

National Report on the Implementation of the UNECE RIS for the MIPAA, 2012-2017

**National Report on the Implementation of the Regional  
Implementation Strategy of the Madrid International Plan of  
Action on Ageing (UNECE RIS for the MIPAA)**

**2012-2017**

REPUBLIC OF SLOVENIJA

May, 2017

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## Summary

Like most developed countries, Slovenia faces significant changes in the population age structure. In particular, the consequences of these changes are shown in a decreasing share of the young and thus a decrease in the working age population and increase in the share of older persons. The EUROPOP2013 projections indicate that the process of demographic ageing will be more intensive in Slovenia than in other EU countries. The consequences are particularly visible in:

- the labour market;
- education;
- public expenditure on social protection; and
- the housing, spatial and regional fields.

The reduced number of working-age population will be a factor limiting economic growth, and productivity growth could also slow down. Demographic trends will also reduce revenue and raise expenditure on social protection; in fact, demographic changes affect all spheres of economy.

Slovenia has been responding to the challenges of demographic change for several years; by 2010, a strategy emphasising solidarity, coexistence and quality ageing of the population was the basis for responding to the challenges.

Also after 2010, there were many responses in different fields, for example:

- in 2013, Slovenia reformed the pension system to provide long-term sustainability for the system;
- given that Slovenia still has one of the lowest employment rates among the elderly, MDDSZ prepared a document in 2016 entitled *The Elderly and the Labour Market in Slovenia*, which included a series of possible measures to increase the employment rate of the elderly;
- in Slovenian local communities, an increasing number of projects are under way which are supported by ICT which provide older persons with better mobility, intergenerational socialising and solidarity;
- in 2013, the Resolution on the National Social Assistance Programme by 2020 was adopted, which specifically highlights older persons from the viewpoint of new, more adapted social services and community services;
- in 2016, the Resolution on the National Health Care Plan was adopted, which, inter alia, draws attention to specific problems of individual groups of the population, including the elderly;
- in 2016, the Dementia Management Strategy was adopted, with a focus on the need to make social security services accessible to dementia patients and to establish regional centres for multidisciplinary treatment.

Despite the responses of individual stakeholders and sectors, the need for a more comprehensive document which could be the basis for an organised response to demographic changes has been intensely expressed in recent years. In 2016, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia adopted a decision on the preparation of a comprehensive long-lived society strategy, which, in addition to an overall situation review, will also include harmonised and state-supported strategic guidelines in the following fields:

- employment and employment rate;
- individual, healthy and safe living of all generations;
- inclusion in society;
- arranged environments for activities throughout life.

The new strategy must be adopted by mid-2017, and will be the broadest framework for responding to the challenges of demographic change.

National Report on Carrying Out the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing for the 2012–2017 period:

- it describes demographic situation in Slovenia;
- presents activities to promote the extension of working life and preserve labour capacity;
- presents activities in the field of promoting cooperation, non-discrimination and the social inclusion of older persons;
- presents activities in the field of promoting and protecting dignity, health and independence;
- presents activities in the field of preserving and strengthening intergenerational solidarity; and
- gives conclusions and future priorities.

## General information

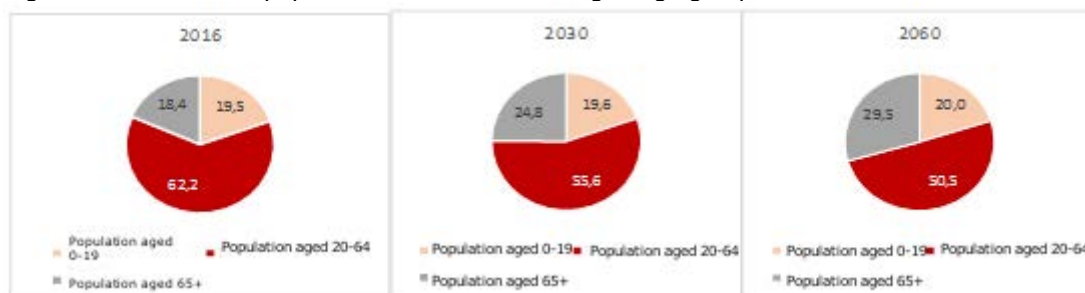
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## Description of demographic situation in Slovenia

(Summarized from IMAD, 2016)

Like most developed countries, Slovenia faces significant changes in the population age structure. In particular, these are defined by a relative low birth rate, low foreign immigration and longer life expectancy. The consequences of these changes are seen in a decreasing share of the young and thus a decrease in the working age population and increase in the number of elderly people. According to the EUROPOP2013 projection, the current process of demographic ageing of population will be more intensive in Slovenia than in other EU countries.

