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## **WORKSHOPS FOR PREPARING PROPOSALS OF ACTION MEASURES TO THE ACTIVE AGEING STRATEGY**

### **HEALTHY AND SECURE LIFE FOR ALL GENERATIONS**

Leader: mag. Rosvita Svenšek, Head of ZDUS Commission for Health and Mental Care

Participants: dr Marjan Česen, Nevenka Lekše, Anka Onič; Mija Pukl, ZDUS Vice President

### **LABOR MARKET AND INTERGENERATIONAL COOPERATION**

Participants: Jasmina Vöröš, Expert Associate at the Slovenian Youth Council; Mija Pukl

### **EDUCATION, ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

Leader: Alenka Reissner, Head of ZDUS Commission for Education, Publicity & Informatics

Participants: Vida Bogataj, Irena Levičnik, dr. Zoran Jelenc, dr. Ana Krajnc, President of Slovenian Third Age University

### **SAFE AND INDEPENDENT LIFE**

Leader: Silva Gorjup, Head of ZDUS Commission for Social Issues

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### **AGEING IN THE DIGITAL SOCIETY**

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### **CREATING AN ACTIVE LIFE ENVIRONMENT**

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## INTRODUCTION

On 20.7.2017, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia (Slovenian Government) adopted the Active Ageing Strategy, which defines guidelines in the four pillars for the most vital and important areas, which are strongly influenced by changes in the demographic structure. Special emphasis is given to the older people in our society.

The government has also instructed all stakeholders in realizing the strategy to prepare concrete action plans, which will determine the tasks, responsible parties and deadlines for the implementation of the most important issues at the national, regional and local level. The Council for Active Ageing and Intergenerational Cooperation was appointed to coordinate the preparation of action plans.

In ZDUS we suggest that each institution draws up concrete and feasible measures to improve the situation in our society.

To the Council for Active Ageing and Intergenerational Cooperation we propose the appointment of cross-sectoral expert groups that will coordinate activities in a particular field for several area bearers.

We also propose to establish the most concrete tasks for local communities and the parallel creation of stakeholder clusters and stakeholders at the local level.

We would like to draw attention to the importance of participation in EU networks and engagement in joint projects.

### STARTING POINTS:

- ❖ The Government and other decision-makers must cooperate constructively in the implementation and realization of action plans for each area separately
- ❖ For all changes and activities, broad social and political consensus needs to be achieved
- ❖ In all activities, the measures must be designed and implemented in such a way as to put the human being in the foreground during all stages of life
- ❖ The key issue in introducing change is the provision of resources that need to be defined by type and scope
- ❖ Sufficient volume of solidarity and reciprocity should be preserved, and a sufficient volume of public funding is needed to ensure the social situation of the major part of the population
- ❖ The scope of volunteering needs to be increased, regulated and incorporated into individual parts of the public system
- ❖ A number of educational contents need to be incorporated into the education and training system.

## **SOME OF THE FINDINGS AS A BASE FOR PROPOSALS OF ACTION MEASURES**

We are aware that our society is long-lived and that demographic trends pose important challenges in front of us.

Society must be based on intergenerational cooperation and coexistence.

The social system must provide conditions for involvement of the individual in society over all periods of life, especially in old age.

There is a lack of awareness that health sustainability factors contribute significantly to the longevity, both at personal and social levels.

We estimate that older people are not sufficiently involved in education and training - which would be necessary for both personal development and professional activity, social inclusion and civic activity, active ageing, preservation of intellectual abilities and physical capabilities. The exclusion (or leaving behind) of older people from modern information flows, which is happening in the last two decades, represents a violation of Article 39 of the Republic of Slovenia Constitution.

We find that there is no systematic collection of data on the extent of older workers training and how much training is intended for pensioners.

A system needs to be built so that employees can learn throughout their lives (lifelong learning). MIZŠ (Ministry of education, science and sport) and MDDSZEM (Ministry of labour, family, social affairs and equal opportunities) must immediately identify the situation and propose changes to legislation that will introduce relevant programs and ongoing statistical monitoring of the situation.

