UNECE Regional Research Forum on Ageing

Abstracts

Scientific Committee:

Agnieszka Chłoń-Domińczak | Warsaw School of Economics (PL)
Carlos Farinha Rodrigues | University of Lisbon (PT)
Sarah Harper | University of Oxford (UK)
Boo Johansson | University of Gothenburg (SE)
Tine Rostgaard | Danish Institute for Local and Regional Government Research (DK)
Kai Leichsenring | Ricardo Rodrigues
Anette Scoppetta | Alexandre Sidorenko
European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research

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Session 1
Recognizing the potential of older people

Chair: Boo Johansson, University of Gothenburg, Sweden

What are the potentials of older people?

Andreas Kruse, University of Heidelberg, Germany

The potentials of age refer to a two-fold design option, which is to be understood in the sense of an opportunity and a challenge. From an individual perspective, there are now better possibilities for older people to fulfill their own life plans, as well as to participate in social development and to engage themselves for others and the community. From a societal perspective, the potentials of age refer to the opportunity to contribute, by means of social, cultural and institutional conditions, to the growing proportion of older people being able to lead an independent, self- and co-responsible life for as long as possible. Attention must be directed at the reduction of social inequality. A major social issue relates to intra-generational justice, i.e. the society should be in a position to effectively support those older people who find themselves in distress, be this health, social and financial distress. To address these issues and to realise the potentials, it is necessary to develop an age-friendly culture in ageing societies.

An age-friendly culture is to be understood as the involvement of older people in the social, political and cultural discourse, as well in social and cultural progress. In an age-friendly culture, older women and men are equally heard, and treated with as much respect as younger people. An age-friendly culture does not make generalization about the group of older people, but respects the “uniqueness of being” of older women and men. The intergenerational perspective forms the second feature of an age-friendly culture. Age is integrated into an intergenerational perspective as the active exchange of ideas, knowledge, experience, assistance and sympathy between the generations. Prominent examples of this inter-generational perspective are generation tandems and mentoring opportunities in the workplace, as well as sponsorships of older people in civic matters. Thirdly, an age-friendly culture articulates the vital interest in the potentials of age (which can, of course, vary considerably from
person to person) and creates conditions that are conducive to the realization of such potentials – to be mentioned here is the introduction of the flexible retirement age in the world of work (which is not to be construed as a relinquishment of legally defined age limits), as well as the removal of all age limits in the field of civic engagement. Fourthly, an age-friendly culture encounters older women and men, including their vulnerability, with respect and sensitivity. It provides socio-spatial contexts that promote independence and self-responsibility and secure participation – to mention are places to meet in the living quarters, to mention too are differentiated, target-group-specific service systems, as well as barrier-free environments, all of which have a positive impact on the maintenance or recovery of independence and mobility. In the case of severe physical and cognitive losses in older persons, an age-friendly culture respects the individual’s uniqueness, expresses their respect for the dignity of this individual, avoids trying to externally determine the quality of life of this person and neither denies the individual the fundamental right of participation, nor expert and ethically-sound medical care. Furthermore, an age-friendly culture is determined to reduce social inequality among the group of older people and to ensure that every person – regardless of education, income or social class – receives the social and medical services which are known to be necessary for his or her specific life situation.

Finally, it needs to be underlined that an age-friendly culture does not deny the rights, claims or needs of younger people, rather it endeavours to identify and recognize the rights, claims and needs of all the generations, whereby no single generation is preferred or disadvantaged.

Biographical note

Andreas Kruse is Professor of Gerontology and Director of the Institute of Gerontology at the University of Heidelberg since 1997. He studied Psychology, Philosophy, Psychopathology and Music at the Universities of Aachen and Cologne as well as at the State Conservatory of Cologne. His impressive career has been marked by the following achievements:

- 2007 – 2011 Dean of the Faculty of Behavioural and Cultural Studies at the University of Heidelberg
- 2000 – 2007 Dean of Studies of the Faculty of Behavioural and Cultural Studies at the University of Heidelberg
- 1993 – 1997 Professor of Psychology and Founding Director of the Institute of Psychology at the University of Greifswald
- 1991 – 1993 Visiting Professorships at Freie University Berlin and at the University of Heidelberg
- 1991 Habilitation in Psychology at the University of Heidelberg
- 1986 PhD in Psychology at the University of Bonn
He has been member of a large number of committees, e.g. the German Ethics Council, the Austrian Interdisciplinary Platform on Ageing, the Future Commission of the Federal Chancellor, and the Commission of the Federal Government for the Report on Families.

Reablement – A precondition for realizing potentials

Bent Greve, University of Roskilde, Denmark

Long-term care has undergone strong and important changes in recent years in Denmark. From as long as possible in one’s own home to as long as possible in one’s own life. If one shall be able to live as long as possible in one’s own life, this might imply a need for support. There has as part of this been a stronger focus on rehabilitation (which is by now a legal demand), and also re-enablement and use of welfare technology in the field of long-term care.

This presentation will present recent changes in the Danish long-term care with a focus on the issues about, including with a focus on both societal impact (especially public-sector spending) and on the impact on users and providers of long-term care in a universal welfare state where the state (in practice the municipalities) has a strong role in the provision of the care and setting the scene for quality in care. The focus will further be on the possible benefit of that users are able to take of themselves including actively participate in societal life. It will finally highlight possible learning effect for other countries.

Biographical note

Bent Greve is Professor in Social Science with an emphasis on welfare state analysis at the University of Roskilde, Denmark. His research interest focuses on the welfare state, and social and labour market policy, often from a comparative perspective. He has published extensively on social and labour market policy, social security, tax expenditures, public sector expenditures and financing of the welfare state. At present involved in Horizon 2020 project (SPRINT) which focus on social investment in long-term care. He is regional and special issues editor of Social Policy & Administration. Recent books include (ed.), 2017: Long-Term Care for the Elderly in Europe. Development and Prospects (Routledge), Handbook of Social Policy Evaluation (ed.), Edward Elgar and forthcoming (Nov. 2017) Technology and the Future of Work. The Impact on Labour Markets and Welfare States.
Comment:
The potential of older people in Eastern Europe

Jolanta Perek-Białas, Jagiellonian University in Kraków and Warsaw School of Economics, Poland

Recognizing the opportunities that an ageing population can contribute (but not only to the economy as workers, consumers and producers) are important. However not only the policy makers are responsible for understanding it. The current older generations (as future cohorts yet we are not so sure how they behave) need to be already aware about the benefits of showing their great potential for the society (i.e. via the Active Ageing Index). Especially such awareness is key for Eastern European countries as being younger compared to Western Europe and due to certain policies, still there is not yet enough understanding and acceptance that older persons can be not only burden. It is extremely crucial to change the image of older generation as not showing the great importance of this group it can lead to ageist attitudes as it could be seen in various analysis (examples very briefly will be presented during a comment). However, of course in this ‘positive’ image of seeing opportunities of ageing population we cannot forget about those older who are not able to show these potential due to their sickness and/or disability. This as well will be mentioned as knowing Danish example it could be evaluated if and how the long-term can be used as a way to be actively involved in societal life. However, a brief evaluation if all solutions could be easily transferred to countries like those in Eastern Europe will be as well given at the end of the comment.

Biographical note

Jolanta Perek-Białas is Associate Professor at the Jagiellonian University, Cracow in Poland and as well she works at the Institute of Statistics and Demography at the Warsaw School of Economics. Her research interest focuses on ageing, active ageing indicators, ageism in the labour market policy, social exclusion of older persons, care for older persons. She has been a Polish coordinator and participated in many national, international projects related to these topics and as well as expert for various decision policy makers at the local, regional and national level in Poland and for OECD, EC, WB, UNECE. She has published on active ageing policy, ageism in the labour market, reconciliation of work and care for older persons, consequences of population ageing in Central Eastern Europe countries and exclusion of old people. Currently, she is a Polish representative in the COST ACTION 1492: Ageism – a multinational, interdisciplinary perspective and in COST ACTION Reducing Old-Age Social Exclusion: Collaborations in Research and Policy, while in the first one she is also a Chair of the WG on Ageism in the Labour Market. Since, November 2017, she will be involved in a huge prestigious Marie-Curie Sklodowska Action – Innovative Training
Network project EuroAgeism (Coordinator: Prof. L. Ayalon). Recent co-authored chapters in books include, 2016: The elderly care regime and migration regime after the EU accession (Routledge), 2017: Regional approaches to demographic change in Poland (Springer), 2018: Measures of Ageism in the Labour Market in International Social Studies (Springer).

Biographical note of the Chair

Boo Johansson is Professor of Psychology, especially Geropsychology at the University of Gothenburg, Sweden. His research is focusing on cognition, cognitive and mental health in late adulthood and aging; normal aging, compromised cognition and dementia; clinical, twin, and longitudinal population-based aging studies. He studied Psychology at the Universities of Uppsala and Gothenburg (Ph.D 1985). His academic and administrative positions include: 2001- current, Professor of Psychology, especially geropsychology, Dept. of Psychology, University of Gothenburg and Professor of Geropsychology; 1993- 2010 Adj. Prof., Dept. of Biobehavioral Health, College of Health & Human Develop., Penn State Univ., USA; 1987-2002; Assoc.prof, Inst. of Gerontology, University College of Health Sciences, Jönköping; 1986 Post-doc (Fo.ass), Dept. of Applied Psychology, Univ. of Gothenburg; 1985-87 Senior Researcher, Inst. of Gerontology, University College of Health Sciences, Jönköping; Research Associate, Dept. of Geriatric Medicine, Univ. of Gothenburg; 1975-85; Research Psychologist, Inst. of Gerontology, University College of Health Sciences, Jönköping. From 2003-2017 he has been Deputy Dept. Head for the PhD Program at the Dept. of Psychology, 2007-2010 Deputy Dean Faculty of Social Sciences, 2006-2008, Deputy Ass. Dean for Research and Graduate Studies, Faculty of Social Sciences, Univ. of Gothenburg. Furthermore, he is Board Member in a number of research centres and professional organisations and Editorial Board Member in several scientific journals.

Biographical note of the Rapporteur

Ricardo Rodrigues is currently the Head of the Health and Care Unit and Deputy Director of the European Centre for Social Policy Research in Vienna. He has a background in Economics and a PhD in Social Policy and Social Work from the University of York (UK). His research interests include inequalities in health and ageing, long-term care, user choice and care markets, informal care and active ageing. He has coordinated and participated in several EU and nationally funded projects, namely INTERLINKS (FP-7), European Care Across Borders (FP-7), Social Situation Monitor (DG-EMPL) and MOPACT (PF-7). He has been recently awarded a 3-year grant by the
Austrian Research Fund (FWF) to analyze inequalities in the determinants of long-term care use in Austria and Slovenia, together with partners from the University of Ljubljana. He is one of the Austrian members of the COST Action IS1492: “Ageism – a multinational, interdisciplinary perspective” and COST Action IS1311: Intergenerational Family Solidarity across Europe (INTERFASOL)”. Recent authored and co-authored works include a book chapter on evaluating long-term care policies in the Handbook of Social Policy Evaluation (Bent Greve) and several articles in the European Journal of Ageing, Ageing & Society and Journal of Social Policy and Administration.
Session 2
Encouraging longer working life and ability to work

Chair: Carlos Farinha Rodrigues, University of Lisbon, Portugal

Working longer – A key issue for sustainable pension systems?

Jorge Cabrita, European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, Dublin

The current major demographic, economic and social challenges are seriously compromising the sustainability of welfare states and social protection systems including pensions throughout the EU. Part of the solution demands that more people are brought into employment and that they remain in employment longer. However, expanding participation requires looking at how availability for work changes over the life course. In this context, Eurofound has been studying the idea of “sustainable work over the life course” which means that working and living conditions are such that they support people in engaging and remaining in work throughout an extended working life. These conditions enable a fit between work and the characteristics or circumstances of the individual throughout their changing life, and must be developed through policies and practices at work and outside of work.

Sustainable work over the life course requires improving the conditions of work and adapting them better to the specific and changing needs of workers over their life course. And it involves redesigning social and employment policies to, among other things, facilitate a better work-life balance. These transformations will improve workers’ wellbeing and influence availability for work and thus will ultimately influence employment rates and the sustainability of pensions systems. Some examples of concrete national policies helping to achieve sustainable work and how they have been implemented will be briefly presented.

Biographical note

Jorge Cabrita is responsible for formulating, coordinating and managing European-wide studies, surveys and publications, and for promoting the dissemination of
knowledge through the participation in debates, conferences, seminars and workshops in the thematic areas of working conditions and industrial relations. He has been responsible for various activities related to Eurofound’s observatories on working conditions and industrial relations (EWCO and EIRO - EurWORK since 2014) and numerous research projects such as ‘Absence from work’, ‘Working poor in Europe’, ‘Work-related stress’, ‘Helping young workers during the crisis: contributions by the social partners and public authorities’, ‘Industrial relations and working conditions in Central Public Administration’, or ‘Gender issues in social partners’ organisations in Europe’. Contributed to the analysis of the 6th European Working Conditions Survey data and is currently responsible for the EU-wide projects “Working time patterns for sustainable work” and ‘Working conditions and workers’ health’.

Cumulative Inequality in Later Life

Tetyana Shippee, University of Minnesota, School of Public Health, USA

This presentation applies cumulative inequality (CI) theory to understand disparities in health and work trajectories in later life. CI theory is a systematic explanation of how inequalities develop and influence outcomes for individuals, cohorts, and societies over time. CI theory emphasizes that inequality is structurally generated and these stratified structures lead to diverse trajectories over the life course. Building on this concept, the presenter will utilize empirical examples to illustrate how risks and resources (e.g. socio-economic status, race, education) shape health and work trajectories over time. CI theory further explains that disadvantage increases exposure to risk, but advantage leads to opportunity. Resources such as greater education and occupational prestige can provide for better health and work engagement while those with lower occupational prestige are exposed to more health risks.

Empirical illustrations will be drawn from the National Longitudinal Survey of Women, a longitudinal panel dataset of working women in the United States (nation-ally representative panel, 36 years of follow-up). Key findings support axioms of CI theory and include the intergenerational transmission of health inequality, especially for Black women; and the robust role of perceived trajectories (e.g., perceived financial well-being for remaining in the workforce vs. objective measures of socio-econo-mic status) as predictors of health disparities and work engagement over time. Findings will be discussed in the context of the US and international policy implications and future refinement of conceptual work around cumulative inequality in later life.
Biographical note

Tetyana Shippee, PhD, is an Associate Professor with tenure in the Division of Health Policy Management, School of Public Health, University of Minnesota. She is a social gerontologist whose vision is to improve quality of life and quality of care for older adults and address health disparities over the life course. As part of her research, she spent two years living in a long-term care facility. Her research focuses on two main topics: 1) quality of life and quality of care in long-term care settings and 2) racial disparities in health and health care over the life course. Dr. Shippee’s work employs survey and administrative data and longitudinal analyses to study racial/ethnic differences in utilization and outcomes, with a focus on the mechanisms driving those inequalities (particularly, access barriers, insurance status, discrimination, and employment). Much of this work has been influenced by Cumulative Inequality Theory, which she co-developed (with K. Ferraro). This award-winning paper (Best Paper for Theoretical Developments in Social Gerontology) has been widely cited as well as her over 40 peer-reviewed publications, book chapters and reports.

Comment:
Working longer in Eastern Europe?

