should have expected the

mandatory military service. Each of these cases exhibits a distinctive intergenerational distribution of transition losses or gains.

Normative Implications

The second (and last) step consists in drawing normative conclusions from this impact analysis, basing ourselves on an examination of each of the two components of the twofold test (predictability

and legitimacy) as they apply to the three examples. It is shown that regarding predictability, the military service cancellation case is especially interesting, as the time lapse between the age allowing to predict such change and the intervention of such a change is comparatively short. Admittedly, predictability also depends on national circumstances. Yet, the military service cancellation example will require special treatment, whatever the national context we are concerned with. Predictability should thus not be used as an obstacle to compensation in this case. As to the legitimacy component, none of the pre-existing regimes in the three examples discussed turns out to be obvi-

ously unacceptable. Hence, applying this second part of the test to our three examples does not lead to any serious obstacle to compensating transition losers either.

Of course, even in a clear case such as the military service cancellation one, this only leads to a *ceteris paribus* presumption for compensation. Whether the generation experiencing the most serious transition losses is also extremely privileged in other respects should matter as well in considering whether, all things considered, net transfers should be set up to benefit such a generation.



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Institutional Determinants of Public Debt: A Political Economy Perspective

by Prof. Dr. Robert K. von Weizsäcker and Dr. Bernd Süßmuth

*G*rowing public debt is a serious constraint of the degrees of freedom future generations have to set their environment. Von Weizsäcker and Süßmuth outline the fiscal problem of public debt for Germany in an international comparison. The shortsightedness of politicians who prefer being re-elected instead of solving this fundamental problem is a main obstacle for possible solutions suggested by the authors.

Public Debt – A Growing Threat

There is a well-known antagonism between the conservatively budgeting politicians' and their opponents' view of the accumulation of public debt: An enormous amount of debt inheritance to a

society's newborns and an expansionary alignment of fiscal policy in order to solve problems in areas like education, science, and research. Using historical and more recent figures, we sketch the development of public debt and interest payments for the German economy from the 1950s to the present. In an international comparison the global dimension of the problem of excessive public debt accumulation is highlighted. We identify debt rescheduling practices by the exception of special assets from the broadly worded constitutional constraint and scattered public liabilities fostering window dressing practices as German idiosyncrasies.

Winning Elections – At the Expense of Higher Debt

Despite obvious disadvantages of debt accumulation in the form of a tightened

financial scope, a potential decrease in aggregate capital, and problems of generational equity, there is no reasonable economic justification to opt for it. We raise profound doubt on standard justifications that can be found in the literature, like countercyclical use of deficits in order to combat recessions, tax smoothing arguments, and the temporal displacement of taxes. Based on recent data and indicators for the EU-15, institutional determinants of public debt are discussed along two central dimensions: First, the common resource problem denoting the externality which results from the fact that government spending is commonly targeted at specific groups in society while being financed from a general tax fund to which all taxpayers, possibly including future ones, contribute. This problem of modern democracies is aggravated by the number and ideological range of ruling parties, institutional characteristics of the electoral system, and the fragmentation of the budget process. Second, it is most reasonable to proceed from myopic foresight of incumbents, seeking to protect claims and power by instrumentally misusing public expenditures financed by issuing debt to maximize re-election probability. It is shown that the more frequently coalitions or ruling parties in a European democracy changed during the last two decades, the more the respective govern-

*“The politician considers the next elections;
the statesman considers the next generation.”*

*/William Gladstone (1809 - 1898), English politician,
from 1867 onwards leader of the Liberals
in the House of Commons/*

ment tended to accumulate debt. In addition to this and other evidence, it is suggested that this relationship is nonlinear, i.e. convex, in nature: Both, too few and too frequent changes generate a negative performance. A further aggravation of the implied shortsighted calculus of politicians is foreseeable by the ongoing demographic change in industrial societies.

Ways out off the Debt Dilemma

In sum, the quantitative study of institutional determinants reveals a fundamental dilemma of self-interests of economic and political agents on the one hand and

social welfare on the other. Recent proposals of institutional reform, including constitutional limits, balanced budget and intertemporal rules, a debt tax, children voting rights, and the delegation of the budget process to an independent national or supranational entity are outlined. They are discussed and assessed with regard to maturity, effectiveness, theoretical underpinning, and tractability. Due to an established theoretical foundation and experience in the field of monetary policy, we suggest delegation being the most promising alternative to alleviate this paramount fiscal policy problem of contemporary democracies.



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The Economic Sustainability Indicator

by Dr. Peer Ederer, Dr. Philipp Schuller, and Stephan Willms

*E*derer, Schuller and Willms present the 'Economic Sustainability Indicator' developed by the German think tank Deutschland Denken! The authors criticize that welfare institutions, i.e. public pension systems, disability insurance, poverty alimentation and health care, are products of the 19th and 20th century which have not been adapted to today's reality.

Measuring Sustainability

The fiscal patterns in most advanced economies are far from being sustainable. The political system is blind for long-range developments that impact the well functioning of an economy.

Austerity measures that intervene in public investment rather than in public consumption increase future difficulties because of the loss of future returns on current investments.

For the fundamental change to be realised, a majority of the voters must recognise the need for a change. This is supposed to happen with the help of expert knowledge in the policy process as well as in the political process.

The Economic Sustainability Indicator is supposed to provide the needed connection of expert knowledge and political communication. It should make long-

term interests transparent for the citizens. Moreover, it describes the impact of any given policy on economic sustainability. Moreover, the indicator measures how much net capital is being passed on from current generations to future generations as a percentage of how much net capital these current generations have inherited. If the indicator's value is above 100%, then the current generations have increased the stock of capital for future generations and if it is below 100%, then they pass on less than they have inherited. From a historical perspective, the Economic Sustainability Indicator has registered more than 100% in Germany already from the time of the Industrial Revolution. For Germany today, however, it only ranks at about 70%.

Components of the Indicator

The indicator contains five sets of capital: real capital, human capital, natural capital, structural capital, and intergenerational debt. In the following, it is explained how the Indicator and its components, evaluated from an entirely economic point of view, are measured.

The formula for calculating the Economic Sustainability Indicator is:

$$+ \sum \text{Net Capital inherited:} \\ (Real\ C + Human\ C + Natural + \\ Structural\ C - Debt\ C) \text{ per year alive}$$

$$- \sum \text{Net Capital handed down:} \\ (Real\ C + Human\ C + Natural + \\ Structural\ C - Debt\ C) \text{ per year alive}$$

Net Capital created or destroyed per generation:
Net Capital handed down / Net capital inherited = economic sustainability index in %

It is claimed that economic sustainability is most appropriately measured on a per capita basis. As a basic assumption of the methodology, total economic output is seen as a linear function of the input (the four types of capital specified). This leads to the conclusion that the more of these types of capital are being used, the more economic output can and will be created. It remains to be seen whether this indicator will become accepted enough to influence the public's consciousness for future generations.

Dr. Peer Ederer, Dr. Philipp Schuller, and Stephan Willms founded together the think tank 'Deutschland Denken!'



Institutional Protection of Succeeding Generations – Ombudsman for Future Generations in Hungary

by Dr. Benedek Jávör

Benedek Jávör describes one possible way to institutionalise generational justice, namely by establishing an ombudsperson for future generations. In Hungary, this idea was initiated by the NGO 'Protect the Future!' of which Jávör is a founding member.

Taking responsibility for Future Generations

The existence of our moral obligations towards future generations may be approached in several ways. The moral responsibility to provide coming generations with the conditions for life can be justified through the broadening interpretation of general human rights, through the general comprehension of democratic principles, by the concept of the common heritage of human kind or by relying on Rawls's theory of justice. This responsibility, however, will only become reality if we are able to convert it into real actions.

How to Institutionalise Generational Justice?

One inevitable step for achieving this is to build the protection of the interests of the future generations into our current decision making mechanisms institutionally. The coming generations do not presently exist, therefore their interests cannot be represented by today's models

of interest vindication that are based on the active participation (realized through some kind of mechanisms) of the concerned groups. However, there are special legal institutions which can ensure the representation of the interests of those

ing other similar institutions. Until the political will to set up the ombudsman's office is gathered, Protect the Future! has founded and is operating 'REFUGE' (Representation of Future Generations), a civil initiative representing the coming

"The world desperately needs appetite for the future."

*/Clyde Collins Snow (*1928), US-American physician/*

groups with no or very low capability to vindicate their interests. One of these is the institution of the ombudsman which, owing to its peculiarities, can surmount the legitimacy problems relating to the representation of the future generations.

The Answer: An Ombudsman of Future Generations

In Spring 2000 the Hungarian association, Protect the Future!, initiated the establishment of such an institution, the office of the 'Ombudsman of Future Generations' in Hungary. The proposal that was presented by Protect the Future! in the form of a draft law has been roaming in the cobwebs of political decision making since then, and there is hardly any chance of its realization in the short run.

The idea is, however, still on the agenda and may provide an example for establish-

generations in the spirit of the bill. REFUGE has been working for nearly five years and releases its results in annual reports similar to those of the existing Ombudsmen in Hungary (1). Finally, Protect the Future! makes a proposal to study and analyse the possibilities of setting up an EU-level office of the European Ombudsman of Future Generations.



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The Role of CPB in Dutch Economic Policy Making

by Rocus van Opstal and Jacqueline Timmerhuis

The article discusses the role of the Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis (CPB) in economic policy making in the Netherlands. Having outlined the history of the CPB and the formal status it has within the government, its independent position is highlighted, which is rather unique in international comparison. Moreover, the work of CPB is described,

focusing on studies that also affect future generations.

Preventing Short-sightedness for Future Generations

In a democracy, politicians decide on economic policy and quite rightly so. In the political debate, however, it is difficult to distinguish objective arguments from normative or political arguments or some-

times even arguments designed primarily to reach a preconceived goal. Moreover, politicians are often short-sighted, giving priority to the short-term effects of their decisions, for example with a view to the next elections. This can be detrimental for long-term developments and the position of future generations.

Influence through Information – how the CPB works

"The future is the time when the burning issue is no longer today's problems but rather their solution."

*/Wolfgang Mocker (*1954), German journalist and author/*

In the Netherlands, politicians, unions, employers' organisations and the general public see the benefits of separating political arguments from economic ones. This is why the CPB, the Netherlands Bureau for Economic Policy Analysis, plays an important role in Dutch economic policy making. Founded immediately after the Second World War, it was originally designed as a planning agency to facilitate the post-war reconstruction of the Dutch economy, CPB soon evolved into a centre of economic information inside the government and, at the same time, an independent institute for economic forecasting and analysis. CPB provides politicians and policy-makers in- and outside the government with information that is rele-

vant for decision making.

In most cases this amounts to sketching the relevant trade-offs that politicians face, as it is often very hard to find policy measures that are Pareto-improvements. In other words, most policies having a positive effect in one field, will have some negative effect in another field.

In presenting the effects of policy options, along with the effects on the short term, CPB only provides *information* for policy makers. CPB does not provide direct policy *recommendations*. Rather, it tends to take an academic approach, stating facts and pointing out the expected effects of different courses of action, but refraining from normative judgments.

The analysis of election platforms in the

months preceding general elections in the Netherlands is, in international comparison, a rather unique event. CPB studies on the sustainability of government finances in the long run and on cost-benefit analyses of government investment programs play an important role in Dutch economic policy making. In this way, the CPB contributes to more long-term thinking within the Dutch government. This is one possible and effective step to guarantee sustainability for future generations.



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Commission for Future Generations in the Knesset – Lessons Learnt

by Prof. Shlomo Shoham and Nira Lamay

In their article, Shlomo Shoham and Nira Lamay relate to the realisation and the respective circumstances of the Commission for Future Generations in the Israeli Parliament.

It is explained that the Commission for Future Generations of the Knesset is a worldwide unique establishment, which is, by definition, designed to protect the rights of future generations at the parliamentary and governmental level.

An Institution for the Rights of Future Generations

The establishment of the Commission is characterised as the result of a top-down process. Thus, the Commission was not born out of a public campaign or discussion but emerged from a parliamentary initiative, attempting to consider long-term implications of legislation. The initiation of the parliamentary institution itself probably made it possible to establish the institution and introduce the con-

cept of the rights of future generations. It is funded by the Knesset's own budget and led by a Commissioner.

The Commission has important authorities regarding the parliamentary legislative process in almost every area except matters of defence and foreign affairs. This includes the initiation and drafting of bills, later to be submitted by individual parliamentarians. It also enjoys the right to demand information from every inspected government-related institution under the law of the State's Controller. Along with the general authority to advise the parliament regarding any matter that is of special interest for future generations and its physical location within the parliament, this created a whole new dimension in the parliamentary, executive and public levels in Israel.

Struggling to Get Accepted

The Commission struggled its way to public awareness with considerable efforts. Stepping out of the survival dimension was not easily accepted by

politicians in Israel. Among the civil society, however, it was more popular, especially among non-governmental organizations as their agents. Parliamentarians started to appreciate the Commission as an establishment that influences public interest and establishes the concept of future generations that had not been introduced before to the public. Indeed, the concept found its way into political communication and the media. Thus, it soon became an important tool in positioning the Commission and the concept of future generations.

Nevertheless, a conceptual framework to work with was not enough. Thus, the Commission had to define the identity of future generations which included "special interests" for them. For this purpose it adopted the concept of "Sustainable Development" as a platform and received vast research support from the academic sector and NGOs. Sustainable Development is promoted by the Commission within the parliament, but also vis-à-vis the government and the public and business sector. However, the

"The best way to predict the future is to invent it."

*/ Alan Kay (*1940), US-American computer scientist/*

concept was not sufficient since it does not refer to specific issues that have a direct effect on the future. As an example, the implications of technological development on society and ethics are mentioned which includes among other things the issue of human reproductive cloning. One of the guiding principles of the Commission's work is creating legislative mechanisms within the decision-making process relating to different subjects of Sustainable Development. A main rule of that principle is achieving a financially independent decision-making process of a specific government ministry. The Commission also seized the advantage of its unique location to become a facilitator, channelling information and ideas into the parliament and to the parliamentarians in person.

The Main Function

One of the Commission's main goals is to incorporate the right to Sustainable Development (rather than 'only' environmental protection, for instance) in the constitution as well as in a future constitution that is now drafted. Although its authorities vis-à-vis the government and with regards to executive actions is not specifically defined in law, the holistic and ethical conduct of the Commission brought it to cooperate with the government. This cooperation takes place before the government introduces a draft legislation to the parliament. Thus, it can influence the executive actions in real time. The Commission's power to change is partly founded on the fact that it is a governmental and not a non-governmental

organisation. Its most important task in creating functioning frameworks for long term national planning and decision-making regarding issues of Sustainable Development. This is linked to the goal of passing on values and knowledge as well as a different dimension of thinking future to all governmental and, above all, public levels.



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The Committee for the Future - Future policy

by Dr. Paula Tiihonen

Tiihonen discusses origins, history and main tasks of Finland's Committee for the Future. She gives account of concrete policy schemes and issues that the Committee has dealt with, presents an excerpt from the background paper of the latest future dialogue and, finally, tries to evaluate the work of the Committee.

Origins, History and Main Tasks

The urge to create a parliamentary body that promotes sustainability stems from the fact that politics try to preserve the status quo as voters are supposedly against new things and change. However, this is not the case and therefore active involvement of Members of Parliament is required, who speak out against tradition-bound governments. Thus, the parliament can serve as a forerunner and an active player for a new society. For this reason the Committee for the Future was estab-

lished at the beginning of the 1990s, four years after a citizens' initiative proposing the creation of a futures research unit had failed. Nevertheless, the struggle for acceptance continued and culminated in the granting of permanent status to the Committee in 1999. Over the years, the Committee for the Future has become an established forum at the core of the parliamentary system that enjoys the power of initiative. It consists of 17 parliamentarians and has great freedom in setting its own agenda after every election, with the only requirement that the agenda contains something new and important to the people. The overall aim is to make policy, rather than to do research. Its main task in this connexion is to hold a dialogue with the Prime Minister's Office and the Government on future related issues, which has significantly broadened the Government's view of the future. Furthermore, the Committee was successful in establishing technology assessment of future technologies in the Parliament with the aim to make use of the latest

methods that future research has provided.

Concrete Policy Schemes and Issues

The different projects of technology assessment can be categorised into three generations, which include, among others, the projects *Plant gene technology in food production*, *Energy 2010*, and *Regional innovation activities*. In the course of the different projects, active involvement of the parliamentarians has increased considerably, e.g. parliamentarians visited some of the USA's most important universities and research centres, formed arguing panels in a Delfi study and arranged meetings with companies and discussions with other Members of Parliament.