We find that education is carried out in larger and stronger companies, while in smaller businesses this is hardly a fact, since every missing worker due to minimal human resources means a downturn in production. It is also about saving on costs that the company would have due to education referrals. The fallout is particularly apparent after 50 years of age. Since lifelong learning and acquisition of skills are the driving forces behind the development of every society, we expect that Slovenian Government provides greater support in providing opportunities for education and training of older people from the preparation of an appropriate action plan to the development and provision of financially accessible educational programs with relevant content for older people crossing into the third life-period or already in the third or even in the fourth life-period. We also expect the provision of sufficient number of suitably qualified education providers and the necessary technical and spatial conditions. This includes enabling the development of new skills for occupational migration in the third and fourth periods of life. This is also one of the ways to



reduce age dependency. It is also necessary to ensure the appropriate preparation of workers for life after retirement.

There is an increasing share of precarious workers.

The work of the older people is now legally limited by the number of hours allowed.

Especially in young people, but also in working-age generations, there are increasing types of addictions that are caused by information technology and already have a strong influence on mental health. Negative effects on mental health of children are on the rise.

Older people in Slovenia are insufficiently involved and poorly trained in the use of modern technologies. They need to have suitable and appropriate access to ICT, Internet and other newly established digital technologies and networks.

We expect support and help from the state in: enhancing capabilities of using digital technologies among older people (digital literacy, subsidized access to devices and communication networks, appropriate usage support) in order to make it easier for them to exercise their rights and obligations; maintenance and upgrade of ICT knowledge for the people which have a wish for it, for their possible reintegration into work processes; providing older friendly ICT services for seniors in terms of content and facilitating electronic operations with the state and other business entities.

The number of older people needing long-term care is increasing year by year. Unfortunately, the vast majority can not pay even for the current help at home offered by the local community at the subsidy, which is different in municipalities, depending on the available budget.

Due to frequent changes in pension legislation, employees are still afraid that they will be penalized with a lower pension due to their subsequent retirement. We are facing »an escape into retirement«, which is conditioned by ill-treated legislation and its failure to comply...

Wage disparities and weaknesses in the country can not be solved through the pension system, because the pension is a right based on previous work and contributions already paid. In our system of pension and disability insurance, it is clear that the pension is not a social transfer and that after 40 years of work, the worker is entitled to a full pension in accordance with the applicable law.

The annual allowance is the right of all pensioners.

According to data gathered by volunteers when visiting older people according to the program "Elderly for the Elderly", 86% of dwellings and houses are proprietary.



The dwellings are too big, older people, as a rule, have difficulty to maintain them with their small pensions. Loans for housing maintenance for older people are not available. This situation causes additional poverty, especially for single people, predominantly women.

We also face energy poverty, because with low pensions, pensioners can not afford to heat their apartments all-day.

A large part of apartments on the higher floors of residential blocks are without elevators.

## **WORKSHOP**

### **HEALTHY AND SECURE LIFE FOR ALL GENERATIONS**

#### **1. Promoting health factors: raising awareness at all levels and at all stages of life**

##### **1.1. Key factors for a healthy life on the personal level:**

- healthy nutrition – food self-supply is the future of nutrition from childhood onwards,
- physical activity - to regulate systemically (to increase the awareness that life power is being built by the age of 18, which is why nutrition, physical activity, a healthy lifestyle, the care for mental growth and development are so important in this period – see also Physical Culture on Page 8,
- to educate young people through a professionally and systematically implemented socially-conducted unified campaign for them to be able to make informed choices of a healthy life.

##### **1.2. Key factors for a healthy life on the social level:**

- healthy social and natural environment (water, air, working conditions, right to work, relationships, control of healthy nutrition),
- to enable sport and recreation to be considered as mass activity already in kindergartens, schools and in adulthood,
- to include health education (personal hygiene, care, etc.) in school programs,
- to include the first aid training in school programs,
- to increase mental health care.

#### **2. A prerequisite for a worthwhile life in active and in old age are decent wages and pensions, so we demand that:**

- The minimum pension amount should be systematically examined and determined.
- The pension is a right arising from work and it is based on already paid old age insurance contributions. This should be clearly and unambiguously documented.
- Supplementary pension insurance must be adapted to the abilities of young people.

### 3. The structure and content of the OZZ (obvezno zdravstveno zavarovanje - compulsory health insurance), which corresponds to the civilization level of the Slovenian society:

- the realization of constitutional right to equality in access to health services on solidarity basis,
- preservation of public health system.

### 4. Caring for secure old age

Therefore the state budget must provide a greater share of funding for the care needs of the older people.

We propose that preparing the measures for resolving current problems in the area of long-term care (help at home, institutional care for older people) becomes absolute priority.

- MDDSZEM (Ministry of Labor, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities) together with MZ (Ministry of Health) and ZZZS (Health Insurance Institute) must immediately analyze the norms and standards of health care and prepare corresponding changes.
- The Law on Long-Term Care should be put into the debate as soon as possible. It should include solutions that will provide all the necessary assistance in the appropriate quality and quantity to all in need of such care.
- Long-term care system should also include qualified informal caregivers and volunteers.
- Help at home - common foundations for the network and funding for municipalities have to be prepared
- The founder of the homes for older people - The Ministry of Labor, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities - must prepare an analysis of their performance.
- Institutional protection for people with behavioral disorders (Alzheimer, dementia, psychiatric disorders - that are on the rise) must be provided.
- The state must provide the conditions for a decent life during the remaining part of the life after an active working period.
- It is necessary to introduce measures for reducing the impact of different forms of addiction in young people as well as in active population caused by information technology.
- **ZDUS program "Elderly for Elderly" must become part of the regular, state-supported volunteering programs to help older people and complement the professional care for older people. (The program was awarded "Citizen of Europe for 2017" )**

## **WORKSHOP**

### **LABOR MARKET AND INTERGENERATIONAL COOPERATION**

#### **Labor Market**

1. Regulate the situation of precarious workers, with particular emphasis on establishing stable forms of social protection and social security of individuals.
2. Establish mentoring schemes and ensure their implementation and funding.
3. Limit the scope of student work by determining number of hours worked (without limitation only during holidays).
4. Increase the possibilities of flexible work forms for older people and pensioners.
5. Ensure conditions for the introduction of appropriate work forms for older people, mostly already retired, in order to encourage them to work as much and as long as possible.
6. Prepare programs and implement various forms of reactivation of retired people, based on their interest.
7. Prepare and adopt a law on the work of pensioners who are still ready and able to work. This law should enable work without affecting pensions (penalties).
8. Continue to stimulate employers to employ older workers, which would have more work opportunities in business organizations under the appropriately adjusted legislation.

#### **Education and development requirements**

1. In accordance with changes and development of technology, universities must adapt and modify study programs and create professions for the future.
2. Universities can not, as before, be completely independent in their decisions, since they are largely financed by the state, therefore they must take into account the changes and needs of the economy and society as a whole.
3. We propose a revision of the Bologna study in order to ascertain whether the goals and expectations are being realized. If it is established that they are not, than it is necessary to analyze the situation and propose changes immediately.

#### **Entrepreneurship**

1. Social entrepreneurship has to be supported, but should not become the main focus and the perspective form.

#### **Physical Culture**

1. Sports - mass recreation and sport - emphasis from kindergarten onwards – should be included in Faculty programs.
2. Young people are becoming ICT dependent. It is essential to introduce different skills and activities, knowledges relevant to everyday life - into educational programs.
3. We are turning into a society of asocial people - also because we are shutting ourselves into media networks.

### **Financial sustainability**

1. Establish a demographic office (some European countries with the highest proportion of those over 65 years of age have already done so).
2. Possible additional sources of social protection funding should be explored.

### **Child Care**

1. Adjust kindergartens working hours with working hours of employees.
2. The possibility of including a child in a kindergarten must not be fully conditioned by permanent residence.