Figure 1: Movement of population numbers according to age groups



Source: SORS for 2016, EUROPOP 2013 for 2030 and 2060, calculation: IMAD

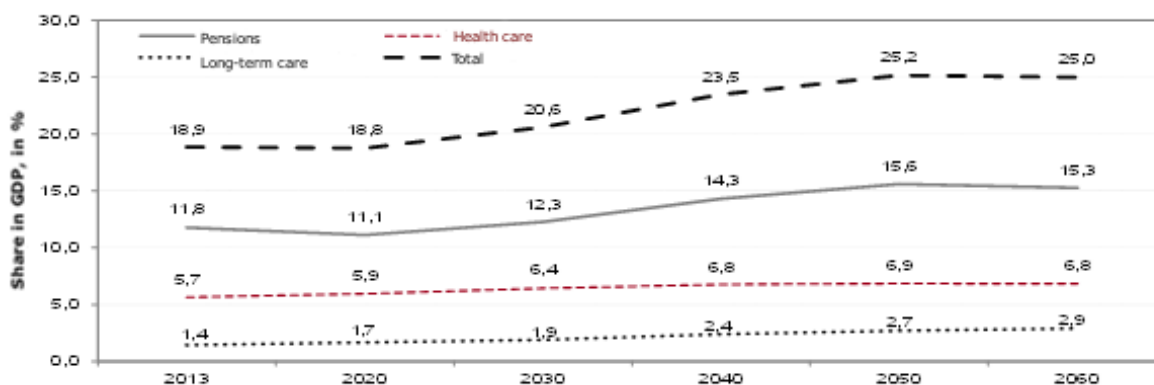
The consequences of the respective movement will be evident in particular in:

- the labour market;
- education;
- public expenditure on social protection; and
- the housing, spatial and regional fields.

In the labour market, the reduction in the working-age population will become a factor limiting economic growth in the next ten years. With approximately the same level of migration, even if the employment rates of the young and older persons increase, this will not cover the need for increased labour due to higher economic growth. The changed age structure of the reduced labour supply could also slow down productivity growth and affect the structure of consumption. Demographic changes alter the needs for capacities in education related to strengthening lifelong learning and providing skills for life and work.

Demographic movements will also reduce revenue and increase expenditure on social protection. If the current methods of financing social protection systems, which are covered primarily by contributions paid by the active population, are maintained, a smaller working age population will limit revenue for funding social protection systems, while an increase in the older population will increase pressure on general government expenditure on population ageing. In particular, this will be reflected in a significant rise in expenditure on pensions, which are already now partly funded from budgetary resources.

Figure 2: Long-term projections of public expenditure on social protection systems, basic scenario, Slovenia



Source: EC (2015).

Note: The projections of the basic AWG (Ageing Working Group) scenario Expenditure on health care is shown according to the SHA methodology, including investments, but excluding long-term health-care expenditure (0.86% of GDP). According to the ESPROSS methodology (0.4% of GDP), invalidity allowances are also added to expenditure for long-term health care (health care and the social care according to the SHA methodology; 0.98% of GDP). The base year for projections is 2012.

Population ageing also changes needs in the field of housing, spatial and regional policies. There is already a high share of socially excluded among the elderly, and this issue could become even more urgent if their number rises and no suitable measures are taken. A higher share of owner-occupied dwellings and at the same time an above-average share of the elderly who live on farms or in family houses is also typical of the elderly population in Slovenia. Demographic changes increase the need for spatial planning, the construction of facilities and traffic policy adapted to the elderly. Regional population projections indicate disproportionate ageing of the population from region to region.

## NATIONAL ACTIVITIES AND PROGRESS IN IMPLEMENTATION THE MIPAA/RIS

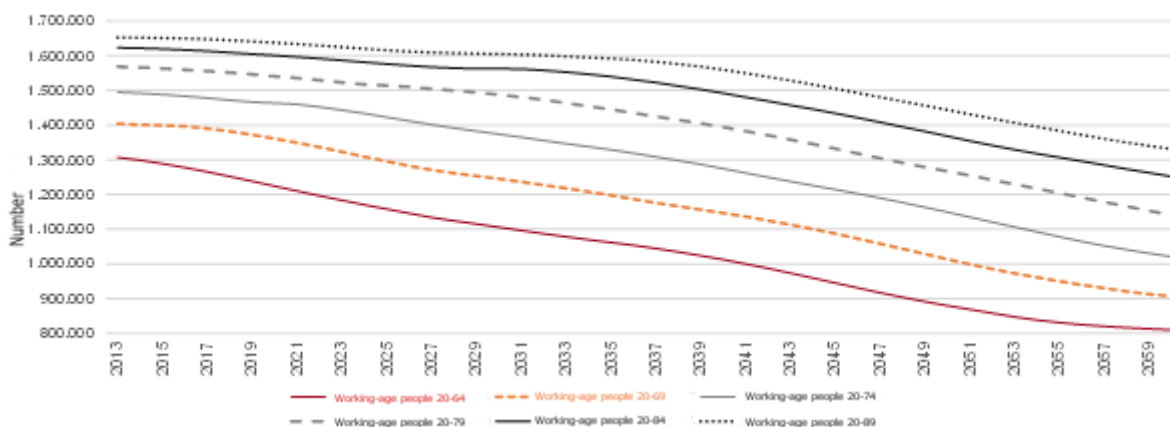
### Objective 1)

## PROMOTING THE EXTENSION OF WORKING LIFE AND PRESERVING LABOUR CAPACITY

Demographic changes are already reducing the labour supply. If migration remains at approximately the same low level, even higher employment among the young and elderly will not cover the need for increased labour which could strengthen economic growth. The changed age structure of the reduced labour supply could also slow productivity growth and reduce potential for economic growth.

Demographic changes will also lead to different needs in education, particularly in terms of strengthening life-long education and training and providing skills for life and work throughout life.

Figure 3: Changes in the number of working-age population according to different definitions of the maximum age (without migrations)



Source: SORS, Eurostat

Although the employment rate of the elderly (55–64 years) recently slightly increased, Slovenia still has one of the lowest rates among EU countries. In 2015, the employment rate in the 55–64 age group was only 36.6% in Slovenia, which is significantly less than the EU28 average (53.3%). Due to early exits from the labour market, Slovenia's employment rate in the 60–64 age group is well behind the EU average, as in the 55–59 age group. Slovenia has a somewhat smaller lag behind the EU average in the employment rate in the 65–74 age group. However, non-formal forms of work prevail in this age group, particularly in agriculture, which do not improve the long-term sustainability of the pension system.

**Table 1: Employment rates (55–64 years) in the EU-28 according to years**

	2005	2010	2015
EU-28	42.2	46.2	53.3
Belgium	31.8	37.3	44.0
Bulgaria	34.7	44.9	53.0
Czech Republic	44.5	46.5	55.5
Denmark	59.5	58.4	63.7
Germany	45.5	57.8	66.2
Estonia	55.7	53.8	64.5
Ireland	51.6	50.2	55.6
Greece	42.0	42.4	34.3
Spain	43.1	43.5	46.9
France	38.5	39.7	48.7
Croatia	32.1	39.1	39.0
Italy	31.4	36.5	48.2
Cyprus	50.6	56.3	48.5
Latvia	48.3	47.8	59.4
Lithuania	49.6	48.3	60.4
Luxembourg	31.7	39.6	38.4
Hungary	33.0	33.6	45.3
Malta	31.9	31.9	40.3
Netherlands	46.1	53.7	61.7
Austria	29.9	41.2	46.3
Poland	27.2	34.1	44.3
Portugal	50.4	49.5	49.9
Romania	39.4	40.7	41.1
Slovenia	30.7	35.0	36.6
Slovakia	30.3	40.5	47.0
Finland	52.7	56.2	60.0
Sweden	69.5	70.4	74.5
Great Britain	56.8	57.2	62.2

Source: Eurostat (on-line data code:ifsi\_emp\_a)

According to the SHARE research on the reasons for retirement in 2011, 70.5% of pensioners in Slovenia retired as soon as they had fulfilled the conditions for an old-age pension, and 14.2% opted for early retirement.\* The desire to retire is statistically significantly higher if satisfaction at workplace is low. Kavaš et al. (2015) established that education also has an important impact on the desire for immediate retirement, since respondents with tertiary education have less desire to retire as soon as possible. Nonetheless, in Slovenia, the desire to retire as soon as possible is higher at all levels of education than the average in other countries included in the SHARE research. The desire to retire as soon as possible is also evident from the data on unemployment among the elderly (50–64 years), since the unemployment rate in this age group, which was 7.6% in Slovenia in 2015, is only slightly higher than the EU average (7.1%) (The Project Active and healthy ageing, Analytical Report, January 2016).

In 2013, Slovenia implemented pension reform to provide the long-term sustainability of the public pension system while preserving the appropriate level of pensions. In the future, this goal will be attainable to the maximum extent with a more of the active working population in employment.

The reform stipulated that the main source of a decent pension should be compulsory pension insurance, i.e. the public pension system based on intergenerational solidarity, while a greater role should also be given to voluntary supplementary pension insurance. Another purpose of the changes was to remove from the pension system all those rights not based on paid contributions, thus making the system more transparent and just. This will improve the transparency of the pension system, which also provides a higher motivation for being included in the insurance scheme and paying the contributions.

The pension insurance system is based on labour and its related contributions paid. In the pension system, the legislator set the priority principle that the rights arise from labour. With the exception of special cases, pension and disability insurance is compulsory and not up to the individual. Despite the foregoing, the new system still preserves the basic principles of pension insurance, of which intergenerational solidarity, reciprocity and redistribution are the most important. These are the principles on the basis of which material and social security for old age, disability, death and other insured cases is provided within the scope of public Pillar I, so that insured persons pay reciprocal contributions (funds contributed by insured persons are used to cover all benefits), while rights are exercised by persons meeting the eligibility conditions. According to the principle of solidarity, material and social protection is provided for persons who for various reasons during their active period failed to pay contributions for cases of old-age, disability or death to the extent that would provide them with a general level of rights, regardless of whether, during their active period of life, they contributed as much to the pension fund as they will receive in their passive period of life. In this way, upon retirement, individuals are provided with a decent standard of living and at the same time, the social risks of some categories of insured persons are prevented.

The 2013 act introduced the following measures:

- increase and equalisation of retirement conditions for men and women;
- more incentives to remain in employment longer;
- elimination of time bonuses (additional period).

The reform also requires that in future the main source of a decent sum of an individual pension will come from Pillar I or compulsory pension insurance, which is based in intergenerational solidarity. However, it should be noted that, particularly due to future demographic trends of rapid population ageing, voluntary supplementary pension insurance will also have an important role in providing an appropriate level of pensions.

