

## **Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation**

### **Project/Activity Report**

#### **‘Road map for mainstreaming Ageing in Georgia – Phase 1’**

The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) and its Regional Implementation Strategy (RIS) defines policy principles and guidance in response to population ageing which is an important issue within the region. It provides a framework for creating an integrated approach, comprising elements in the area of the economy, labour market, entrepreneurship, health, social protection, education, intergenerational relationships, gender etc. Countries committed to implementing MIPAA/RIS are confronted with the difficulty of translating this internationally agreed framework into concrete policy action, suitable and affordable for their economies. To this end, the UNECE Population Unit offers to develop ‘Road Maps for Mainstreaming Ageing’ involving four subsequent stages: (1) a desk study, (2) a field study, (3) the development of the Road Map and (4) an evaluation of progress made after one year of endorsement of the Plan of Action by the Government. The complexity of socio-economic consequences of the demographic change is not yet well comprehended by policymakers and other stakeholders in particular in countries where population structure was relatively balanced until recently and family care-for-older models traditionally prevailed. Georgia is one of these countries: a number of policy actions and measures undertaken by its subsequent governments remain somewhat unconnected, providing for the short to medium-term adjustments for the current old-age population and not yet addressing the challenges of rapid population ageing as such. The current policy measures do lack an integrated approach that the Road Map on Mainstreaming Ageing with its Plan of Action aims to ensure.

The **UNECE Population Unit** accepted a request from the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs to prepare a ‘Road Map for Mainstreaming Ageing’ in Georgia. The **RPTC funding** was used to support (1) a desk study by commissioning a report on needs for labour market adjustments to a local consultant; and (2) two field missions to Georgia (27.10 – 2.11. and 9-14.12.2013) that included a number of interviews and focus group discussions in Tbilisi, Kutaisi and Batumi. The project pursues a participatory approach, involving different Georgian ministries, national, regional and local government, non-governmental organizations, the private sector and academia.

During the field missions, the official handover of the Ministerial letter requesting the Road Map took place. Two meetings with Deputy Minister Mariam Jashi of the Ministry of Labour, Health and Social Affairs (MOLHSA) helped to agree on the substantive focus of the Road Map. More than 30 meetings were held with different departments of MOLHSA, the Ministry of Sports and Youth Affairs, the Ministry of Education, Parliament, the Ministry of Health and Social Affairs of the Autonomous Republic of Ajara, the Municipalities of Tbilisi and Batumi, the State Fund for Protection of Victims of Trafficking (in charge of older people’s shelters), the ombudsman’s office, colleagues in international organizations, the EU Delegation, the Statistical Office, with NGOs (Caritas, Red Cross, the Home Care Coalition, DVV international, "Deserving old age") and employers’ organizations. Older peoples’ homes were visited in Tbilisi, Kutaisi and Batumi. A cross-sectorial **working group (WG)** to accompany the drafting of the Road Map was established and its first meeting took place.

During the field missions, available data and background documents were collected and interviews were carried out to identify important to address issues and prepare evidence base for recommendations to direct investment of limited resources strategically into areas that yield the biggest benefits for ageing population. The **WG** will engage key stakeholders throughout the Road Map project, allowing to build on their expertise. The **WG** will continue working beyond the adoption of the Road Map to ensure and drive its implementation. The first phase of the project helped to create awareness among key stakeholders about population ageing and related challenges and opportunities in Georgia and to encourage them to explore ways to address ageing in their area of activity.