## **WORKSHOP**

### **EDUCATION, ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND TRAINING**

#### **General in the Field of Education**

1. An integrated cross-sectoral approach is needed in the preparation of action plans, involving all key social partners and stakeholders, taking into account the existing expert findings and thematic consultations, good practices and established public networks of organizations (which already ensure quality provision of education and learning programs and adequate support environment for their development and implementation).
2. The Government and other decision-makers must cooperate constructively in the implementation and realization of plans for the education, learning and training of older people, which are an important component of the lifelong learning strategy.

#### **Proposals**

1. Action plans in the field of adult education and learning (including older people) should take into account the Lifelong Learning Strategy in Slovenia, already adopted by the Ministry of Education in 2007 (today the Ministry of education, science and sport - MIZŠ); The Ministry also has to adopt the working material Review of activities for the implementation of the Lifelong Learning Strategy in Slovenia, which was prepared, but has not yet been addressed by the Ministry, and therefore not yet adopted. Both documents should be approved by Slovenian Government.
2. The state and its citizens need a clear strategy - the doctrine and the operational program of education for people older than 65 years. The public interest, objectives and stakeholders must be clearly expressed in these documents.
3. Older persons should be included in education and training for both work and personal development, social inclusion, active ageing and maintaining intellectual abilities and physical capabilities.

4. The inclusion of older people in programs that bring new skills and new knowledge - the one that will be most easily and professionally integrated into social and economic development - should be encouraged.
5. Adult education should be complemented by programs for those aged over 65 which should become part of the public education offer and should be systematically co-financed. These programs should be developed by public institutions for adult education and civil society organizations. The specifics and needs of different older people groups should be taken into account.
6. It is necessary to establish a system that will ensure development, adaptation and implementation of appropriate programs for the education and learning of older people and material support for them.
7. It is necessary to establish a system that will provide continuous, current and accessible training and expert support to professionals and education providers of education and learning for older people.
8. Appropriate educational programs for older people should include contents for: preparing for work (obligation of Ministry of education, science and sport - MIZŠ and Ministry of labour, family, social affairs and equal opportunities - MDDSZEM for providing a formal framework, obligation of business enterprises for realization), achieving and maintaining digital and functional literacy, active, healthy and safe ageing, independent life and improving its quality, preparing for life after retirement, intergenerational cooperation and volunteering ....
9. Particular attention should be paid to informing and raising awareness among older people about the importance of learning and available learning opportunities.
10. We suggest that MIZŠ Directorate's scheme be modified and reformed in such a way that adult education is excluded from the current Directorate for secondary, higher vocational and adult education, and an independent Directorate for adult education is established.
11. We propose that NPIO (National Adult Education Program) Resolution for the next period includes also older persons (persons from the third and fourth life-periods), which should be treated equally with other age groups, including their education and learning, as well as its financing.
12. We suggest that the legislation for the field of adult education should be regulated comprehensively, in accordance with adult education specificities.
13. It is necessary to introduce pre-retirement seminars (preparation for life after retirement) for public administration workers and recommend this practice to employers in business organisations as well. Existing pre-retirement seminars for pedagogical workers and preparational activities for retirement of Slovenian army members should become a regular form of activity of corresponding government departments.

## WORKSHOP

### SAFE AND INDEPENDENT LIFE

1. We insist that compulsory pension and disability insurance remains the basic (first) pillar of the social security of older people, because we are convinced that only this will ensure a stable material security for the citizens of Slovenia in the long run.
2. We do not object to voluntary pension insurance, but we do not approve that this insurance would gradually take on the role of compulsory insurance and thus weaken the first pillar.

#### Long-term care insurance

1. Those citizens who are in need of care and home care and live at home are in an unequal position with those in institutional care; they are left to the care of their family or volunteers.
2. With the adoption and implementation of the Long-term care law, we could open the possibilities of employments for care and home care.
3. We demand equal treatment of older people living in institutions and at home, which is why it is essential to accelerate the adoption of the systemic law on long-term care, and to include informal caregivers – family members and volunteers.
4. We require that representatives of older people - retired professionals – should be appointed into Supervisory boards of social institutions for older people - and not, as is current practice, only representatives of political parties.