Within the scope of this multi-pillar system, the public pillar, i.e. compulsory pension insurance, must provide social security in old age, while the second and third pillar provide or maintain the social status of insured persons also in exercising rights arising from pension insurance. Thus, the above-mentioned system allows individuals to plan or determine the standard of living they want to have during retirement, also according to their lifestyle when they were active.

Despite the positive results of the reform of 2013, unfavourable demographic changes already require further adjustments to the pension system. In 2016, the MDDSZ prepared a white paper on pensions, which, as an expert document, includes the selection of possible adjustments to pension systems and serves as a basis for a general public discussion on possible future methods of providing the long-term



sustainability of the pension system and an appropriate level of pensions and timely adoption of further legislative solutions. It includes a comprehensive analysis of demographic situations and their impact on the long-term sustainability of the pension system. A list of possible solutions is prepared for each key parameter of the pension system, while open issues for further discussion are also highlighted, together with an assessment of their impact on the long-term sustainability of the pension system and suitability of pensions. The most important solutions proposed are as follows: equalisation of retirement conditions for both genders; gradual adjustment of retirement conditions to the foreseen demographic trends; adjustment of the formula for harmonising pensions so that all generations of pensioners will be ensured that the initially determined pension will be maintained; further implementation of the principle "any work counts" to the full extent; strengthening Pillar II (but not at the expense of reducing the rights or contribution rate of the first Pillar); more active raising of awareness of people on the importance of supplementary pension insurance, etc. The White Paper emphasises the need to simultaneously implement the foregoing measures, since an individual measure alone would not attain the desired objective.

The goal of the proposed amendments to the pension system is to provide an appropriate income in old age to all generations of pensioners, and at the same time to strike a balance between the revenues and expenses of the pension fund. The compulsory pension insurance must remain the basic insurance of individuals in the future, but a diversity of sources to fund the income of individuals in old age serving as additional correction of the level of pension from the compulsory pillar must be taken into account more than in the past.

Notwithstanding the low level of employment of the elderly in Slovenia, the number of new employment agreements (hereinafter referred to as: new jobs) with persons older than 55 years increased more than all new jobs in 2014 and 2015, when Slovenia recorded economic growth.

In 2016, MDDSZ also prepared a document entitled *The Elderly and the Labour Market in Slovenia*, which presents an analysis of the situation of the elderly in relation to the labour market and a selection of possible measures that could contribute to higher employment among the elderly, longer periods of employment and an improvement in the employability of the elderly. The document *The Elderly and the Labour Market in Slovenia* includes a selection of possible measures prepared on the basis of an analysis of the situation, and in terms of their content, are divided into fields that have a significant impact on the number of elderly in employment:

- provision of a healthy working environment;
- education and life-long learning;
- systemic obstacles which insufficiently stimulate the elderly to stay longer in the labour market;
- measures of active employment policy and other measures in the labour market;
- measures to increase the inclusion of hard-to-employ people and recipients of social security benefits;
- operation of institutions which provide assistance to the elderly in order to preserve employment or inclusion in the labour market; and
- raising awareness of, and providing information to, the public.

The list of possible measures in the labour market included in the document was the basis for discussions with social partners and the interested public on measures which could have an important impact on number of older persons in employment in the future and respond to the challenges presented by the changed demographic situation. According to the proposals and comments received from social partners, the public and other line ministries, the MDDSZ also prepared an action plan of the document, which was a plan for implementing the measures proposed in the document "The Elderly and the Labour Market in Slovenia" according to the comments received in the public discussion with the responses of social partners and expert public. In December 2016, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia confirmed the document entitled *The Elderly and the Labour Market in Slovenia* and its Action Plan.

In 2017, also for the purpose of addressing the challenges arising from demographic changes, MDDSZ prepared the programme **Comprehensive Support for Active Ageing of Labour Force** (co-funded by the European Social Fund) which will contribute to the introduction of efficient and quality work with older employees in Slovenia and improve the situation of the older women and men in the labour market. The programme foresees activities such as development of standards and tools for working efficiently with the older employees in companies. Employers will be provided with professional assistance to prepare strategies/plans to work more efficiently with older employees. Programmes to strengthen the competences of managers and people responsible for human resources development to manage a generationally diverse labour force and to co-fund the career development of older employees in companies will be prepared. Special attention will be paid to overcoming the negative attitude of employers and the general public to older employees and to raising awareness of negative demographic trends and necessary adjustments. Through an intensive promotion campaign, which will include the promotion of skills, knowledge and competences of older persons, promotion of jobs for the elderly and presentation and exchange of good practices, we will contribute raising the employment rate of the elderly and thus to the long-term sustainability of public funds, particularly the pension fund. The programme will be implemented until 2022.

**As the largest non-governmental organisation for the elderly, the Slovenian Federation of Pensioners' Associations** also draws attention to issues in providing flexible schemes of working time for elderly employees. Adjusted working conditions and monitoring of careers are more the exception than the rule. Several attempts have been made to improve employment conditions for the elderly, but it transpired that the unpreparedness of the working environment for changes and the wrong use of positive discrimination have a negative long-term impact on the ageing population. Since it is hard to dismiss employees older than 58 years as per the applicable legislation, employers dismiss them earlier. A reward system also gives priority to older employees, which in turn has negative effects on their position in relation to younger employees.

