

SHIFT – SHaping Inclusive FuTures through Intergenerational Fairness to Advance the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights

Context

In March 2026, the European Commission adopted the “**Strategy on Intergenerational Fairness**”¹.

The Strategy is grounded in the principles of fairness across generations and a sustainable future.

It is based on three key pillars: fair policymaking, fair opportunities and fair places.

In the EU context, the three pillars of the Strategy on Intergenerational Fairness can be understood as follows:

- **Fair Policymaking:** systematically integrating a long-term perspective and future-impact assessment into policymaking and legislation;
- **Fair Opportunities:** targeted action on education, employment, access to housing and well-being to ensure that young people are not disadvantaged;
- **Fair Places:** giving specific attention to territories, peripheral areas and disparities between urban centres and rural areas.

Within the **CERV Programme**, the **SHIFT project** will contribute to implementing the Strategy by strengthening the application of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights through operational tools, capacity building and civic participation, with a specific focus on applying Generational Impact Assessment (GIA) to public policies at all levels.

For decades, the burden of decisions taken in the present has been silently transferred onto the shoulders of younger generations. GIA

seeks to help reverse this trend by introducing a long-term perspective that recalls the internationally recognised definition of sustainable development: meeting current needs without compromising those of younger and future generations.

This is therefore not only about protection from harm, but also about actively promoting opportunities for development.

Why Italy in the European context?

The 2022 constitutional reform and Law No. 167/2025 make Italy a particularly relevant testing ground for translating the principle of intergenerational fairness into governance practices with potential for transfer to other Member States.

The 2022 constitutional reform directly concerns young people and future generations through amendments to Articles 9 and 41 of the Constitution. For the first time, the Italian Constitution introduced the protection of the environment, ecosystems and, specifically, future generations. The key point of this constitutional amendment is precisely the protection of future generations, through the explicit inclusion of a duty to protect the environment also in the interests of those not yet born.

- Article 9 was amended as follows: “The Republic safeguards the environment, biodiversity and ecosystems, also in the interests of future generations.”
- Article 41 was amended as follows: “Private economic initiative may not be conducted in such a way as to harm health or the environment.”

Building on and generalising some particularly positive and innovative territorial experiences in Italy, Law No. 167/2025 introduced a Generational Impact Assessment (GIA) of legislation, together with a

dedicated Observatory, to ensure that new legislative texts protect the rights and future of young people and future generations.

As shown by studies promoted by members of the project partnership², however, the introduction of GIA through Italian national legislation does not in itself guarantee real change.

Like any ambitious reform, it risks remaining incomplete without strong civic momentum, adequate investment and appropriate technical tools.

One initial recommendation identified, which the project proposal intends to explore further, is the need to establish Generational Impact Assessment as a permanent cognitive infrastructure of the legislative process, capable of providing stable support for policy design. Consistently with the European Charter of Fundamental Rights and the European Strategy on Intergenerational Fairness, GIA should become a lever for shifting public action from a defensive logic towards a generative one, capable of creating opportunities and well-being over time.

Another central issue, which will be explored through the activities of the SHIFT project, concerns participation, particularly when linked to Generational Impact Assessment, and especially at local and municipal level.

To this end, significant practices implemented in different Italian municipalities will be involved, analysed and discussed, including as potentially transferable and disseminable experiences.

Strengthening the involvement of citizens, and young people in particular, means making Generational Impact Assessment a democratic rather than merely technical tool.

At the same time, the project activities will examine the importance of ensuring the independence of the bodies responsible for carrying out GIA, providing them with qualified human resources and appropriate tools.

Overall objective of the project

The SHIFT project aims to contribute to transforming intergenerational fairness from a political principle into an operational, mainstreamed dimension of democratic governance.

It therefore seeks to support the implementation of the Strategy on Intergenerational Fairness in the EU by embedding the principle of intergenerational fairness in public policymaking, in full coherence with the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights and, in particular, by promoting the multi-level implementation of Generational Impact Assessment (GIA), together with strategic and anticipatory thinking.

Specific objectives of the project

- **Raise public awareness** of the issues addressed by the project, with a particular focus on younger generations and the active involvement of youth organisations;
- **Contribute to the development of an Intergenerational Fairness Check** as a practical policy-analysis tool. This is an analytical and policymaking tool used mainly by governments to assess whether laws and public spending disadvantage young people or future generations compared with current generations, in order to prevent imbalances, particularly in relation to public debt, climate, pensions and welfare;
- **Strengthen institutional capacity** to better respond to the needs and interests of young and future generations. This objective seeks to make public administration more efficient, inclusive and forward-looking by integrating the needs of new generations into decision-making processes, investing in the skills of young people, including public employees, and ensuring long-term sustainable policies;

- **Promote meaningful participation** by creating stable spaces for listening to young people and enabling their effective involvement in public decision-making, including through the introduction of new digital and innovative skills within public bodies. Within the project, participation is fostered through the concepts of sustainability and the future, made concrete also through the assessment of the impact of current laws and investments on the well-being of younger and future generations;
- **Develop evidence-informed recommendations** with potential for transfer to other national contexts, in full coherence with the European Union Strategy on Intergenerational Fairness and the European Charter of Fundamental Rights.
- **Operate in coherence with the objectives and values promoted by the European Charter of Fundamental Rights**, for example as stated in the Charter's preamble: *“The enjoyment of these rights entails responsibilities and duties with regard to other persons, to the human community and to future generations.”* and in Article 37 of the Charter on sustainable development: *“A high level of environmental protection and the improvement of the quality of the environment must be integrated into the policies of the Union and ensured in accordance with the principle of sustainable development.”*