#### Social protection policy

For a long time we have been warning that social protection policy is not entirely appropriate. It should be revised and the amendments to the law should update the area of the beneficiaries.

#### Housing policy

1. It is essential to provide funds for the renovation and maintenance of appartments and houses, their modernization and energy reconstruction.
2. We must increase the volume of construction of much needed sheltered housing in those municipalities where they have not yet done so.

## WORKSHOP

### AGEING IN THE DIGITAL SOCIETY

#### Priorities in the field of ageing in the digital society in Slovenia

1. Take into account the needs of the older people for active and healthy ageing by encouraging development of new innovative solutions to improve the employment opportunities of older people, promoting customised training programs for the use of ICT

in the workplace, the unemployed, pensioners and the disabled, the greater active involvement of older people in society and higher quality, security and independence of living in the home environment through the help of new AAL solutions.

1. Provide greater geographic accessibility and affordability of ICT technologies, content and services for all older people, regardless of their material condition, especially those living in remote rural areas of Slovenia.
2. Improve accessibility and usability of ICT solutions and services with the involvement of older people in the development of new solutions and services that are designed in a user friendly manner and adapted to older users, their knowledge and capabilities.
3. Improve digital literacy and e-skills of all groups of older people by promoting formal and non-formal training programs and lifelong learning in the use of the Internet, computers, smart devices and e-contents.
4. Development of new health and social services, which put a healthy individual in the forefront and not just a sick person, a patient. With the help of new technologies, improve the quality, efficiency and accessibility of health services and care, such as new services in the field of tele-medicine and e-health.

To seek sustainable solutions, to place them in the health system, rather than to insist on time-limited research projects.

#### **Proposal of measures and activities (S = system level, L = local level)**

1. Ensure greater geographical accessibility of ICT technologies, contents and services, especially in remote rural areas of Slovenia (mobile, broadband access) - S
1. Allow for greater affordability and usability of devices and services - S
2. Provide financial assistance to families or persons for whom basic equipment prices (computer, software, modem), Internet access and services are unavailable - L
3. Ensure greater digital literacy through the lifelong acquisition of e-skills. Arrange harmonization of technical progress and population training - S.
4. Provide customized training for older people in the field of new technologies in their local environment (the use of computers, the Internet, smart devices and applications) - L
5. Promote development of equipment, solutions and services, which must be adapted to the needs and technical possibilities of older people, taking into account the standards of web solutions development WCAG (Web Content Accessibility Guidelines) and the involvement of older people in their planning and development – S
6. Ensuring equal participation of older people in society and assuming greater responsibility in the management of their life, health and long-term well-being, with special emphasis on protecting their dignity and privacy - with the help of ICT technologies and development of new solutions and devices for independent living - S

## **WORKSHOP**

### **CREATING AN ACTIVE LIFE ENVIRONMENT**

Society must be based on intergenerational cooperation, cohabitation and coexistence. The social system must provide the conditions for involvement of the individual in society over all periods of life, especially in old age.

Elements of the conditions for the activities throughout the life cycle are included in the chapters »Some of the findings as a base for proposals of action measures« on page 3 and chapter »Education, access to education and training« on page 9.

#### **Living conditions and transport arrangements**

1. In the area of living conditions, it is necessary to adapt the legislation so that financing or co-financing of adaptations needed for adjustments of apartments and houses to the abilities of older people (such as installation of elevators in apartment buildings, etc.) will be possible.
1. Adaptation of public transport and removal of obstacles that make it difficult for older persons to move.
2. Prepare legal bases in all ministries responsible for actions in relation to the environment, living conditions and mobility issues for older people, including determination of financial incentives types to regulate these areas.

### **IMPLEMENTATION OF PROPOSED ACTIVITIES AND MEASURES**

- Prepared proposals should be included in the Action Programs of Governmental Departments for the implementation of Active Ageing Strategy.
- There is an urgent need for mutual cooperation between ministries in "overlapping" content and action areas.
- Intensified cooperation between government departments and non-governmental organizations.