In 2013 and 2016, the project entitled **Active and Healthy Ageing in Slovenia** (hereinafter referred to as: AHA.SI) took place in Slovenia. It was funded by the European Commission and co-funded by the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and the Ministry of Health.

The purpose of the AHA.SI project was to prepare bases to draw up a comprehensive strategy of responses to demographic changes, namely in three substantive fields:

- Extended employment and delayed retirement;
- Active and healthy ageing for an active and healthy old age;
- Supporting independent life in the home environment and long-term nursing and care.

The findings and guidelines in the field of extended employment and delayed retirement are already included in the afore-mentioned documents *The Elderly* and *the Labour Market and White Paper*.

#### Active and healthy ageing for an active and healthy old age (**Falls**)

The goal of the European Union by 2020 is to extend healthy life by two years. This objective is attainable by all Member States also by reducing the number of falls and their serious consequences, death, disability and complete dependence. The purpose of this section of the project is to raise the awareness of the Slovenian public about falls and their prevention so that they are understood and accepted as a combination of different factors. By extending healthy years of life or the later occurrence of age-specific health issues, the frailty of the elderly also can be postponed to a later age on average, which in view of increasing longevity will mean only a postponement of problems. The results of the project show the need for prevention activities and a national register of falls and the need to raise social and individual

awareness on falls. The project also establishes the need for a close connection with ICT technologies to deal successfully with the issue of falls.

The problems linked in a comprehensive arrangement of the field of long-term care were in particular oriented to the following objectives:

- formation of an integrated system of services and proceeds (rights) which connects the field of long-term health and social care and formal and non-formal providers of assistance;
- introduction of a single entry point for all potential users, uniform procedure to establish the situation, eligibility and needs, planning of assistance and its coordination adapted to local conditions;
- uniform implementation of assistance for all persons from birth to death, with an emphasis on quality nursing in the home environment and the development of preventive measures, rehabilitation and the use of ICT.
- uniform arrangement of the field of formal providers and provision of measures to promote non-formal forms of assistance for users;
- uniform funding of the field by combining existing sources and the provision of new sources that will provide the long-term financial sustainability of the system.

Within the AHA project, the platform of an information-supported system for reviewing the needs and operating forms of assistance in the field of home nursing in the territory of the entire Republic of Slovenia was also prepared.

At the beginning of 2016, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia supported the MDDSZ incentive on the preparation of a **comprehensive strategy for a long-lived society**. The strategy, which is expected to be adopted in the first half of 2017, will comprise a review of the situation and proposed strategic guidelines in the following fields:

1. **Employment/employment rate** (adjustments in the labour market, including education and training, promotion of immigration of foreign labour force).
2. **Independent, healthy and safe life of all generations** (social protection systems, accessibility of health care services, care for health, and reducing inequalities in health).
3. **Inclusion in society** (intergenerational cooperation, volunteering, use of ICT for communication, prevention of discrimination and violence in society, political participation).
4. **Arrangement of the environment for activities throughout the entire life period** (adjustments in the economy, living conditions and transport arrangements with ICT support and technological solutions).

After the strategy is adopted, the preparation of specific action plans for individual fields will follow, the implementation of which is expected to be monitored by the "Council for intergenerational cooperation" appointed by the Government of the Republic of Slovenia.

## OBJECTIVE 2)

# PROMOTING COOPERATION, NON-DISCRIMINATION AND SOCIAL INCLUSION

In Slovenia, the **at-risk-of-poverty rate** for the population older than 18 years increased from 12.6% to 14.3% in the 2010–2015 period. The at-risk-of-poverty rate for people older than 65 years decreased slightly in the respective period, namely from 20.2% to 17.2%. Notwithstanding the reduction of poverty among the elderly, Slovenia is still one of those countries in the EU where the share of the elderly living below the at-risk-of-poverty threshold is above the EU average. In this regard, great differences of at-risk-of-poverty between men and women must be pointed out, particularly for single women aged 80 years or more (SORS 2016 EU SILC). To reduce the at-risk-of-poverty rate of the elderly, the Government of the Republic of Slovenia proposed an amendment to social legislation in 2016 which increases the possibilities of accessing some social transfers, while a proposal to change pension legislation was also adopted which increases the minimum pension for the full insurance period; both measures have already been implemented or will start to be implemented in 2017.

In the field of social inclusion, numerous projects supported by ICT must be mentioned. One of them is the "MATIJA" network, which since 2013 has been providing the elderly with access to various items of information, services and assistance. The network has several thousand registered users, and connects numerous organisations which offer services and assistance to the elderly. The most frequent questions asked by callers to operators are about health-care services, and many of them are about transport. The network is a realisation of an innovative idea to assist the elderly who are not granted proper conditions for quality of life at their homes. If they call a free-phone number, older persons receive information on services, products and activities provided by volunteer organisations, public institutes and private providers throughout Slovenia. Specialised operators answer the questions and provide support in resolving issues. Under its auspices, the MATIJA network combines providers of goods and services which have undertaken to respect the ethical principles based on the European Charter of Rights and Responsibilities of Older People. The network provides useful information on social rights, waiting times for specialised doctors, volunteer assistance, social activities for the elderly, assistance and care at home, organised transportation, personal services at home, and delivery service.