Victor Gîlca, International Labour Office, Chisinau, Moldova

Rapidly increasing life expectancy, alongside an intense phenomenon of demographic ageing and uncertain transition from a centrally planned to a market-oriented economy has led to major challenges on the governments of Eastern European countries in adapting to these trends by adjusting the labour market policies and advancing social security and social protection reforms in order to ensure their financial sustainability.

The presentation will argue the reduced employment of older workers as well as its impact on social security schemes. Bearing in mind the primary role of old-age pensions to provide income security for those who are incapable of working due to old age, and since pensions are paid for one’s whole life after retirement, pensioners will on average receive pensions for longer periods as the life expectancy extends. Failure to adjust to this changing life cycle and finding a new work-retirement balance, including through raising the effective pensionable age will result in lower or even inadequate pension benefits.
From an employment policy perspective, steps should be taken to improve the labour market’s capacity to absorb and better utilize the human resource of older workers. These could include the introduction of flexible working time arrangements or the adaptation of jobs to the capacities and skills of older workers, the provision of adequate vocational training and lifelong learning programmes to maintain older workers’ employability, and the removal of various labour market barriers (such as ageism or the discrimination of older workers, and seniority wage systems which make it costly to hire older workers).

In addition to constraining early exits from the labour market through increasing the pensionable age or restricting early retirement options, pension systems can adjust their design to reduce labour market distortion and increase incentives for insured persons to prolong their working lives and thereby achieve higher effective retirement ages.

Biographical note

Victor Gîlca is a social protection expert at the International Labour Office in Chisinau, Moldova, responsible for the implementation of a project on Strengthening the coverage and sustainability of the social security system as well as providing ILO experts’ comments on the pension reform in Moldova. He was previously Project Manager for Health and Social Protection at the EU Delegation to Moldova, and chief of the Pensions and Indemnities Division / deputy chief of the Social Insurance Policies Department at the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family of the Republic of Moldova. He was also a lecturer on Trends in social-economic population development at Moldova State University.

Biographical note of the Chair

Carlos Farinha Rodrigues is Associated Professor of Economics at Lisbon School of Economics and Management (ISEG), Universidade de Lisboa. He is also adviser of the Instituto Nacional de Estatística (Statistics Portugal) in the field of households’ statistics. His main research interests lie in applied micro-economics, Income Distribution, Poverty and Inequality; Evaluation of Public Policies and Microsimulation. He was involved in the international projects ‘GINI Growing Inequalities’ Impacts’ and ‘EUROMOD - Tax-benefit microsimulation model for the European Union’. He was coordinator of the projects ‘Evaluation of means-tested benefits in alleviates child and aged poverty in Portugal’ (2008 - 2009) and ‘Anti-poverty effectiveness and effi-

Biographical note of the Rapporteur

Agnieszka Chłoń-Domińczak is Assistant Professor at Warsaw School of Economics and Educational Research Institute in Warsaw. In 2008-2009 she was a Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Policy in Poland. Previously she headed the Department of Economic Analyses and Forecasting in the same Ministry. Her responsibilities included, among others, the oversight of the social insurance system, family policy, extending working lives. In 2007-2009 She was the vice president of Social Protection Committee of the European Council and until mid-2009 member Employment, Labour and Social Policy Committee of the OECD, she also chaired the Working Party on Social Policy of that Committee. Ms. Chlon-Dominczak has several years of experience on the core team in the Office of the Plenipotentiary for Social Security Reform that designed and implemented the new Polish pension system. She also worked at the Gdańsk Institute for Market Economics. As a consultant, she participated in numerous activities related to pension reforms in the region of Central and Eastern Europe, cooperating with the World Bank, ILO and the OECD. She participated in numerous conferences on pension issues, where she shared the experience of the Polish pension reform with other participants. She is an author and co-author of many publications in the field of pensions and labour markets.
Session 3
Ensuring ageing with dignity

Chair: Sarah Harper, University of Oxford, United Kingdom

The need for a rights-based approach to ageing with dignity

Marijke De Pauw, Vrije Universiteit Brussel, Belgium

One of the ways in which to ensure older persons’ dignity in old age is through the protection of the enjoyment of their fundamental rights. Older persons worldwide are subjected to a wide range of human rights violations, yet they remain largely invisible within existing human rights treaties. Although specific efforts were made to advance the situation of this group through international non-binding instruments or “soft law” (such as the MIPAA), the implementation of these recommendations remains problematic. In 2010, the UN Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing was set up to consider, inter alia, the need for a UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons. Since then an increasing number of States have expressed their support for such a binding international treaty, yet no consensus has been reached.

But do we really need specific human rights for older persons? I argue that this is certainly the case. A normative analysis of the existing international human rights framework for older persons demonstrates a serious gap across the board. A UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons would be instrumental in filling those gaps.

At the European level, a Recommendation on the promotion of human rights of older persons was adopted in 2014 and aims at promoting older persons’ protection in societies where ageism is rising or in situations where they may be vulnerable. Although a considerable step forward in promoting the visibility of older persons’ rights, the drafters failed to adopt a comprehensive and effective human rights approach to ensure ageing with dignity in several regards. For instance, it reiterates the prohibition of age discrimination in employment while also allowing differential treatment. A clear prohibition of discrimination on the basis of age in access to health care for older persons also seems to be missing.

In other words, there remains much room for improvement still and the adoption of a new UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons could further strengthen the
rights framework for older persons at a global level. A good example of such added value is certainly the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, which brought about a paradigm shift and promoted the view of this particular group as rights holders. A new Convention tailored to the needs of older persons could thus also promote respect for their inherent dignity, individual autonomy and independence.

Biographical note

Marijke de Pauw is an associate postdoctoral researcher at the Vrije Universiteit Brussel (VUB). She holds a Masters’ degree in law with a specialization in international and European law and a doctoral degree in law from the VUB and Université Saint-Louis – Bruxelles. Her main areas of expertise include the rights of older persons, age discrimination, the rights of persons with disabilities, and the interpretive practice of regional and international human rights bodies. She has previously also worked as a National Focal Point expert on Belgium for the EU Fundamental Rights Agency. She currently continues to be a member of the editorial board of the Flemish human rights journal Tijdschrift voor Mensenrechten and is an active member of the Human Rights Integration Network, as well as the EU Cost Action on Ageism (IS 1402). Most recently, she published a book chapter on the integration of older persons’ rights in the Strasbourg Court’s jurisprudence:


The role of the state in countering the mistreatment of older adults

Marie Beaulieu, the School of Social Work of the University of Sherbrooke, Canada

Growing old free of violence and neglect – two major components of the mistreatment of older adults (elder abuse) – is undoubtedly pivotal for ageing with dignity. For many years, the attention given to the mistreatment of older adults has been mainly focussed on intra-personal dynamics, such as paid workers (especially care attendants) abusing older adults in long-term care institutions, or family members exploiting or neglecting their frail older relative. However, the dynamics of elder abuse are far more complex than those truncated images. The mistreatment of older adults, such as many other social, public health or legal problems, is rooted in society
and culture. The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (United Nations, 2002) has clearly identified the significance of the role of the state in countering the mistreatment of older adults. There are numerous possible responses, with regards to public policy, which may be implemented, such as: infusing elder abuse content into health policy and regulations; creating or reinforcing the role of the ombudsman; adopting specific legislation on elder abuse (including long-term care institutions and/or all types of housing for older adults); adapting services based on the knowledge gained from child protection or in relation to intimate partner violence, including specific articles on elder abuse in the charter of rights; reinforcing tutor-ship/curatorship/safeguarding, etc.

Based on research results and experience acquired as scientific adviser to the Government of Québec (Canada), our statement will address three issues: the importance of public policy in addressing elder abuse; the importance of intersectoral revision mechanisms to put in place a participatory process to evaluate the implementation of public policy and its resulting effects; and the role of specific laws which support public policies.

