

# UNECE Policy Seminar on Ageing

## Ageing in the Digital Era

Wednesday 24 November 2021, 10:00 – 17:30

### Opening session: Digitalisation and ageing populations promises and pitfalls

#### **Vitalija Gaucaite Wittich**

*UNECE*

Vitalija Gaucaite Wittich is responsible for the UNECE work in the area of population ageing and intergenerational relations. She coordinates activities of the UNECE Standing Working Group on Ageing and oversees the organization of the reviews of national policies and strategies in implementing the Madrid International Plan of Actions on Ageing in the UNECE region, capacity development and publication of policy briefs in the area of population ageing. Vitalija Gaucaite Wittich has a doctoral degree in Social sciences and before joining UNECE was an Associate Professor of Economics at Vilnius University in Lithuania.

#### **Roxana Widmer-Iliescu**

*International Telecommunication Union*

Roxana Widmer-Iliescu has been working in the Development Sector of the International Telecommunication Union (ITU) for over 23 years. Through her work, she contributes to achieving the overarching goal of digital inclusion by promoting the empowerment of all people through ICTs, regardless of gender, age, ability or location, including older persons.

In her capacity as the Senior Coordinator for Digital Inclusion, she advises ITU members and stakeholders on the development of ICT accessibility policies and strategies as the key element to achieve digital inclusion. To further support countries' efforts towards building digitally inclusive and age-friendly environments, she also leads the development of several ITU-D resources which raise awareness, strengthen knowledge and provide the necessary tools for implementation.

Considering that ageing is a privilege and ageing in a digital world is an opportunity, Roxana is now using her extensive experience in digital inclusion, addressing the challenges arising from two global megatrends – the rise in technology and ageing populations – to support a healthy and wealthy ageing in a digital world for the present and future older adults.

Finally, she advocates that by ensuring that technology is people-centred and ICT accessibility and Universal Design are at the top of global policymakers and decisionmakers' agendas, with appropriate partnerships and collaboration, we can jointly make the necessary changes to ensure that no one is left behind in the digital age.

#### **Martin Amberger**

*Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth, Germany*

Martin Amberger is working in the Federal Ministry for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth in Berlin. He serves as deputy head of the division „International Policy on Ageing, Inclusion“.

Martin is the German National Focal Point on Ageing since 2017 and Member of the Bureau of the UNECE SWGA.

## Session 1: Enhancing digital skills and digital literacy among older persons

### **Raymond Saner**

*Centre for Socio-Eco-Nomic Development (CSEND)*

Raymond Saner is Titular Professor at Basle University, Dept. of Economics & Management since 2002 and teaches at Leuphana University, Lüneburg, Center for Sustainability (CSM), and taught at Sciences Po, Paris, Master of Public Affairs programme. His research focuses on sustainable development (UNDESA), trade and development UNCTAD/WTO), employment and poverty reduction (ILO), social economy (UNRISD), education (OECD, WTO/GATS), investment and climate change (UNCTAD, UNFCCC), and PPPs (UNECE/WHO). He was member of expert groups that drafted the Global Sustainable Development Report. Raymond Saner co-founded CSEND (1993), an ECOSOC accredited research organisation. He is co-chair of the academic network of the OECD Guidelines on Business and Human Rights and member of the UN Task Force on Solidarity and Social Enterprises. He is a Swiss delegate to the ISO WG on Active Aging and has organised panels on ICT and Ageing for the ITU/WSIS annual conference since 2018. He published 7 books, 30 co-authored books, 8 book chapters and 34 refereed journal articles. He served on the executive board of the Academy of Management ODC division and chaired its Advisory Council to the Board of Governors.

### **John Kiernan**

*Centre for Ageing Better, United Kingdom*

John Kiernan is an Innovation & Change Officer at the Centre for Ageing Better in the UK, a charitable foundation the goal of which is for everyone to enjoy a better later life. The Centre for Ageing Better creates change in policy and practice informed by evidence and works with partners across England to improve employment, housing, health and communities. John's previous roles have been in ICT and digital connectivity programmes through working for the communications provider BT, in marketing and research in supporting consumers, small and medium businesses, and corporate organisations.

### **Irina Strajescu**

*Moldcell Foundation, Moldova*

Irina Strajescu has been working in the telecommunications field for more than 21 years and has a versatile experience locally and internationally in areas such as project management, quality management, business development, regulation, marketing and communication, human resources. Currently, Irina is the Executive Director of Moldcell Foundation as well as People & Communication Director in Moldcell.