Main project action lines

1. **Methodological framework.** National, transnational and European desk research on intergenerational fairness and Generational Impact Assessment of public policies, also in relation to the effects of medium- and long-term demographic trends, a decisive factor in a national and European context marked by population ageing and declining birth rates.
2. **Capacity building.** Contribute, through the project activities, to a continuous process enabling the national system and the

organisations involved in the project activities can strengthen their skills, structures, processes and resources on the issues, processes and vision related to intergenerational fairness;

3. Participation. The project will develop participatory processes for younger generations (and, prospectively, future generations) through an intergenerational approach, transforming young people from mere beneficiaries into co-designers of their communities and their future, also through active collaboration, individually or through youth organisations, with other generations and institutions.

4. Policy dialogue. Fostering policy dialogue on intergenerational fairness will require the enhancement and implementation of concrete tools such as Generational Impact Assessment, structured spaces for dialogue between young people and institutions, including from an intergenerational perspective, and long-term strategies.

To build a fair pact between generations, action is needed on several key fronts:

- **Regulatory and institutional tools** (including constitutional tools);
- **Targeted strategies:** actions consistent with the guidelines set out at EU level by the European Strategy on Intergenerational Fairness, in particular to coordinate budgetary, welfare and ecological transition policies;
- **Democratic participation methods:** for example, permanent civic panels (youth and intergenerational). Involve citizens of all ages in deliberative assemblies to discuss public spending and the ecological transition.
- **Local structured dialogues:** development of opportunities for direct dialogue in municipalities and regions, drawing inspiration from Youth Policy Dialogues initiatives to bring young people's demands into decision-making forums.

- **Renewal of representation:** encourage youth organisations to play a leading role in political parties and intermediate bodies in order to transform generational conflict into co-design.

5. Implementation and promotion of GIA at local level and creation of a multi-level ecosystem. The project will also promote the use of GIA at local level, fostering the exchange of good practices among municipalities, regions and central administrations. It also promotes a national and potentially European information system based on a robust data ecosystem on childhood, adolescence and generational transitions, strengthening its methodological basis through integrated models and indicators.

6. European dissemination. Although SHIFT is predominantly Italian in geographical scope and field of action, consistently with the objectives and constraints of the CERV Call and with its own approach, it envisages significant and structured European exchange and dissemination activities, also using the transnational networks of beneficiary organisations and dialogue with European institutions (in particular: European Commission, European Parliament, European Economic and Social Committee, Committee of the Regions).

Partnership

Coordinator: **ASviS** (Italian Alliance for Sustainable Development)

www.asvis.it

Co-beneficiaries:

ACLI (Italian Christian Association of Workers) www.acli.it

Save the Children Italy www.savethechildren.it

Possibility of involving as associated partners:

- Italian municipalities implementing GIA, including the **Municipality of Parma** (best practice).

- Eventually organisations from other European countries interested in the project themes and promoting activities, including scientific activities, on a sustainable future and strategic thinking.

To support and scientifically validate the project activities, the creation of a Scientific Advisory Board composed of recognised experts on intergenerational fairness and the sustainable future is envisaged.

During the project activities, efforts will be made to involve CNEL, the European Economic and Social Committee, the European Commission and the Italian National Youth Council.

Expected results and outputs

Operational toolkit; Intergenerational Fairness Check; guidelines; Community of Practice; strengthened institutional capacities; contribution to the implementation of the EU Strategy and the European Charter of Fundamental Rights, starting from the provisions of the Charter that directly affect the project's themes. A manual of good practices for local and territorial policies.

European added value

The project will strengthen the implementation of the EU Charter of Fundamental Rights by promoting participation, capacity building and governance approaches aimed at advancing intergenerational fairness, in line with the European Strategy promoted by the European Commission in this field.

Duration, deadline and budget

Duration: 24 months.

Indicative budget: EUR 350,000.

Deadline for submission of the project proposal: 15 September 2026.

Direct link to the **CERV Call text** on the implementation of the **European Charter of Fundamental Rights** (Call for proposals):

<https://ec.europa.eu/info/funding-tenders/opportunities/portal/screen/opportunities/topic-details/CERV-2026-CHAR-LITI-CHARTER?isExactMatch=true&status=31094501,31094502,31094503&callIdentifier=CERV-2026-CHAR-LITI&order=DESC&pageNumber=1&pageSize=50&sortBy=startDate>

¹ See: *Communication from the Commission to the European Parliament, the Council, the European Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions. Strategy on Intergenerational Fairness*, available on EUR-Lex.

² See in particular: E. Giovannini, R. Milano (eds.), *La valutazione di impatto generazionale delle leggi: un cambio di paradigma per le politiche pubbliche*, Future Paper 1/2026, ASviS, Save the Children, Ecosistema FUTURO.