

**First Ministerial Roundtable: Encouraging Longer Working Life
and Ability to Work
(Employment of the Elderly on the Labour Market of the Republic of Moldova)
22 September 2017**

Aging mainstreaming is a coordinated effort to ensure that the interests, concerns and needs of older people in the Republic of Moldova are a priority in the planning, development and implementation of policies. Mainstreaming of aging aims at taking all possible measures so that policy outcomes reduce the age gaps.

In the context of population ageing, increase of the rates of the older workers' participation and employment is essential for contributing to economic growth, strengthening of social cohesion and appropriateness of pensions. Thus, it has been proved that adult education is an efficient means to maintain workers or to reintegrate them into the labour market. Adult education is needed to reduce inequalities on the labour market, including gender and age ones, as well as to maintain the sustainability of the active ageing (including women's ageing) system. In proper conditions, older persons are capable of a high level of employment. The employment opportunities, however, may vary. The older persons usually are absent more often due to sickness than the young ones, but less often due to other reasons. It seems that the elderly employees are able to efficiently perform manual labour in a stress-free labour environment.

The employment rate among the elderly is declining. Although the general employment rate decreased in the last decade (mainly due to migration and reduction of employment rate in agriculture), the employment rate among the elderly, especially those aged 65+, fell twice.

The employment rate of the elderly in the Republic of Moldova is small if compared to other countries in the region. If compared with EU and OECD countries, the employment rate of workers of pre-retirement age (55–64 years) is decreasing and trends appear to be divergent – in the EU and OECD the rate is slightly increasing while in the Republic of Moldova it is decreasing.

The employment rate is much lower among women. A significant gender-based difference exists between workers of pre- and post-retirement age. This is largely due to two factors: (i) women leave the labour market due to their retirement age, (ii) the burden of taking care of children or other members of the family rests upon women.

To reduce the problems related to the employment at any age, including among the elderly, and in order to ensure employment of the elderly on the labour market of the Republic of Moldova,

the Ministry of Health, Labour and Social Protection started to assess the implementation of the MIPAA/RIS in Moldova with the support of UNFPA/UNDESA in 2016. The MIPAA Report reflects the results of appraisal of implementation by the Republic of Moldova of the 2012–2017 Madrid International Action Plan on Ageing and its Regional Implementation Strategy (MIPAA/RIS).

It reviewed the implementation of the Program for Mainstreaming Ageing and its Action Plan implementing the Road Map for Mainstreaming Ageing (2014–2016), approved by the Government of the Republic of Moldova, and other policy documents. The Report also reveals the Government's efforts to implement ageing policies. Overall, we acknowledge that the Program for Mainstreaming Ageing and its related Action Plan are complex documents, comprising both strategic and praxeological components, and prove the Government's rather ambitious response to ageing.

At the same time, the Program for Mainstreaming Ageing and its related Action Plan (2014–2016) were fulfilled only in part (using quantitative indicators as milestones), with a number of crucial arrears still requiring more intense policy efforts and allocation of appropriate resources. Both progresses and problems, still requiring actions, were highlighted practically for all reference commitments.

The following main achievements can be mentioned:

- adopted and implemented the special legal and regulatory framework on ageing: the Program for Mainstreaming Ageing and Action Plan implementing the Road Map for Mainstreaming Ageing (2014–2016);
- developed the institutional mechanism in this area: of the National Commission for Population and Development, of cooperation between NCPD and CLAM, academia, CSOs active in the field of ageing, etc.;
- amended the Law on Pension System Reform, providing for the increase in the retirement age both for men and for women (from 57 to 63 for women and from 62 to 63 for men);
- amended and supplemented the Labour Code of the Republic of Moldova No 154-XV of 28 March 2003, introducing a new Article '1241 Paternity Leave', according to which fathers of newborn children will have the right to a paternity leave;
- developed the integrated social services system meant to create better social inclusion opportunities for persons in distress, including alternatives to the residential services;

- expanded the palliative and geriatric services, approved the mechanism for compensation of medicines from the Compulsory Health Insurance Funds in order to improve the access to health services;
- higher involvement of CSOs in issues of ageing, established the Ageing Platform, etc.

The priority activities include:

The issue of population ageing is on the agenda of the Moldovan Government. It is addressed by the adoption of the legal and regulatory framework, creation of the institutional mechanism and carrying out of a range of activities.

- a) manage efficiently the issues related to population ageing by mainstreaming it in sector policies and local development strategies and strengthen the professionals' skills;
- b) develop and support entrepreneurship programs, including those for the elderly, which would improve their deplorable socio-economic situation, as well as the overall situation in the country;
- c) encourage elderly groups activities, including by their political and socio-economic empowerment; develop lifelong educational/training programs to facilitate ongoing productivity of the elderly employees;
- d) improve and adjust the capacities of social and geriatric services, as appropriate; develop an integrated system of home-based palliative and medical care services, programs for healthy lifestyle;
- e) promote programs on strengthening the solidarity within and between generations as fundamental values of societal development, strengthen the social cohesion, etc.

All these measures will ensure a good quality of life and a decent life in the third age for the elderly, as provided for in Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA).