



MINISTRY

OF LABOUR, SOCIAL AFFAIRS
AND FAMILY
OF THE SLOVAK REPUBLIC

**Report on the follow-up to the Regional Implementation
Strategy (RIS) of the Madrid International Plan of Action on
Ageing (MIPAA) in the Slovak Republic**

2017

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Part I

Executive summary

The statement of the fact of population ageing, which is the consequence of the current demographic development practically in all countries, is the common initial denominator of key international and national documents. However, the difference between the documents often lies in how they contextualise this fact and interpret its implications for the future. Documents aimed at active ageing do not define population ageing in the future primarily as a threat, but as an opportunity for individual societies to achieve higher levels of their development, cohesion and intergenerational sustainability. A condition for using this opportunity is to approach the issue of active ageing support as the issue of public interest and to formulate targeted support policies in this area. A major breakthrough occurred in 2013 when in June 2013 the national project Active Ageing Strategy was completed; the project aims to elaborate connections between demographic ageing and the labour market and pension scheme, including the incorporation of strategic goals in this area and a proposal for measures to meet these goals.

The National Action Plan of Active Ageing for the Period of 2014 – 2020 (further as “NPAS”), by which the Slovak Republic acknowledges active ageing as a political priority, has been developed complementarily with the Active Ageing Strategy. The NPAS was approved by the Government Resolution 688 of December 4, 2013.

MIPAA was the basis for the development of the NPAS. This is the reason why we are going to present fundamental principles by which the NPAS establishes direct connection with the aims of the MIPAA and therefore leads to their fulfilment. NPAS focuses on support of human rights of persons over the age of 50 through their activation via the public support policies. The document especially focuses on employment policies and employability of older persons, but also on policies focused on support of their life-long learning, civil and social activities outside of the labour market, support of their independence, dignity, economic and social security including protection against maltreatment in each spheres of public life and relations.

Among other goals listed in the NPAS, prevention of risk factors arising from concrete problems in each of the given areas is another important feature of the document.

Goals are divided into the areas:

1. Protection of Human Rights, Support of Active Independence and Civic Participation of Older People,
2. Employment and Employability of Older People,
3. Independent, Safe and Quality Life of Older People:
 - a. Health care,
 - b. Pension system,
 - c. Social services,
 - d. Material need and poverty.

Fulfilment of individual tasks arising from the NPAS is evaluated on a regular basis and a report is submitted to the Government once per 2 years. The last report of 2016 evaluated the fulfilment of tasks from the first 2 years of implementation of concrete measures aimed at active ageing in the society of the Slovak Republic as its fundamental public interest and permanent political priority. This report was drafted on the basis of the Report on Fulfilment of Tasks Arising from the National Programme of Active Ageing for the Period of 2014 – 2020 for the period of up to December 31, 2015.

One of the most striking accomplishments within the evaluated period is the transformation of the Committee for the Seniors operating within the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the

Slovak Republic (further as “MOLSAF”) to an advisory body of the Government of the Slovak Republic by a Government Resolution 14/2014 of January 8, 2014 into the Government Council for the Rights of Seniors and Adaptation of Public Policies to the Population Ageing Processes. This accomplishment is a proof of the importance of the relation between the state and older persons and it also marks fulfilling of one of the tasks arising from the NPAS.

Due to the fact that older persons belong to the most vulnerable groups of the society, it is important for them to know their rights and to realise when their rights are being violated. Organizations dealing with the rights and needs of older persons have to be treated as partners when creating public policies and finding solutions related to older persons. Another important accomplishment achieved thanks to active cooperation of the members of the Government Council for the Rights of Seniors and Adaptation of Public Policies to the Population Ageing Processes with the Ministry of Justice (further as “MJ”) and the Ministry of the Interior (further as “MI”) is a whole package of legislative changes focused on the protection of seniors against retailers using aggressive and misleading business practices. One of the most important achievements is tightening of regulations, supervision and sanctions related to the sale of products and services to seniors via presentations and competitions having manipulative and compulsive character. The MI has conducted several preventive projects for seniors in cooperation with organizations of the elderly focused on safe behaviour which helped seniors increase their own safety against dangerous misconduct and negative socio-pathologic phenomena. The criminal police officers carried out several presentations during preventive activities organised for the elderly during various discussions, meetings and courses.

Thanks to the cooperation with the MJ, the rights of victims of violence and violence at home committed on seniors were legislatively strengthened. An amendment of the Criminal Procedure strengthened procedural rights of victims of these crimes.