Irina Strajescu was the President of the Association of ICT Companies during 2016-2019 and currently is a board member of European Business Administration and an active member of ICT Association and Amcham. During her activity within Moldcell company Irina managed to successfully implement a number of social development projects promoting UN SDGs in Moldova that have contributed to the improvement of life in the Republic of Moldova. Irina holds an MBA from the University of Newport, USA; a bachelor's degree in engineering and programming from the Technical University of Moldova, as well as clinical psychology degree from the Free University of Moldova.

### **Eduard Mihalas**

*UNFPA Moldova*

Mr. Eduard Mihalas is leading innovative demographic and data programmes in the Republic of Moldova as part of UNFPA, United Nations Population Fund. He led the process for shifting from "demographic security" to demographic resilience, that supports Moldovan Government in

addressing a growing ageing population, low fertility, migration of young people and low life expectancy, by promoting rights-driven and evidence-based policies. Mr. Eduard Mihalas coordinated national efforts in aligning national population data to international recommendations and practices, that result in the revision, for the first time in 30 years, of the population number at national level and estimation, for the first time, of international migration using cross-border data.

At UNFPA, he is leading the population and development portfolio. As part of this, he builds programmes that seek to establish a robust statistical system in the Republic of Moldova, promotes demographic resilience policies and engages private sector in intergenerational solidarity programmes.

## Session 2: Ensuring access to essential and everyday services that move online

### **Biljana Radonjic Ker-Lindsay**

*European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD)*

Biljana Radonjic Ker-Lindsay has over 20 years of international experience in leading on policies and programmes at the intersection between businesses, governments and civil society in around 40 markets in Europe, Central Asia and North Africa. Biljana is currently heading Access to Skills and Employment at the Gender and Economic Inclusion team of the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), based in the UK. Her work focuses on economic inclusion of youth, women, older workers, people with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups as part of Bank's investments and policy engagement.

(In her previous role at EBRD, as Head of Civil Society Engagement, Biljana oversaw the Bank's consultations with and capacity enhancement of civil society groups and organisations. Before joining the EBRD in 2006, Biljana co-founded and ran Civilitas Research, an independent strategic consultancy and think tank conducting political and business analysis in South East Europe and Eastern Mediterranean, based in Cyprus. Biljana holds a joint MA degree in International Relations from the University of Nicosia, Cyprus & University of Indianapolis, US. In addition to her native Serbian, she also speaks English, Russian and Greek.)

### **Vito Gosar**

*NLB, Slovenia*

Vito's whole career has been about digitalization, customer experience, and smart product development. It all started with setting up a mobile portal for a cellular service operator, continued with mobile games and TV and culminated in heading the CRM and customer experience department.

After a short stint with a digital marketing agency, where he was involved in various international projects, he moved to banking where he found a great challenge in digital transformation of a major bank.

Currently, he is working on channel development; mobile and online services, and traditional banking channels. He is predominately focusing on the new regional mobile and web app Klik.

### **Lisa Goodfellow**

*Financial Consumer Agency of Canada*

Lisa Goodfellow is a Senior Supervisor in the Supervision and Enforcement Branch at the Financial Consumer Agency of Canada. As such, she provides expertise and advice to senior management on

market conduct risks and other issues of industry-wide significance while managing a portfolio of Regulated Entities. From 2013-2015, Lisa was the Manager of the Consumer Education team at FCAC. Lisa joined the agency in 2008 bringing nearly a decade of practical experience in the financial services sector to FCAC's team. Prior to joining FCAC, she held several positions with a major financial institution, including Personal Banker and Branch Manager. She holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree with a major in international business from Bishop's University as well as her Personal Financial Planner designation.

**Natasa Todorovic**

*Red Cross of Serbia*

Natasa Todorovic is a psychologist, Master of Public Health and has worked for the Red Cross of Serbia since 2001, focusing on elder abuse and human rights of older people. She is one of co-founders of HumanaS, a national network of organisations working with older people, promoting the global advocacy campaign for the new United Nations' convention on older people rights. Moreover, Natasa Todorovic is Member of the Governmental Council of Aging, the Governmental Council for Intergenerational Solidarity and President of the Gerontological society of Serbia. She is a regional representative for Europe of the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse.

**Milutin Vracevic**

*Red Cross of Serbia*

Milutin Vracevic is a graduate of the Medical school of the Belgrade University, a member of the Serbian Chamber of Medicine and has a master degree in Public Health. He has worked for the Red Cross of Serbia since 2001 focusing on elder abuse and human rights of older persons. He has been active in advocacy for improved quality of life of older persons through research and closely following policies relevant for older persons at global, regional and national level including promoting the global advocacy campaign for the new United Nations' Convention on the Rights of Older People. He is one of the founders of HumanaS network and is also a Serbian co-representative in the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA) as well as a member of The Global Alliance – For the Rights of Older People (GAROP). He is a supervisory board member of the Gerontological society of Serbia and was a member of the Governmental Council of Aging from 2006 to 2013. He is a co-author of multiple scientific papers and books on different aspects of ageing, older persons' rights and quality of life.