"Zlata mreža" (Gold Network) is a new project which will continue and upgrade the projects of the MATIJA network, and introduce some new services. Within the scope of the MATIJA network, the Prostofer (newly coined Slovenian word comprising "volunteer" and "chauffeur") project has an important role. It connects older women and men who need transport, but cannot or do not want to ask their relatives, with the "prostofers", active elderly drivers who are prepared to transport them.

Single older women and widowed women, in particular in the countryside, are more socially excluded than those in the urban environment. With its programme "The Elderly for the Elderly", implemented for 11 years by 3,500 trained volunteers, the Slovenian Federation of Pensioners' Associations is making an example of good practice in assisting these people. In their environment, the volunteers visit everyone over 65 to establish if they need any assistance in everyday errands in their home environment. Volunteers also carry out different forms of socialising, transportation to doctors, assistance with shopping, and, if needed, they also submit information to official institutions. If official procedures are introduced, volunteers participating in the project continue to stay in touch with the respective elderly people and remain their 'advocates'.

Within the NETage project implemented by the Slovenian Federation of Pensioners' Associations as one of the partners in the international project in the northern Primorska region as an upgrade of the foregoing project (The Elderly for the Elderly), in one of less privileged border municipalities, the ZDUS

representatives brought together local experts who, in terms of their competences, are engaged in care for the elderly, and together with them analysed the life of the elderly in the municipality, in particular to provide them with a good quality of life at home. On the basis of the analysis, they improved a series of activities related to care for the elderly; improved the monitoring of the health status of the elderly for community nurses, organised courses and free assistance for relatives of people with dementia and organised numerous workshops for experts working with the elderly.

Representatives of older persons (ZDUS) have established good practices in Slovenia in terms of the cooperation of their representatives on preparing strategic documents at the state and local level. They emphasise that there is no difference between genders in the drawing up of legislation and strategic documents. However, there is an important difference in decision-making processes where there are more men than women at all levels of these processes.

The representatives of older persons found that ageism is still very much present in Slovenian society. This negative phenomenon is one of the results of the economic crisis, or has become more recognisable recently. The reason lies in the reduced standard of living of all generations, while ageism is additionally ignited by frequent statements made in the media implying that the main problem of the budget are the assets allocated for pensions and other expenditure related to the ageing of the population. These claims could have long-term negative consequences on the public's attitudes to the elderly.

On the other hand, ZDUS representatives report that the number of positive images of the old age in the media is increasing, e.g. examples of the elderly succeeding in sport, culture, ecology, different forms of volunteering and many other amateur activities.

Various television and radio stations broadcast various shows promoting various forms of active and healthy ageing and emphasising the importance of the elderly for the whole society.

The ZDUS has been striving for some time to establish an office for the elderly which would be organised to deal with the issues of the older population and manage and keep records on the exchange of data and information related to the elderly.

### **Objective 3)**

## **PROMOTING AND PROTECTING DIGNITY, HEALTH AND INDEPENDENCE**

In the last five years, Slovenia has adopted several important national documents which recognise the ageing population and provide solutions particularly related to the older generation.

In 2013, **the Resolution on the National Social Assistance Programme by 2020 was adopted**. The Resolution especially addresses the issue of older persons, who often face material deprivation and low social inclusion. In particular, it emphasises that, due to the growing share of the older population, new, more adapted social services and programmes for older women and men must be prepared, especially integrated long-term care services which should be provided in the home environment. Thus, the Resolution also pays special attention to the elimination of regional differences and inequalities, promoting and developing specific forms of intergenerational solidarity, the cooperation and inclusion of different groups of society in planning and decision-making processes. An important goal of the Resolution which in particular addresses the elderly generations is to change the ratio between users of community social care and users of institutional social care. It is intended to change the ratio in favour

of community social care, which offers assistance and aid to individuals with different issues in order for them to live in a community as independently as possible (help at home, daily forms of care, management, care and employment under special conditions, family carers) or to be accommodated and nursed in different forms of community care. The Resolution also draws attention to the greater need to change the quality of individual providers. The aim by 2020 is for providers of social care services with at least 10 employees to be granted a certificate for any certified systems of quality management.

**In 2016, the Resolution on the National Health Care Plan 2016-2025 –"Together for a Healthy Society" – was adopted.** It is a strategy for developing health care, with a special emphasis on the specific needs of certain groups of population, e.g. older persons. The Resolution recognises the change in health-care needs of the elderly population. It highlights a shift in paradigm from disease to health and the upgrade of curative activities with preventive activities, with a special focus on vulnerable groups. It also underlines the need for a better connection between levels of health-care activities and with social care. A proposal for developing geriatric medicine in Slovenia has been prepared which also provides additional knowledge and capacities to recognise and treat frail and multimorbid patients. One of the measures of the strategy is to establish an individualised supply of medication, including its delivery and ensuring that frail and multimorbid patients take them safely and correctly.

**In 2016, the strategy for dementia management in Slovenia by 2020 was adopted.** It outlines the basic direction of development in the field of dementia, on the basis of which quality health and social care will be provided for patients with dementia, as well as efficient raising of public awareness on dementia and quality support for carers of patients with dementia. The strategy highlights the following guidelines: early diagnosis, support for patients, relatives and carers, equality of partners, respect and promotion of rights, care at home, respectful and dignified treatment, active role of persons with dementia in the local community and adjustment of the living environment to persons with dementia.

Special attention is paid to the need for accessible social care services for patients with dementia and the need to establish regional centres for multidisciplinary treatment.

**The National Housing Programme Resolution 2015–2025** also recognises the need to adjust to the changed demographic situation. Slovenia ranks among those countries with a very high share of owner-occupied apartments and houses owned by the elderly, which often means that the elderly allocate a large share of their income to maintaining their real-estate. The strategy sees solutions in specially built, renovated or adapted apartments in the vicinity of day-care centres for the elderly or in the vicinity of nursing centres, as well as in planning suitable apartments within mixed neighbourhoods to contribute to improving the quality of life and social inclusion. The strategy promotes, among other things, the cohabitation of the elderly in large or collective households.

In Slovenia, pre-retirement education is not a labour right, so employers are not obliged to implement such education programmes, which are also considered a short-term expense. However, numerous pre-retirement programmes are implemented in many environments. These activities assist individuals before their retirement to understand that their financial situation will be different after retirement from the financial situation of an employed worker, that their social circle will change and that they will have more spare time, which many retired people have difficulty managing.

With its long tradition, the Slovenian Third Age University is particularly active in this field.

The Ministry of Defence, organising retirement activities within the scope of the Ministry as well as the Slovenian Armed Forces, also has a long and successful tradition in the respective field. The programme provides information to members of the Slovenian Armed Forces on retirement procedures and related rights, gives advice together with representatives of the Pension and Disability Insurance Institute of the Republic of Slovenia, Kapitalska družba d.d., and Modra zavarovalnica on the provision of these rights so that members of the Slovenian Armed Forces have a less stressful and more pleasant retirement

from the Slovenian Armed Forces. For ten years, The Ministry of Defence of the Republic of Slovenia has also organised five-day pre-retirement seminars, where gerontologists, nutritionists, financial advisers and other experts inform the participants on the traps and opportunities of the third life period. In addition to the importance of a healthy diet and physical exercise, they also address the topics of time management, stress management and relaxation techniques, preventing falls, different types of addiction, as well as the attitude to death and mourning.

The Anton Trstenjak Institute of Gerontology and Intergenerational Relations developed a project entitled "Network of intergenerational programmes for quality ageing", within which 27 programmes supporting the elderly, coexistence between generations or both started to be implemented in 2007. These programmes also include courses for good-quality life after retirement for people who are retiring or are already retired. It is a short course of social group learning for companies and individuals. The course presents three main tasks related to the transition to retirement: a review of past experience, present tasks and realistic possibilities of the third period of life after retirement. The basis of the programme is a comprehensive view of the human being in all dimensions.

**Every year, the Ministry of Public Administration and the Administration Academy** organise pre-retirement seminars for older public employees, which may be also attended by younger employees. The programme deals with issues related to relationships with older employees and the inclusion of their knowledge and experience in the operations of the administration and public institutions and services. The programme is primarily intended to promote an active and healthy life in old age, i.e. longevity, specifics of old age today as an additional period of life, health and healthy habits, social inclusion, important decisions and changes the elderly face. The content of the pre-retirement seminars were prepared by the EMONICUM Institute, which has a mission to promote an active and healthy life in all ages.

#### **Objective 4)**

## **PRESERVING AND STRENGTHENING INTERGENERATIONAL SOLIDARITY**

In 2012, the Social Protection Institute of the Republic of Slovenia prepared a special analysis of intergenerational solidarity in the community. The Institute established that solidarity in Slovenia is in particular present at the micro level, within a family, and is well developed, especially in the family nucleus. However, due to the modern way of life (lack of time, problems with harmonising work and family), not all needs, despite strong family support, can be fulfilled only within non-formal networks. The Institute found that in terms of disburdening the family, community programmes can make an important contribution, since their activities can supplement or replace family support. It was established that political documents governing the field of intergenerational solidarity in Slovenia focus mainly on the aspect of the young providing assistance to the elderly. The reverse idea of the elderly assisting the young is almost non-existent, despite the reciprocity and benefits for all generations which the term "intergenerational" implies. In its research, the Institute established that more attention should be paid to the middle generation, which, according to the data of different studies, is also the most burdened, since it helps both the elderly and young family members, and is also actively employed. Since the present way of life poses a threat of burnout to the middle generation, the latter should be somewhat disburdened.

There are certain projects in Slovenia whose activities make important contribution to consolidating intergenerational solidarity in the community (e.g. Simbioza, the Anton Trstenjak Institute project, Hiša Sadeži družbe, activities of the Third Age University, project of intergenerational solidarity – Developing the potential of youth organisations for intergenerational coexistence and cooperation, etc.). However,

the Institute advised that it would be reasonable to develop and support community programmes with an emphasis on integration in the local environment, e.g. operation of family centres, youth centres, intergenerational centres, etc.

