

Panel C: Towards a balanced care strategy

Mr. Avraham Bitzur, Israel, Director General, Ministry of Senior citizens

Israel is one of a kind because in it there is a new ministry for the old senior citizens. In other countries there are welfare ministries and health ministries for the rights and needs of the elder, but in Israel we decided that there is a need for a special ministry for the old especially for those (540,000) that are not in a need at the welfare field (160,000 older in Israel).

In Israel you are going on a pension in 62 (women) and 67 (men). In Europe they will go on pension on ages between 62-65. Because of this, to "work longer" will be equivalent for need to find new jobs especially for elder people. I'll give some examples for such jobs:

1. Kindergarten grandfather/mother – every 5 kindergartens will have a grandfather/mother that will work with the kids (for salary).
2. Cross-roads policemen/women – elder people will help, with special uniforms and equipment, young kids to cross the road forth and back from school.
3. Cleaning police patrol – every city will have such a patrol and will try to keep the cities being clean.

It is important to understand that we have to keep the pride of the elder and to give them some work and to fulfill their empty life and time. We have to give them jobs, to give them time and places for culture events, to build for them parks for sports (like the Petank in France. Etc.) It's time that the Hebrew sentence "cast me not off in the time of old age" – will come to be a mantra for all of us.

The understanding of the situation that it's not yet the time for working longer in the usual places our older used to work in is because of the biological condition of their body on the needs of the younger generation. This understanding will be replaced by the solution of more jobs and new demands from the elder people and for them at the end.

The example for all this is my 82 years old minister who is fighting for the elder like one of the youngest ministers and he is getting thanks for it and we can be very proud about him and about our new ministry like (again) in the sentence: "Respect your elders".