Biographical note

Marie Beaulieu, Ph.D., is a full professor at the School of Social Work of the University of Sherbrooke and a researcher at the Research Centre on Aging at the CIUSSS Estrie-CHUS. She teaches Gerontological Social Work and Research Methods at the undergraduate and masters levels as well as Theories of Aging and Research Methods at the masters and doctoral levels in Gerontology. Since November, 2010, she has held the position of Research Chair on Mistreatment of Older Adults financed by the Québec Government. Since 1987, her primary focus has been dedicated to counter mistreatment (elder abuse), the sense of security of older adults, ethics and social gerontology. She was also active in the implementation of the World Health Organization’s Global Age-friendly Cities project in Québec using a community development approach which favours the participation of various actors including older adults. It is in the area of mistreatment that she has left her mark. She has been the scientific advisor to the Québec Government in the development of the 2 action plans to counter elder abuse (published in 2010 and 2017). Marie Beaulieu is a member of the National Council on Aging of Canada since 2013. Since 2010, she is the North-American representative at INPEA (International Network for Prevention of Elder Abuse). As a member of the civil society, she represents INPEA at the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing at the United Nations since December, 2016. In September 2017, she was received as a member of the Royal Society of Canada. Over her career, she has obtained more than 45 grants as principal researcher and more than 35 as a collaborating researcher. These funds, from various sources, came from large, well-known grant organizations in Québec and Canada, or from ministries or foundations.
She has produced approximately 300 written works, has participated in more than 325 conferences as an invited speaker and is the author of more than 300 scientific exposés. Selected recent publications related to mistreatment of older adults (elder abuse) are:


Comment
What does dignity for older people mean in in CIS countries?

Olga N. Mikhailova, Saint Petersburg Institute of Bioregulation and Gerontology, Russian Federation

My comments will echo the general discourse that dignity is an inherent value of a human being and an unequivocal necessity to be visible, heard, listened to and be involved with an equal access to all assets and enjoyment of human rights. Demographic indicators highlight both challenges and opportunities which face CIS countries with their total population of about 282 mln. people. One of the distinctive characteristics of the CIS countries is their demographic diversity: while some CIS countries show very high proportion of older persons, the Central Asian CIS countries remain in demographic terms relatively “young”. For example, in the Russian Federation, the proportion of retirees (women 55+ and men 60+) has increased from 21.8% in 2010 to 24.6 in 2015. It is projected to reach 26.7% (39 mln.) by 2021 and 27.5% (40.5 mln.) by 2030. All CIS countries have a relatively low life expectancy, a decreasing number of people at working age, and a huge gender disproportion in older population. Belarus, Russia and Ukraine exhibit the widest gaps in the gender ratios. In Russia, on January 01, 2016 there were registered 2,431 women per 1,000 men over working age. This phenomenon reflects high prevalence of widowhood amongst
older women, particularly in Belarus, Russia and Ukraine. Solitary living older women do often suffer limited access to home care and more often prone to discrimination and ageism.

As recognized by the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, the consequences of population ageing include both challenges and opportunities, and the principal policy task is to overcome challenges and utilize opportunities in order to adjust to population and individual ageing. In spite of demographic heterogeneity, almost all governments of the CIS countries consider population ageing as an issue of major concern with health and medical care as top priorities, followed by social protection/income security and social services. However, comprehensive national strategy on ageing is a rare phenomenon. Most existing policies have sectoral character often challenged with their affordability.

In this context it is worth mentioning the ‘Strategy on Ageing Issues and Social Protection of Older Persons’ in Armenia whose government is trying to combat the age discrimination and provide more favourable conditions for the older employees. The policies in Belarus focus on ‘young’ (55-60) retirees by providing training programmes and support to job seekers Promotion of social participation is visible in Azerbaijan through its State Programme to Increase Social Protection of Older Citizens. Governmental and non-governmental programmes are active in Armenia, Belarus and the Russian Federation. Three CIS countries (Armenia, Moldova and Georgia) have elaborated Road Maps for Mainstreaming Ageing. These documents were developed with the support of the UN office in Geneva (UNECE).

In line with the MIPAA global commitments to mainstream ageing concerns in all policy fields “Strategy of action in the interests of older persons up to the year 2025” was adopted in Russia in 2016. The Strategy stipulates goals, principles, tasks and priorities aiming at a steady increase in longevity and life quality of older persons. Its priorities include life-long education, improvement of social services, healthcare, income security and stimulation of employment of seniors. At the same time it is necessary to bridge the gap between strategic planning and its implementation. Given the small level of pension benefits many pensioners keep their employment involuntary to avoid poverty or a sharp reduction in living standard after retirement. Caring for children and grandchildren makes the largest (60%) contribution to the domain value.

Therefore, living with dignity means improved access to lifelong learning, including Internet, and sport facilities; increased employability of seniors aged 55-64; better conditions for independent living due to improved housing availability; involvement of seniors in voluntary activities and supporting their involvement in social contacts; and improving access to health care and its quality.
The annual International Forum ‘Senior Generation’ provides a platform for experts from governments, research institutions, NGOs, business and civil society to exchange knowledge, experience and good practices at all levels, including international. The Forum provides unique opportunities to highlight the achievements for the older people in the fields of education, social and health support as well as age-friendly technologies and products for reliable, accessible and affordable support. It is a useful tool for promoting evidence-based research in various areas of ageing as a basis for policy-making.

Biographical note

Olga N. Mikhailova, Ph.D., Deputy Director of the Saint Petersburg Institute of Bio-regulation and Gerontology, Coordinator of International Research Collaboration, Academic Secretary of the Gerontological Society of the Russ. Acad. of Sci., IAGG Council member, Member of the Council of the INIA Satellite Centre for Eastern Europe in St. Petersburg, Board Member of the International Institute on Ageing, United Nations – Malta. She has been the co-organizer and scientific coordinator of the International Forum ‘Senior Generation’ held in Saint Petersburg annually since 2006, the Executive Director of the 6th European Congress of the IAGG (St. Petersburg, 2007) and of many other congresses on ageing, including an international workshop organized in collaboration with UN ECOSOC on the formulation and implementation of the state policy on ageing in the countries of Central and Eastern Europe (2008). She is the author of over 100 scientific publications including


Biographical note of the Chair

Sarah Harper is Director of the Royal Institution of Great Britain and Professor of Gerontology at the University of Oxford. She is the Co-Director of the Oxford Institute of Population Ageing which she founded in 1997 with funding from the NIA. She was appointed in 2014 to the Prime Minister’s Council for Science and Technology, which advises the Prime Minister on the scientific evidence for strategic policies and frameworks. She chaired the UK government’s Foresight Review on Ageing Populations,
and the European Ageing Index Panel for the UNECE Population Unit. She is a Governor of the Pensions Policy Institute. Sarah was the first holder of the International Chair in Old Age Financial Security, at the University of Malaya (2009/10) and her research was recognized by the 2011 Royal Society for Public Health: Arts and Health Research Award. She is a Fellow of the Royal Anthropology Institute and of the Royal Society of Arts.

Her background is in anthropology and population studies and her early research focused on migration and the social implications of demographic change. Her current research on demographic change addresses the global and regional impact of falling fertility and increasing longevity, with a particular interest in Asia and Africa. In 2016 she completed a monograph on Population Challenges for Oxford University Press and she is now working on her next book for Cambridge University Press on Population and Environmental Change.

**Biographical note of the Rapporteur**

Alexandre Sidorenko is Senior Advisor at the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research. He was previously the Chief of the Population Unit at the UN Economic Commission for Europe (Geneva, Switzerland) and Head of the United Nations programme on ageing (Vienna, Austria, and New York, USA). He holds a PhD in immunology from Kiev Medical University and has been working over the past few years on monitoring of the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, on developing evidence based policy on ageing, and providing advisory services to governments on policies on ageing. Selected publications: