

Side Event in the focus area ‘Social protection and social security including social protection floors’ of the 10th OEWG-A session, organized by HelpAge Deutschland

Towards A Comprehensive Architecture Of Social Rights In Old Age

Moderator: Lutz Leisering, HelpAge Deutschland

Panelists: Claudia Mahler, German Institute for Human Rights; Ignacio Saiz, Centre for Economic and Social Rights, New York; Matthias von Schwanenflügel, Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, Germany

There is a broad agreement on the general principles of social protection, including universalism, non-discrimination, and accountability. The message of the discussion in the group was to go beyond restating these general principles, by identifying specific gaps and deficiencies that call for action. First, older persons lack visibility in policies and human rights documents. Awareness for issues of old age needs to be raised, and rights and policies need to address older persons explicitly. Second, standards of adequacy of social provisions often remain vague. Procedures for defining standards that take account of the needs of older persons have to be put in place. Third, availability of fiscal resources is a condition of human rights policies that is often neglected. We need to identify the concrete effects of cuts in public spending on the living situation of older persons and vulnerable groups.