### Session 3: Safeguarding human rights in the use of digital technologies

**Nena Georgantzi**

*AGE Platform Europe/National University of Ireland Galway*

Nena Georgantzi is a lawyer specialized in human rights and social protection and an expert on the rights of older persons. She has more than 10 years of experience in the NGO sector, with a focus on strategic human rights advocacy, research and policy analysis. She is Policy Coordinator for AGE Platform Europe, the largest EU network representing older persons. Her PhD thesis was a comparative empirical study on the meaning of human rights in old age and the value of a new UN treaty. She has participated in the drafting of the Council of Europe recommendation on the rights of older persons and has consulted the UN Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights. She is actively involved in the political process around a new UN convention on the rights of older persons and has served until recently as Deputy Chair of the Global Alliance for the Rights of Older Persons.

**Vijeth Iyengar**

*United States Department of Health and Human Services*

A cognitive neuroscientist by training, Dr. Vijeth Iyengar currently serves as the Brain Health Lead and Technical Advisor to the Deputy Assistant Secretary for Aging at the Administration for Community Living (ACL), an operating division of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. Most recently he completed a nearly year-long secondment as a Policy Advisor to the White House Office of Science and Technology Policy where his portfolio focused on the role of emerging technologies in the areas of brain health, dementia, and neuroscience.

He serves as a co-lead coordinator of the older adult working group for the Healthy People 2020/2030 initiative and is an ex-officio member of the National Advisory Council on Aging at the National Institute on Aging. He has contributed articles appearing in the Bulletin of the World Health Organization, JAMA Health Forum, U.S. National Academy of Medicine, and Scientific American.

Dr. Iyengar was a visiting undergraduate student at Cornell University, received his bachelor's degree from Tulane University, and his masters and doctoral degrees from Duke University. He has been recognized as a Presidential Management Fellow, a National Science Foundation Graduate Research Fellow, and selected as a 2020 Aspen Ideas Festival: Health Fellow.

**Verena Schriebl**

*Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection, Austria*

Verena Schriebl is Deputy Head of the Department "Ageing and Volunteering Policies" in the Federal Ministry of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection (Republic of Austria). She is UN National focal point on Ageing and the Austrian member in the UNECE Standing working group on Ageing. From 2014-2019 she worked in the Department "EU policies and coordination", where she served as Co-chair in the negotiations on the Recommendation on access to social protection for workers and the self-employed during the Austrian presidency of the Council of the European Union. From 2015-2019 she was the Austrian representative in the committee of the EU Programme for Employment and Social Innovation (EaSI) and from 2017-2019 alternate Member in the EU Social Protection Committee (SPC). Verena Schriebl studied political science and international development.

**Klaus Niederländer**

*AAL-Europe*

Klaus Niederländer is currently the Director of the Ambient Assisted Living (AAL) Association, an international public partnership of national and regional Health, Innovation & Research Ministries/Funding Agencies from 18 countries (mainly in Europe plus North America and Asia). This support programme focuses on active & healthy ageing with support of digital-based solutions.

Mr Klaus Niederlander has 25 years of work experience in dealing with socio-economic transformation issues, such as SME development in Sub-Saharan Africa or the spreading of cooperative enterprise models in various sectors in Europe, e.g. for locally owned renewable energy production, healthcare and education. Since 2016 his work focuses on demographic change challenges and opportunities through ageing well based on autonomy, self-help and solidarity.

With a double bachelor's degree in European Business in Germany and the UK and a master's degree in European Economics from the College of Europe in Belgium, Mr. Niederlander started his professional career in 1995 in investment banking and in management consulting for the pharmaceutical/chemical/logistics industry as well as for city development. When moving to Brussels in 2002, he joined an EU-ACP agency for private sector development as programme manager before

becoming Director of Cooperatives Europe, the pan-European cooperative enterprise association. He eventually was appointed Director of the AAL Association in 2017.

**Galina Poliakova**

*Age Concern Ukraine*

Galina Poliakova is the Executive Director of the Ukrainian Charity “Turbota pro Litnih v Ukraini” (Age Concern Ukraine). Age Concern Ukraine is a big national NGO established in 1999. It joins about 1500 volunteers aged 60+ in various regions of the country. The activity of TLU is focused on protecting rights and interests of older people.