The Committee has discussed different issues, e.g. the major changes of Finnish economy, and different success factors for Europe and for Finland, in particular, in the information society. Globalisation, Information and technology, the human aspect in innovation, and governance, are

all-permeating factors with an influence on future success- in an all-encompassing sense. These factors are in turn influenced by powerful actors, so that it is important to bear moral responsibilities for the effects of one's choices. In the full article, some examples of issues that the Committee has handled are illustrated in more detail, for example, major global environmental, and structural problems, demographic trends, and the future of Finnish knowledge society. I discuss the latter and thus firstly analyse the "big picture" of the rival economic systems of the past fifty years using a US American study (Brooks, 2005). It is stated that the American model is going to be challenged, whereas the European model is unsustainable. Secondly, every committee has discussed unemployment, but one can criticise that the signals that the projects provided were not taken seriously by the decision-making system of Finland. Thirdly, the Committee gave the plenary five basic hypotheses of problems of the Finnish welfare system to discuss, e.g. that morbidity follows social dividing lines. I conclude that the Finnish welfare model does not meet all the goals set for it and that "the important task of politics in this new e-world is to provide old and new solutions and options from all these e-things".

Latest Future Dialogue

The topic of the latest future dialogue was demographic challenges. In order to illustrate the controversial discussion among the committee, Tiihonen lists the titles of the background paper and cites some of its openings. In the first part, *Starting points*, it is warned that population policy is generally a very sensitive issue. It touches the values of the population and the most permanent institutions of society, such as family, and therefore has to be considered carefully before it is implemented. Furthermore, it bears controversial questions right from the start, such as the

Sustainability



question whether population policy is a private or a public issue, or else, if the problems of population development are primarily economic. Despite the relative homogeneity of the Finnish society, population policy has nevertheless been an easy issue to address. This, however, will change in a globalised world. Furthermore, according to population forecasts, the population in poor countries will increase significantly, with the effect that the world markets will shift from rich to poor countries. If the problems of an ageing and shrinking society are supposed to be solved by increased immigration, a proper discussion of values has to be initiated, and possible alterations of Finnish identity must be analysed. In the second part, *Global responsibility*, it is argued that the developed industrial countries should pursue long-term global interests rather than short-term national advantages and fight the battle against disintegrated countries and construct good national administrations as a requirement for a more just world. The paper gives several examples

of taking global responsibility and the conflicts involved, e.g. world poverty and distribution of work, youth unemployment, world tax, the participation in peacekeeping and peace-building, and global administration. The paper draws the conclusion that in order to guarantee peace and stable population development, as well as human welfare, it is most important to ensure a favourable development in an open global economy.

Has it been a Success?

Firstly, the Committee has taken its place in the Finnish parliamentary system as an innovative political body, a forum that has shown that initiatives within democracy can be taken with parliamentary measures. Secondly, the Committee for the Future serves as an excellent forum where parliamentarians can expand their knowledge beyond everyday politics and beyond problems that are confined to Finland.



Dr. Paula Tiihonen is Committee Counsellor to the Committee for the Future in the Finnish Parliament.

Contact: Committee Counsel to the Committee for the Future, FI-00102 Parliament of Finland, Finland; paula.tiihonen@parliament.fi

We are at the very beginning of time for the human race. It is not unreasonable that we grapple with problems. But there are tens of thousands of years in the future. Our responsibility is to do what we can, learn what we can, improve the solutions, and pass them on.

/Richard Feynman (1918 - 1988)/

Book Recommendations and Reviews

Index of Contents

A Poverty of Reason: Sustainable Development and Economic Growth
by Wilfred Beckerman 38

The Environmental Ethics & Policy Book
by Donald VanDeVeer & Christine Pierce 39

Presentation of Handbook Intergenerational Justice in European Parliament 39

Justice and Environment
by Andrew Dobson 39

The World in 2020. Power, Culture and Prosperity
by Hamish McRae 39

Wilfred Beckerman: A Poverty of Reason: Sustainable Development and Economic Growth

Reviewer: Julia Scheide

In recent years the concept of “sustainable development” has promoted a great expansion of bureaucratic activity at the regional, national and international level. The sustainable-development movement claims to support environmental and human well-being, but *A Poverty of Reason: Sustainable Development and Economic Growth* by Wilfred Beckerman argues, that this would not be the case. According to Beckerman, support for sustainable development is challenged by the confusion about its ethical implication and a flagrant disregard of the relevant factual evidence.

Throughout seven chapters on 76 pages Beckerman argues in a fervent, but often exaggerating way against the concept of sustainable development (SD). He points out for example that “sustainable development has become an all-embracing concept to the extent that it has no clear analytical bite at all.” (p. 4).

Firstly, Beckerman argues that sustainable development is not measurable at all because there is no clear conceptual basis to begin with (cp. p. 7). Without doubt there are many competing definitions for SD. But it is also true that the UN Commission for Sustainable Development as well as many national councils for SD have established clearcut indicator systems to define if a state is sustainable or not.

Beckerman secondly mentions finite resources and the predictions of scientists about the lasting of finite resources. He argues that such prognoses have usually been false or exaggerated. Every time when a scientist predicted that the world would run out of a certain finite resource within the following decades, it finally turned out to be humbug because after

one or two decades even more resources were available because new resources have been found. He also mentions the extinction of animals as a process we cannot change anymore, because “98 percent of all the species that have ever existed are believed to have become extinct already, but most people do not suffer any sense of loss as a result. How many people lose sleep because it is no longer possible to see a live dinosaur?” (p. 2).

This argument neglects that it is not the same if a thunderstorm causes a destruction in a forest or if man does the same deliberately. Just because there have been five “waves” of species extinction in evolution, man has not the right to add a sixth one.

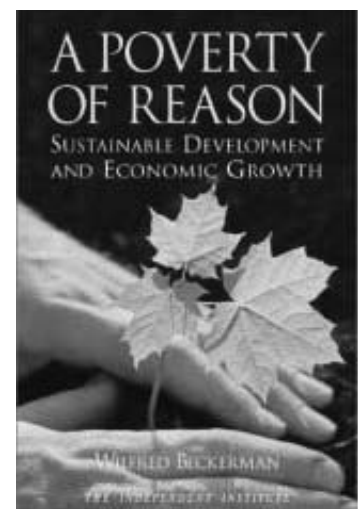
Furthermore, Beckerman talks about climate change. On the one hand, he agrees that there is a climate change. But on the other hand, he argues that “up to a point a warmer climate is likely to reduce mortality and disease in developed countries.” (p. 35). He also mentions that today more houses are destroyed by hurricanes only because there are more houses today than decades earlier (cp. p. 34).

Beckerman often speaks about the developed countries. For instance, he explains that developed countries should not reduce their carbon emission because that would cause their GNP to decline. But developed countries need a rapid growth of incomes (cp. p. 38-39).

As another important topic Beckerman mentions the “precautionary principle”. He argues against the precautionary principle by stating that there would be much more poverty in the world, if we followed the precautionary principle. “The harmful effects of applying the precautionary principle in the past would have included, for example, severe restrictions on thousands of innovations such as vaccines and antibiotics that have saved millions of lives.” (p. 44). As an alternative to the precautionary principle Beckerman suggests the following, “The alternative to the precautionary principle is not non-action but informed action. Drastic action to reduce climate change today, for example, is

probably undesirable *given today's state of knowledge* (accentuation in the original). If we wait, however, new knowledge will arrive, and it will become much clearer what action are best.” (p. 47). Beckerman asserts it would be absurd to change anything right now, for instance, reducing carbon emission because it would cause more harm than benefit.

Altogether, Beckerman wants to give reasons for not supporting the idea of sustainable development. He thinks there are much more important problems in the world that have to be solved first. With his opinions, he is an outsider – and rightfully so. In 1993, 600 of the most eminent scientists of the world, among them the majority of nobel prize winners still alive, issued a dramatic *Warning to Mankind*. It states: “The earth is limited. Its capacity to sustain a growing number of us is limited.” The new paradigm of finiteness puts classical economists like Beckerman or Julian Simon in a dilemma. Some of the foundations of their discipline – e.g. that there are no limits to growth – must be rethought. But that is a problem for those economists, not for science.



Beckerman, Wilfred: *A Poverty of Reason: Sustainable Development and Economic Growth*. The Independent Institute, Oakland, California: 2003.

Book Recommendation

Donald VanDeVeer and Christine Pierce

“The Environmental Ethics & Policy

Offer some guideline how policies for the protection of future generations can or should be implemented, the FRFG recommends this interdisciplinary work of reference.

“At the leading edge of refreshing and illuminating environmental debate...”

VanDeVeer and Pierce’s environmental ethics source book is a wake-up call that helps each of us explore questions about responsible treatment of the planet and the nonhumans that share it with us.

Beginning with a readable introduction to ethical theories and how they relate to environmental concerns, *The Environmental Ethics and Policy Book*, Second Edition casts a revealing light on the relevant empirical and normative presuppositions that underlie policy recommendations. And whether these recommendations are made by economists, biologists, ecologists, philosophers, engineers, or politicians, VanDeVeer and Pierce do not hesitate to cross disciplinary boundaries to spotlight and clarify issues.

A valuable interdisciplinary source for students of philosophy, environmental studies, and policy studies, this second edition also includes:

- Twenty-nine new essays – many chosen for their path-breaking content, others to represent diverse views, and all for their accessibility to readers of varying backgrounds
- Greater emphasis on relevant sciences to

help foster empirically informed, state-of-the-art proposals

- Internet Environmental Resources offering guidance in how to use the Web to investigate issues and write effective papers

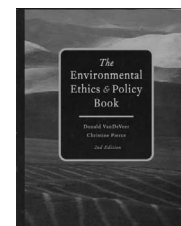
- A glossary defining philosophical and scientific terms needed to understand this cross-disciplinary field

- A time Chart providing a broad geological perspective on evolution and change

New Previews introducing 18 subsections and Sidelights that examine important, related issues”

- from the back cover -

Donald VanDeVeer and
Christine Pierce: “*The
Environmental Ethics &
Policy Book*”, 1998
Wadsworth Publishing
Company: Belmont, 650 pages,
ISBN 0-534-52524-5



Book Recommendation

Andrew Dobson:

“Justice and the Environment. Conceptions of Environmental Sustainability and Dimensions of Social Justice”

For further elaboration on the conceptualisation of environmental protection and social justice, the FRFG recommends this work by Andrew Dobson, who is Professor of Politics at Keele University, UK. Especially interesting is to explore whether these two concepts are at all reconcilable or rather contradictory.

“Environmental sustainability and social, or distributive, justice are both widely regarded as desirable social objectives. But can we assume that they are compatible with each other? In this path-breaking study, Professor Dobson, a leading expert on environmental politics, analyses the complex relationship between these two pressing objectives.

Environmental sustainability is taken to be a contested idea, and three distinct conceptions of it are described and explored. These conceptions of it are then examined in the context of fundamental distributive questions such as: Among whom or what should distribution take place? What should be distributed? What should the principle of distribution be? The

author critically examines the claims of the ‘environmental justice’ and ‘sustainable development’ movements that social justice and environmental sustainability are points on the same virtuous circle, and concludes that radical environmental demands are only incompletely served by couching them in terms of justice.”

-from the back cover-



Andrew Dobson: „*Justice and the Environment. Conceptions of Environmental Sustainability and Dimensions of Social Justice*”, Oxford University Press 1998, 262 pages, ISBN 0-19829482-4

Book Recommendation

Hamish McRae:

“The World in 2020. Power, Culture and Property”

Hamish McRae is a journalist, awarded with important prizes, and associate editor of the London ‘Independent’. To get an idea how the world may possibly look like in economic, cultural as well as power distributive terms, the FRFG recommends this book – also to raise the reader’s awareness whether this picture presents future generations as being endangered.

“As the foundations of world economic

order continue to shift, some countries will flourish and some will falter. Determining which nations will experience economic growth and property in the next century – and understanding why this is of vital interest to economists, investors and business leaders. In *The World in 2020*, acclaimed commentator and best-selling author Hamish McRae paints a vivid competitive landscape in which culture and values will be the new sources of advantage for the industrialized nations.

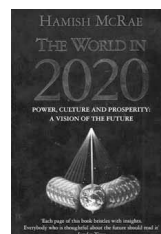
Grounded in the experience of a twenty-five-year career interpreting the international financial and economic scene, McRae’s argument for the future begins with a thorough examination of the present. Identifying the forces for change –

among them demography, the environment, the role of government, technology and natural resources – and analyzing their effect on the world in the next quarter century, he makes a powerful and original economic case for good behavior.

In the year 2020, all having embraced market capitalism, the North American, European and East Asian countries will be engaged in fierce economic competition. With each nation increasingly able to imitate the others, innovations will cross borders within mere days and weeks, removing technological prowess as a source of sustained advantage. McRae sees the “old motors for growth” – land, capital and natural resources – being replaced by more qualitative assets

– quality, organization, motivation and self-discipline of the people. Everywhere, governments will take a less active role in the social and economic life of the nation. In such a world, the best predictor of success will be how a nation strikes a proper balance between creativity and intellect on the one hand, and social responsibility on

the other. Thus the leading world economic powers of the next generation are just as likely to include China and Australia as the United States and Japan. Provocative, realistic and accessible to the reader, *The World in 2020* shows us not only where we will be in the next twenty-five years, but how we will get there.”



- from the back cover -
Hamish McRae: “*The World in 2020. Power, Culture and Prosperity*”, Harvard Business School Press, 1995, 281 pages, ISBN 0-87584-604-1

Presentation of Handbook Intergenerational Justice in European Parliament

The FRFG is going to present its upcoming publication, the “Handbook Intergenerational Justice”, to the European Parliament (EP). With this presentation, the FRFG seeks to gain support of young parliamentarians from all political groupings within the EP for the initia-

tive to institutionalise Intergenerational Justice, also on the European level. The presentation will presumably take place in November 2005. For registration, please contact the FRFG by e-mail under info@srzg.de.

Index of Contents

New Staff Members 40

European Volunteers 41

Award for Intergenerational Justice 2005/2006 41



Frauke Austermann

I am 20 years old, coming from Ahrweiler, a small town in the west of Germany. After my A-levels in March 2004, I worked for a French hotel chain. Back in Germany, I enrolled in European Studies (ES) at the University of Maastricht/The Netherlands. I have just finished my second semester by the end of June. Apart

from studying, I am involved in the student association of ES. Having worked as a board member, I joined two, the Cultural Committee and *Student Forum Maastricht*. The latter is an annual student conference with participants from all over the world. My home town is not such an international environment. However, precisely here, I regularly get in touch with the universal problems that can occur between different generations. Being one of the places with the highest age average in entire

Germany, much more is done for old people than for the youth. Both generations often struggle instead of collaborating and benefiting from each other. Not only this experience aroused my interest for an internship for the FRFG. Tying up to my study program, I am interested how to realise generational justice on the European level. Among others, my main task concerns the third English issue of the journal “Intergenerational Justice!”.



Raphael Bernhardt

I am 20 years old and I live in Struth, a small village in Thuringia. In 2004, I received my University-level graduation. Furthermore, I had training as an assistant for computer science.

At the moment, I study computer science at Friedrich Schiller University in Jena. However, I will change programs and continue my studies in sociology. As a preparation I am now doing an internship at the FRFG. It is to show me essential insight in scientific labour and the work of a young, international think tank. It is

important that there are people engaged for the rights of future generations – and who would suit better to do so than the current young generation? I am glad to make my contribution to Generational Justice. Concerning my future study program, I hope that I will gain meaningful experiences.



Andrea Heubach

I am 26 years old and I studied Political Sciences, Philosophy, Public Law, and Philosophy at the Johannes Gutenberg University in Mainz. Having recovered from the stress about my thesis, I decided to work on the topic of justice between today's and future generations. The topic is not only interesting

but most notably of practical meaning. Current generations design their lives at the expense of future generations. Political decisions that are made today can have implications on lots of coming generations. We can only influence towards the future. Future generations will have to face the consequences of irreversible decisions that are made today. It is time for the discipline of Philosophy to deal extensively with the topic. Moreover,

boundaries towards other disciplines have to be transgressed; particularly the border between theory and practice. During my literature research to the topic of Intergenerational Justice, I came across the FRFG. In doing an internship, I want to make my contribution together with Jörg, Tobias, and the other volunteers on the way to realise Sustainability and Intergenerational Justice.



Carsten Kipper

I am 24 years old and a volunteer at the Foundation for the Rights of Future Generations

(FRFG) from Mid- August until Mid – October 2005. I used to live in Niddatal near the small town of Friedberg / Hessen. Since October 2003 I have been studying Political Sciences at the Freie Universität Berlin, now entering my fifth

semester. Before starting my studies, I accomplished a two - year traineeship in a bank in Frankfurt am Main. My goal here at the FRFG is to increase the attention necessary for a topic as the rights of future generations. In this point,

I firmly disagree with the non-ratification of the Kyoto Protocol by some of the strongest economies (most of them with a significant share of CO2 emissions

worldwide) and the increasing state debts in Germany.

After my studies I see a variety of job possibilities for myself. The working for a

foundation like FRFG is one of my fields of interest and so are Public Relations or Consulting. I have also done a short traineeship in this area before.



Lisa Marschall

I am 22 years old, and originally from Tübingen. Soon after I had finished my a-levels, I decided to leave this idyllic university town and moved to my favourite city, London, where I worked as receptionist in a Health Centre and later in a restaurant for about six months. In 2003, I enrolled

in the course 'Languages, Business Studies and Cultural Studies' in Passau, with the main focus on Spanish & English, World Politics and Business Studies. However, I spent the last academic year in Limerick, Ireland, and will continue my studies at the University of Granada in October. In the future, I would like to work in the field of development politics. This idea mainly developed when I was spending several months in Guatemala, working for an

NGO that provides basic education for children, who - mostly for financial reasons - cannot attend any ordinary school. With this internship I hope to gain valuable experience in a related area and I am looking forward to ten enriching weeks. In my free time, I like playing the violin and the piano, as well as playing tennis, cycling, and walking our family dog.



Kristin Tecles

After I finished school in March 2005 I was looking for an interesting occupation till I start studying in October. Accidentally, I got to know

about the Foundation for the Rights of Future Generations and I liked the topics "Generational Justice" and "Sustainability" immediately. In my opinion it is very commendable to be socially engaged and I liked to support the idea of a juster world, especially for our children. Furthermore, I was very impressed

by the idea of an European network, fighting together for one idea. In school, I was interested in the subjects German, English and Social Studies, which show my preference for languages and politics. Now, I am looking forward to an internship in the Foundation for two months.

European Volunteers in the FRFG's International Volunteers Office



From February until July this year, the two first European volunteers enriched the staff of our International Volunteers Office (IVO). Yanti Ehrentraut from Belgium and Caterina Bressa from Italy have worked six months for the FRFG's various projects, among them the journal *Intergenerational Justice Review*, the Young

Leaders Congress „Ecological Generational Justice into the Constitution“, which is documented in the issue at hand, or the our latest book release, the "Handbook Generational Justice". Moreover, the two young Europeans attended a language course to enhance their skills in German.



and Jakub Kochowitz are motivated to make their contribution in realising Intergenerational Justice and Sustainability. The project 'European Volunteers Service' is financed with support of the European Union.

If you are also interested to work as an intern within the international atmosphere of the IVO, you can send your application (including letter of motivation, curriculum vitae with photo, references) every-time to the FRFG.

The FRFG invites tenders for the Award for Intergenerational Justice 2005/2006

The Foundation for the Rights of Future Generations (FRFG) offers an award for Intergenerational Justice, endowed with 10.000 Euro. By calling this prize, the FRFG aims at encouraging research on Intergenerational Justice.

The topic for the award in 2005/2006 is **Intergenerational Justice and "Voting Right from Birth"**

To deal with this topic, the following

research questions should be answered:

- 1.) Does the democratic principle demand a "Voting Right from Birth"? Which models and procedures are conceivable?
- 2.) Does a "Voting Right from Birth" encourage the realisation of generational justice?
- 3.) Which societal obstacles and provisos against a "Voting Right from Birth" are to be expected? How can they be overcome practically?

The following explanations should offer help to answer the questions.

Definitions

"Voting Right from Birth"

The FRFG defines a "Voting Right from Birth" as a right that every citizen must be entitled to. According to the principle 'One Person – One Vote', the deputy suffrage as well as direct suffrage for persons below 18 years without the possibility of a deputy belong to the definition.

Intergenerational Justice

The FRFG perceives Intergenerational Justice according to the definition of the 'Handbook Intergenerational Justice' as a state, in which the chances for future generations to satisfy their own needs are at least as high as these chances were for the precedent generations.

These definitions should help to avoid fundamental misunderstandings. They are not binding for the participants of the competition; alternative definitions should, however, be well reasoned and ought to take into account relevant literature.

General Remarks

Up to now, about one fifth of the population of most industrialised countries is excluded from suffrage. The discussion of the different models and procedures should constitute an essential part of the work. The workings ought to treat the topic from in an interdisciplinary way, that is, from perspectives of Political Sciences, Law, History, and Sociology. Moreover, the international context needs to be adhered to. Therefore, team works are particularly welcome.

To question 1)

The workings should comment on whether the democratic principle demands a "Voting Right from Birth". It needs to be differentiated between active and passive suffrage. In this context vari-

ous models that are thinkable to introduce a "Voting Right from Birth" should be analysed in a comparative way. Within this examination, also aspects of the election procedure can be taken into consideration, for instance postal vote or suffrage for foreign nationals.

To question 2)

The workings should depict the implications of a "Voting Right from Birth" as well as the realisation of Intergenerational Justice. Aspects of the analysis can be

- taking into account the demographic change, to what extent a "Voting Right from Birth" would influence the decisions and actions of politicians and political parties in the sense of more sustainability and long-term thinking;
- to what extent a "Voting Right from Birth" would lead to the establishment of new parties that align their program aimed at the interests of new groups within the electorate;
- to what extent a "Voting Right from Birth" would have implications on the discussion of politics within the family;
- to what extent a "Voting Right from Birth" would have implications on social

studies and politics lessons in schools
- to what extent a "Voting Right from Birth" would encourage democracy as a way of life.

To question 3)

Here, it is to present which arguments against a "Voting Right from Birth" exist. For the draft strategy to impose a "Voting Right from Birth" historical experiences can be taken into consideration, for example the introduction of voting rights for women or for coloured people in the USA.

Finally, it could be outlined which concrete constitutional changes would be necessary to realise the "Voting Right from Birth" and how a necessary majority could be won over.

To participate in the competition, you need the respective forms which can be requested by sending an e-mail to info@srzg.de.



The campaign can't stop here
Karsten Wenzlaff, President of YOIS Europe, explains why YOIS supports the implementation of ecological intergenerational justice in the constitution. He cautions not to stop after the conference, but take concrete steps very soon.

About YOIS

YOIS is short for Youth for Intergenerational Justice and Sustainability. It is network unlike most other networks: We are not affiliated with any political party; our members are school students, students from all disciplines and young professionals. We work international and have a global perspective. We believe that future generations should have the same possibilities as previous generations.

But what does that mean? Sometimes, we are asked: If future generations are not born yet, how do you know what they want in the future? What right do you

have to speak on behalf of future generations?

The simple answer is: we don't. We don't claim to know the truth about what life future generations want to live. But we agree that the current economical and political operating system of our planet is restricting future generations in deciding how they want their life to live. Resources are being wasted, natural habitats polluted, social security systems cannot sufficiently deal with the ageing of our population. Our global operating system can create a lot of wealth, but the distribution of wealth is very unequal. At YOIS we believe that our generation needs to make an effort to solve these problems, so that future generations don't have to pay for the mistakes we made today.

Intergenerational justice is easy to define: all generations receive the benefits and bear the costs from the changes of society and from technological innovations. But it is difficult to implement. To ensure the principle of intergenerational justice, all generations need to have an influence on political decisions. Most political decisions are short-sighted. Yet young people often have remarkable long-term views concerning the environment, global peace,

education issues.

If you can't vote, you are not concerned?

We offer two solutions: first of all, we need to decrease the voting age rapidly. If young people can't vote, they are not heard. Some people fear that young people can be influenced easily and lack the maturity to make well-judged decisions. But this is not true: in countries like Rwanda where half of the population is less than 18 years old, it is no surprise to see two children delegates at the national parliament, elected by the children and young people under 18. They show no sign of immaturity; actually these delegates ensure that the country promotes sustainable development.

The problem of children and young people voting is not immaturity, but that adults often treat young people as some sort of underdeveloped human who have no political opinion. In most cases this is not true either. In 2002, a campaign called "Ich-will-wählen" (I want to vote) was started. It asked young people under 18 to give reasons why they would like to vote. Some of the most thoughtful and sophisticated justifications came from 12 and 13

years old – they felt that a democracy can not arbitrarily exclude a portion of the population from active citizenship.

Be Aware: Future Generations!

Voting is one thing, but democracy has its deficiencies. Like Churchill said “Democracy is the worst form of government except for all those others that have been tried.” The problem of democracy is that unborn generations have no votes at all. This is a problem we cannot solve with simply reforming the voting procedures or the access to voting rights. We need to create awareness for intergenerational justice. Some countries have introduced Ombudspersons or advisory councils, some have parliamentary committees dealing with intergenerational justice, and some have included intergenerational justice in their constitutions.

YOIS supports the campaign of the Foundation for Rights of Future Generation to introduce intergenerational justice in constitutions across Europe and in future treaties of the European Union. The first step was the congress in Berlin in June. But the next step has to create more awareness and needs to take the dialogue to the young people in Europe. It's not enough if three dozen young leaders talk about the implementation of ecological generation justice at a conference. The campaign has to fill the abstract meaning

of intergenerational justice with life.

Intergenerational Justice and the MDGs

The method of YOIS is talk about ecological intergenerational justice in the framework of global development. In my opinion, the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of the United Nations are one step to realise intergenerational justice: provide education, decrease maternal death, and promote sustainable development. YOIS coordinates the efforts of youth NGOs working the MDGs.

This is part of our overall contribution to an initiative called the Global Marshall Plan. The Global Marshall Plan aims at creating a world-wide Eco-Social Market Economy, creating the funds for the implementation of the Millennium Development Goal and distributing wealth through an introduction of a Terra Tax on resource consumption, a marginal Tobin tax on international capital transfer and other very practical solutions.

The next step

I give these two examples to show that YOIS is an organisation that addresses a lot of different issues. But we don't want to address a big “anything whatever”. We would like to co-operate with NGOs who believe like us in intergenerational justice

and want to try new approaches to achieve that aim.

I suggest that Youth NGOs in Europe, among them YOIS, start the next step in raising awareness for ecological generational justice. Remember: good news don't have to be bad news, most local newspapers are happy to have their pages filled during the summer gap. Why not write short articles about ecological generational justice?

Also, most members of European parliaments are happy if they can convey a positive image of Europe at the local and regional level. Why not invite them to speak at universities about Europe's effort to save resources and discuss with them the implementation of ecological generational justice in the framework of the European Union.

One last method that YOIS would like to propose to the participants: let's create a library of concrete examples of intergenerational justice in the European context. Examples from Finland or Greece, Switzerland or Russia, easily available on the Internet could serve as a starting point for a future discussion on these issues.

We offer a network of active people from very diverse backgrounds and skills. We connect old-aged academics and motivated young people, professionals and volunteers. In short: we try to live intergenerational justice in our daily work. Join us. www.yois.de

Dear Reader,

Your opinion matters!

We want to improve the Intergenerational Justice Review with your input. Send us your comments to:

IJR-Editors, Postfach 5115, 61422 Oberursel, GERMANY, Fax 06171-952566, Phone 06171-982367, Email info@srzg.de

Please tell us of any friends to whom we can send one trial issue free of cost. If you would like to avail of this offer your-

self, then please understand that we cannot send you any further trial issues. We would be delighted should you choose to subscribe to our magazine for just € 20 a year. (see last page)

Support us!

Become a member of FRFG today and support us in working towards intergenerational justice. As a member you are invited to all open meetings of the Board of

Directors and the Board of Trustees. The minimum annual contribution is 50 €, and only 25 € for those under thirty years. You will receive our magazine Generationengerechtigkeit!

Intergenerational Justice Review four times a year. Complete and send us the

membership form on the last page of this magazine today! Your children and grandchildren might be grateful.

SRzG, Account no. 8039555800, GLS Bank eG (BLZ 43060967), IBAN: DE64430609678039555800

FRFG granted "Special Consultative Status" by the ECOSOC of the United Nations

In July 2005, the Economic and Social Council decided to grant Special Consultative Status to the Foundation for the Rights of Future Generations. The organisation may now designate official representatives to the United Nations - to the UN Headquarters in New York and the offices in Geneva and Vienna. The

FRFG is very proud of this distinction and looks forward to a productive cooperation with the UN's Economic and Social Council. The relationship to the United Nations will certainly be helpful on the way to institutionalise Intergenerational Justice on the global level.



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