Also, on the basis of results of this analysis and guidelines stated in the Resolution on the National Assistance programme by 2020, the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities published a public tender in 2016 to co-finance multi-generational centres (hereinafter referred to as: VGC) which will organise different programmes, in particular for families, individual family members, the elderly and other vulnerable groups. A multi-generational centre is a central gathering point in a local environment intended for socialising, preserving or spreading social networks, and fulfilling the needs of different types of families, individual family members of all ages, the elderly and other vulnerable groups. The activities of multi-generational centres are preventive and intended to enable the social inclusion of vulnerable special groups or to prevent social exclusion. Within the VGC, numerous activities take place which emphasise social inclusion, education and intercultural and intergenerational integration. Users attend the VGC voluntarily and free of charge. By publishing a public tender, the MDDSZ wanted to establish a network of 15 multi-generational centres across Slovenia. Based on this tender, several multi-generational centres are already operating.

Through different programmes, Slovenia also promotes other forms of intergenerational gatherings. Intergenerational centres are also being established by pensioners' organisations. There are many examples of good practices in the local environment in Slovenia, where the elderly pass on their knowledge and experience to the young, while the young teach the elderly how to use new technologies and thus, in addition to volunteering, also learn how to be tolerant and patient.

An example of good knowledge transfer is the BRIDGES WITHIN EUROPE (Erasmus plus) project, where the elderly and the young strengthen their mutual dialogue, tolerance and volunteering by constructing model bridge and also learn how to overcome language barriers.

To strengthen intergenerational cooperation and solidarity, the ZDUS proposes promoting volunteerism as an important value in a modern society. Through volunteering, different generations cooperate and meet each other; the young may realise that old age is only a period in life when it is much easier if one is not alone.

The National Youth Council of Slovenia emphasises the need for more intergenerational integration in general, in particular regarding issues such as future of the pension and health care system and labour market. It points out that the effects of reforms will particularly affect younger generations. In terms of cooperation between organisations of the young and the elderly, they see the promotion of establishing intergenerational centres as a positive measure. The National Youth Council of Slovenia has recommended undertaking more activities whereby generations can meet and consequently understand each other better. It advocates promoting intergenerational solidarity in a way which ensures the development of individual generations. For the young not to be dependent on the elderly generation for too long, the conditions must be provided for them to have employment and take care of their own existence.

To attain the objectives of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (hereinafter referred to as: MIPAA), Slovenia also leads an active foreign policy focusing in particular on human rights. There are occasional exchanges of information with the civil society in the preparation of guidelines in this field. In September 2013, Slovenia supported the mandate of a new special mechanism of the UN Human Rights Council in the field of human rights of the elderly, and between 17 and 21 November 2014 also hosted the first visit of the holder of the mandate, an independent expert of the UN Human Rights Council for exercising all human rights of the elderly, Mrs Rose Kornfeld-Matte.

Slovenia is actively included in a thematic discussion on the elderly in the context of human rights at the UN, also in the context of finding gaps in the provision of human rights to the elderly and the more efficient exercising of the rights of the elderly. Slovenia also organised or co-organised a series of thematic discussions and events: in September 2014, within the scope of the Bled Strategic Forum (hereinafter: BSF) on the threats and opportunities of demographic transition; in June 2015, within the scope of the 29th meeting of the UN Human Rights Council on violence against older women; in



September 2015, within the scope of BSF on the ageing society and development; in September 2016, within the scope of the 33rd meeting of the UN Human Rights Council on needs and wishes in the field of human rights of the elderly. In April 2016, it also hosted an international conference in Brdo pri Kranju, where rights to empower the elderly were discussed. In June 2016, it co-funded a non-formal group of friends of the rights of older persons, which is based in Geneva.

The adoption of the Protection Against Discrimination Act in 2016 is a positive change in the legislation, stipulating the protection of individuals from various forms of discrimination, including age discrimination. The Act also introduces the function of an advocate of the principle of equality.

## CONCLUSION

Presented below are the most important achievements in Slovenia in terms of responding to demographic changes in the context of realising the regional implementation strategy of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA RIS) in the last previous five years and fields presenting a special challenge for Slovenia in the future.

### Achievements

- 1) Between 2013 and 2016, Slovenia adopted the pension reform and Resolution on the national health-care plan. The purpose of the reform is to provide the long-term sustainability of the public pension system, which is attainable by increasing the number of the active working population in work. Raising and equalising the retirement age for men and women are important elements of the reform. The Resolution on the national health-care plan focuses on the specific needs of individual groups of the population, including the elderly, and includes a proposal for developing geriatric medicine.
- 2) In 2015, the Strategy for dementia management in Slovenia by 2020 was adopted. It outlined the basic direction of development in the field of dementia, on the basis of which good-quality health and social care will be provided for patients with dementia, as well as efficiently raising the awareness of the population on dementia and giving quality support to providers of care for people with dementia.
- 3) In 2017, the Protection Against Discrimination Act was adopted which defined the protection of individuals from different types of discrimination, including age discrimination. The Act also introduced the function of an advocate of the principle of equality.
- 4) Representatives of the elderly have noted good practices in Slovenia in terms of the cooperation of their representatives on preparing strategic documents at the state and local levels.
- 5) In July 2017, the comprehensive long-lived society strategy was adopted.

### Challenges

- 1) Greater participation of older persons in the labour market.
- 2) Systemic arrangement of long-term care, with a recognition of the role of non-formal care providers.
- 3) Initiation of the deinstitutionalisation process
- 4) Creating the conditions for better intergenerational cooperation and integration between generations.

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