The field of pensions system witnessed an introduction of the minimum pension as of July 1, 2015, related to the number of years of gainful activity. The aim of the minimum pension is to ensure that a person who carried out gainful activity during most of their life has an income during their pension age which enables them not to be dependent on the system of material need assistance.

It will be necessary for the future to focus on the labour market which is undergoing several important changes related to the ageing of the population. It is expected that in 2050, there will be a 21% deficit in the available workforce due to the population ageing. To reach this goal, increasing the level of employment and employability of persons over the age of 50 shall be crucial, especially by the means of age management; employment services for older employees and support of silver economy; non-discriminating, safe and healthy work conditions and life-long learning.

Paying adequate attention to social services, their financing, support of their deinstitutionalization and development of field and institute centred social services will be equally important. These should be continuously developed in accordance with their deinstitutionalization resulting in the stay of the older persons in their natural environment.

General information

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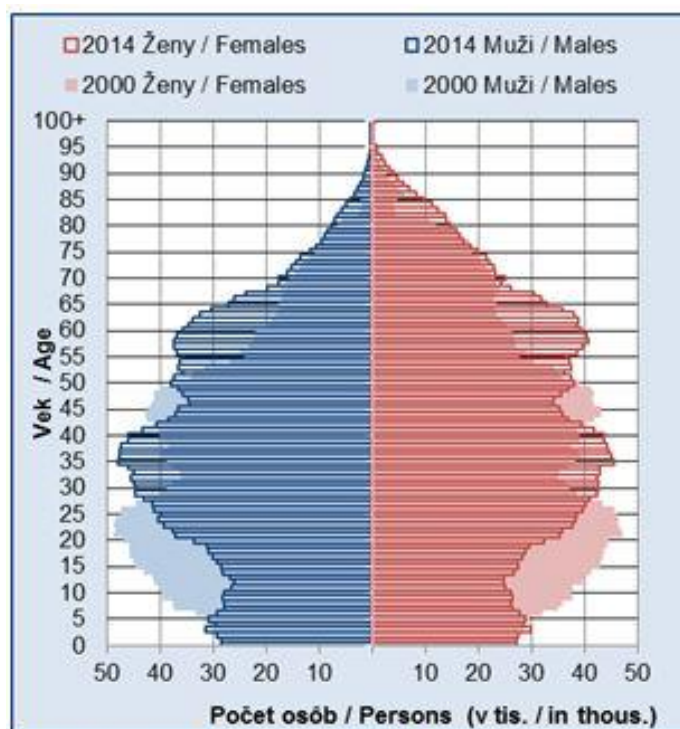
„National action plan for active ageing for the period 2014 – 2020“ was approved by the government of the Slovak Republic on 4th December 2013. National action plan for active ageing is attached in the annex.

1. National ageing situation

Demographic indicators

Population ageing constitutes for Slovakia one of the greatest challenges of the 21st century, which irreversibly affects all spheres of the functioning of society. Despite the fact that the signs of the Slovak population ageing are not so perceptible, the development of the age structure of the population points out the acceleration of population ageing in Slovakia. The retirement age is reached by baby boomers and not very numerous age groups are born at the age of the highest fecundity (physiological fertility) in the first half of the 90's of the last century.

Graph 1: Population age structure on December 31st 2000 and 2014



Zdroj dát: SU SR / Data source: SO SR.

Currently in Slovakia, the ratio of the number of people of productive age, i.e. 15 - 64 years (71,7 % in 2014) to the number of people of pre-productive age (15,3 % in 2014) and those of post-productive age (13,9 % in 2014) is still relatively favourable. However, this situation is only temporary. In years to come, the ratio of the people of productive age to those of the post-productive and pre-productive age will start changing. The post-productive age is gradually being reached by numerous generations of men and women born in the second half of the 40's and the 50's, thus fundamentally changing the ratio of the productive part of the Slovak population to its post-productive part in the next ten years. It is the shift of numerous generations of men and women at the age over 50 which significantly contributes to the increase in the number of older people in the labour market. Population decrease may be mitigated by migration. But apparently, it will not affect the accelerating process of population ageing to a more considerable extent.

Table 1: Population age-structure on December 31st of each year

Indicator	Year					
	2000	2005	2010	2012	2013	2014
	persons					
Total population	5 402 547	5 389 180	5 435 273	5 410 836	5 415 949	5 421 349

0-14	1 036 425	894 308	830 457	830 576	829 925	830 181
15-49	2 934 602	2 901 150	2 854 174	2 773 817	2 750 915	2 726 898
50-64	881 936	961 084	1 077 918	1 096 221	1 101 973	1 107 391
65+	619 584	632 638	672 724	701 222	733 136	756 879
Mean age	36,0	37,4	38,7	39,3	39,6	39,9
proportion (%)						
0-14	19,18	16,59	15,28	15,35	15,32	15,31
15-49	54,32	53,83	52,51	51,26	50,79	50,30
50-64	16,32	17,83	19,83	20,26	20,35	20,43
65+	11,47	11,74	12,38	12,96	13,54	13,96
age						
Mean age	36,0	37,4	38,7	39,3	39,6	39,9

Zdroj dát / Data source: Infostat, Populačný vývoj v Slovenskej republike 2014

The average age of the population of the Slovak Republic has also gradually increased; in 2012 it reached the age of 39,9 years.

Social and economic development

According to data of the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic drawn from the Labour Force Sample Survey ("LFSS"), since 2000 the total average number of the economically active older people in Slovakia (consisting of working people and the unemployed aged 50-64 years) has increased from the original ca. 365 thousand to nearly 675 thousand in 2012 and in 2015 to nearly 704 tisíc. In 2012 the total average economic activity rate of older people aged 50-64 years reached 61.9 %, while in 2015 it was already 63.6 %. Developments in the economic activity rate of the population aged over 50 years in the period after 2000 were influenced mainly by changes in setting the retirement age after 2003. The change in the old system of retirement after 2003 affected the more significant gradual increase in the economic activity rate for both men and women aged 60 years and over, or 53-57 years and over for women. Another approved increase of the pension age occurred in 2012, while the pension age has been gradually increasing in accordance with the increase of life expectancy of the pensioners since 2017.

The level of employment of older persons has been gradually increasing due to the reasons listed above. The most striking increase of employment growth in the period of 2012 – 2015 occurred within the 65+ age group. A considerable increase of the level of employment, influenced by the increase of the pension age, is present in the 55 - 64 years age group for women.

Table 2: Rate of employment and unemployment in 2012 and 2015¹

Age	Rate of employment (year average in %)						Rate of unemployment (year average %)					
	Total		Males		Females		Total		Males		Females	
	2012	2015	2012	2015	2012	2015	2012	2015	2012	2015	2012	2015
50 – 54	77,4	77,9	80,0	80,3	75,0	75,6	10,9	10,5	10,7	9,3	11,1	11,7
55 – 59	62,6	69,7	71,4	74,3	54,5	65,4	12,6	10,0	13,0	8,9	12,2	11,2
60 – 64	19,6	22,8	31,5	30,7	9,4	15,8	5,3	7,0	4,8	6,5	6,6	7,7
65 +	1,7	2,5	2,7	4,1	1,1	1,5	3,8	2,7	2,1	2,7	6,2	2,7
Total population	59,7*	62,7*	66,7*	69,4*	52,7*	55,9*	14,0	11,5	13,5	10,3	14,5	12,9

*15 - 64 years

Zdroj dát/ Data source: ŠÚ SR, VZPS

¹ Development before 2012 is listed in the Annex

As of 2012, the total level of unemployment has been decreasing. This applies to almost all of the age groups with the exception of the 60 – 64 age group, where the level of unemployment increased from 5.3% in 2012 to 7% in 2015.

The growing number of seniors within the population increases the expenses related to the provision of pension benefits. In 2012, a total of 5.7 bill. EUR was used to provide pension benefits, while in 2015 the number stood at 6.4 bill. EUR. The number of pension benefits provided as of December 31, 2012, stood at 1 301 055 (not including pensions funded by the state), while as of December 31, 2015, the number increased to 1 642 919. The largest share is represented by old-age pensions. The average solo old-age pension amounted to 376 EUR as of December 31, 2012, and as of December 31, 2015, the benefit amounted to 411 EUR, according to the data of the Social Insurance Agency.

Table 3: Ratio of average solo old-age pension (as of December 31) to average wage in the economy

Year	Ratio of average solo old-age pension (as of December 31)	Average wage in the economy brutto*	Ratio of average solo old-age pension (as of December 31) to average wage in the economy (brutto)
2012	375,89 €	805 €	46,69 %
2013	390,51 €	824 €	47,39 %
2014	400,18 €	858 €	46,64 %
2015	411,06 €	883 €	46,55 %

Zdroj dát/Source: Sociálna poisťovňa/Social Insurance Agency

The ratio of average solo old-age pension (as of December 31) to average wage in the economy is 46%.

2. Method

The basis for the preparation of this document was the report on the fulfilment of tasks of the NPAS, as the NPAS itself includes individual tasks that can be used to meet the goals of the Vienna Declaration and commitments of the RIS/MIPAA. The NPAS itself was developed by the MOLSAF within the activities of the Inter-departmental Working Group for the Preparation of the National Programme of Active Ageing for the period of 2014 – 2020. The NPAS was therefore developed in close cooperation with all ministries, the Statistical Office, self-governing regions, the Association of Cities and Towns of Slovakia, the Union of Pensioners of Slovakia, the Association of Christian Seniors, the Forum for the Assistance of the Elderly, the Confederation of Trade Unions of the Slovak Republic, the Association of the Social Services Providers in the Slovak Republic, the National Union of Employers, the Federation of Employer’s Associations of the Slovak Republic, etc.

These institutions participate on fulfilling the tasks of the NPAS at the same time. The MOLSAF presented a draft of the Report on Fulfilling of Tasks Resulting from the National Programme of Active Ageing for the period of 2014 – 2020 up to December 31, 2015. This report was prepared on the basis of partial reports provided to the MOLSAF by all ministries, other central state administrative bodies, institutions dependent on the state budget, the National Bank of Slovakia, the Radio and Television of Slovakia, the Social Insurance Agency, self-governing regions, the Association of Cities and Towns of Slovakia, the Union of Pensioners of Slovakia, the Association of Christian Seniors, the Forum for the Assistance of the Elderly, etc.

The Report on Fulfilling of Tasks Resulting from the National Programme of Active Ageing for the period of 2014 – 2020 up to December 31, 2015 was approved by the Government Council for the Rights of Seniors and Adaptation of Public Policies to the Population Ageing Processes, which also

submitted several amending proposals. This way the representatives of older persons were able to directly evaluate the fulfilment of tasks arising from the NPAS.

This national report on the implementation of MIPAA therefore originates from the real evaluation of tasks developed by the MOLSAF on the basis of partial reports of all relevant institutions and associations and it was developed not only the representatives of the seniors in the Government Council, but also the Government itself.

Supplementary information necessary for the development of this report was provided the Statistical Office of the Slovak Republic, the Social Insurance Agency, The Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, as well information available to the MOLSAF from other sources.

Part II

1. National actions and progress in implementation of MIPAA/RIS

Goal 1: Longer working life is encouraged and ability to work is maintained

Support of employment of older persons through active labour market policy

Several measures, programmes, projects and activities aimed at facilitating the integration and re-integration of jobseekers, especially groups of disadvantaged jobseekers such as persons aged 50+, are conducted within the active labour market policy (further as "ALMP"). ALMP instruments also help develop business by supporting the creation of new jobs and maintaining the existing jobs and employees employed there. The majority of the ALMP instruments, in accordance with the Act No. 5/2004 Coll. on Employment Services, was implemented and funded via national projects from the Operational Programme Employment and Social Inclusion of the European Social Fund (further as "ESF") during the reference period. The ALMP instruments are co-financed also from the state budget, in accordance with the rules of the ESF, the usual ratio being 85%:15%.

The National Project "We Want to be Active on the Labour Market" (50+)

The aim of the project is to improve the situation of the unemployed persons aged 50+, increase their employability and employment. The aim is to decrease the level of unemployment of the selected target group of disadvantaged jobseekers aged 50+ via creation of new jobs. Creation of new jobs for persons aged 50+ is supported by financial contributions during the period of up to 12 months for employers to cover the expenses of advance insurance payments for compulsory public health insurance, social insurance and compulsory contributions for old-age insurance paid by the employer. The employer is obliged to maintain this job at least for the period of 12 months. The project is implemented from December 2015 to November 2018, the budget being 30 mill. EUR.

Advisory services for increasing the employment of older persons

There were 90 242 registered jobseekers aged 50+ on average in 2015. The number represented 25.45% of all jobseekers. Offices of labour, social affairs and family continuously provide all clients with information and advisory services, including clients aged 50+. In 2014 the number of provided information and advisory services stood at 161 565, in 2015 the number increased to 288 216. This group of jobseekers was also invited to job interviews. In 2015, there were 3 624 job interviews offering 30 068 jobs in total. The total number of accepted jobseekers to these jobs stood at 3 204 jobseekers. Out of this number, 492 jobseekers were aged 50+ (15% of all accepted jobseekers). In 2015, a total number of 1 159 jobseekers participated on education training courses on information technologies, 178 of them being aged 50+.

Advisory services and inspection in the field of creation of non-discriminatory, safe and healthy work conditions

The National Labour Inspectorate carried out inspections focused on creation of non-discriminatory, safe and healthy work conditions via individual labour inspectorates in each individual region while focusing on establishments where the number of 50+ aged employees is highest. The total number of inspections amounted to 42 and were focused on creation of adequate work conditions for older employees (inspection of occupational safety and health focusing on older employees, adaptation of workplaces from the ergonomical point of view, work conditions considering health of the employees, psycho-social issues, stress-inducing factors, etc.). The subjects controlled were provided with free advisory services. It also has to be noted that within the “Advisory Services and Inspection in the Field of Creation of Non-discriminatory, Safe and Healthy Work Conditions” programme; labour inspectors were trained in the field of identification of discrimination, including discrimination due to age. This training took place in the second half of 2013.

Legislation related to non-discrimination of older employees

The currently valid and effective Labour Code prohibits discrimination due to age of employees. In accordance with Article 1 of the Fundamental Principles of the Labour Code, natural persons shall have the right to work and to the free choice of employment, to fair and satisfying working conditions and to the protection against arbitrary dismissal from employment in accordance with the principle of equal treatment, stipulated for the area of labour-law relations under a special act on equal treatment in certain areas and on the protection against discrimination and on amending of certain acts (the Anti-discrimination Act). These rights belong to them without any restriction and discrimination on the grounds age, with the exception of a case where different treatment is justified by the nature of the activities to be performed in employment, or by the circumstances under which these activities are to be performed, if this reason consists in the actual and decisive requirement for the job, provided the objective is legitimate and the requirement adequate.

Increasing the IT literacy of seniors

Within the new programme period of the Operational Programme Integrated Infrastructure, a specific target 7.6 – Improving the IT skills and inclusion of disadvantaged individuals into the digital market in relation to the Inclusive eGovernment initiative was introduced. Each person, including those belonging to the disadvantaged age group 55 – 74 years of age has the right to access to eGovernment. By applying these principles, digital gap has been steadily decreasing and the disadvantaged persons are able to participate on public administration. Another important aim is to increase the period of time during the person can live independently in their preferred environment and this aim can be achieved by assisted life technologies and tele-medicine.

Goal 2: Participation, non-discrimination and social inclusion of older persons are promoted

Transformation of the Committee for the Seniors under the auspices of the MOLSAF to an advisory body of the Government of the Slovak Republic

The MOLSAF closely cooperates and maintains active partnership with all subjects dealing with needs and interests of seniors. One of the most striking accomplishments within the evaluated period is the transformation of the Committee for the Seniors operating within the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic (further as “MOLSAF”) to an advisory body of the Government of the Slovak Republic by a Government Resolution 14/2014 of January 8, 2014 to the Government Council for the Rights of Seniors and Adaptation of Public Policies to the Population Ageing Processes. The council is a permanent, advisory, coordinative and initiative body dealing with the rights of seniors in everyday life, equal opportunities and equal treatment of seniors and also focusing on closer cooperation with all relevant subjects in overcoming the population ageing. The

council also submits its proposals, coordinates and inspects the implementation of measures aimed at elimination of negative impact of population ageing on the economy, labour market, pension system and other aspects of the society, while also issuing its standpoints towards legislative acts proposals and other pieces of legislation which could have an impact on the situation of older persons, it also submits its proposals to ministries and other central state institutions focused on new legislation in the field of rights and obligations of seniors in all aspects of life.

Memorandum on Partnership and Cooperation between the self-governing regions and the Union of Pensioners of Slovakia

Older persons and seniors are active partners in creation of public policies and activities dealing with the protection of interests and needs of older generations in the Slovak Republic also at the regional level. Several self-governing regions (Bratislava, Trnava, Trenčín and Košice) have concluded a Memorandum on Partnership and Cooperation with regional offices of the Union of Pensioners of Slovakia, the aim of which is to increase the quality of life and dignity of seniors residing within the territory of the given region. Other regions also confirm active cooperation with seniors. Some of the regions have also established “Municipal Parliament of Seniors”, where the older persons can provide feedback towards the conditions of life of older persons in their city.

Evaluation of policies from the point of view of their impact on the elderly

Legislative and also non-legislative proposals submitted to the inter-ministerial discussion process and to the Government meetings have to include the so-called “selected impacts clause” and also an analysis of social impacts if social impacts have been identified. The methodology for the preparation of this clause is established in the Unified Methodology for evaluation of selected impacts. On October 1, 2015, an amendment to the methodology was introduced which strengthened the focus on vulnerable groups, including older persons. The assessment of impacts has to include overview of impacts on households, access to resources, rights, goods and services focused on potentially vulnerable groups in relation to the risk of poverty and social exclusion of older persons. When assessing impacts on equal opportunities, it has to be examined whether the proposal also takes into account equal treatment on the ground of age and whether it could lead to indirect discrimination. One part of the clause focuses on impact on employment and labour market from the point of view of specific age groups, e.g. whether such a proposal could be a reason for premature withdrawal of individuals from the labour market.

Guidance for seniors through the free Senior Line

The “Forum for the Assistance of the Elderly” public association implements projects supported by the MOLSAF in order to support the activities and maintenance of the state-wide Senior Line. Specific problems encountered by the seniors are monitored via this line and solved in cooperation with the selected experts. Throughout 2014, more than 2900 citizens were assisted via this line. There is a great demand for this service. In 2015, guidance was provided for more than 200 citizens each month. The guidance focused e.g. on providing assistance for victims of violence and in this respect, the municipality and the police were notified and they provided the required assistance. The citizens were provided guidance on how to defend themselves against violence and how to prevent violation of their rights. If there were complaints related to maltreatment of the elderly by social services providers, the Forum informed the respective self-governing region and inspection institutions, as well as the Inspection Body of the MOLSAF. A lot of the cases were positively concluded and new measures focusing on overcoming the discovered deficiencies were adopted. The Forum also provides assistance in its consulting centre, where they assisted 450 citizens throughout 2014 in overcoming difficult situations; protect their property, life and personal freedom.

Protection of the elderly against maltreatment and abuse at retail sales

On the basis of active cooperation between the Government Council for the Rights of Seniors and Adaptation of Public Policies to the Population Ageing Processes with the MJ and MI, several

measures aimed at prevention of illegal misconduct against seniors at retail sales have been adopted, especially the new Act No. 102/2014 Coll. on the protection of consumers at retail sales or provision of services on the basis of an agreement concluded at a distance or an agreement concluded outside of the sellers' premises, which tightens the regulation, inspection and sanctions related to manipulative retail sales of goods and services to the elderly. At the same time, Annex 1 of the Act No. 250/2007 Coll. on the protection of consumers was adjusted and amended to better protect consumers against sellers using manipulative and aggressive business practices. Inspections and sanctions related to manipulative and aggressive retail sales of goods and services to the elderly have been made stricter, while also improving and deepening cooperation with the Slovak Trade Inspection. The Police in cooperation with the Department of Crime-prevention of the MI published several leaflets with information on manipulative and aggressive business practices and distributed them to the regional Police departments to help the officers in their fight against these criminal activities. The MI together with organizations of the elderly organised a number of preventive projects for the elderly focused on safe conduct which helped the elderly to improve their own safety against negative socio-pathological phenomena. The Criminal Police officers gave several lectures to the seniors regarding the above-mentioned criminal activities. A new Act No. 391/2015 Coll. on alternative solving of consumer disputes was adopted to introduce new way of solving disputes between the seller and the customer. The act enables the consumers to turn to an independent subject when getting into a dispute with a retailer. This independent subject will attempt to help both parties find a quick and fair solution of consumer conflicts, which will prevent long judicial proceedings related to these disputes. Of course, the possibility to bring the case to the court still remains.

Legislative strengthening of rights of victims of violence at home

In 2015, the Criminal Procedure was amended. This amendment represents an important strengthening of rights of victims of violence at home committed on seniors. This amendment widened procedural rights of victims. A senior has e.g. the right be accompanied by a confidant who accompanies them and provides them with assistance, especially psychological support. Depending on each individual case, criminal proceedings institutions provide the victim with information on the provision of necessary healthcare, specialised psychological support, other types of support, procedures related to submission of criminal notification and of the position of the victim in these procedures, conditions of provision of assistance in case of life threatening situation, conditions of access to legal services, etc.

Goal 3: Dignity, health and independence in older age are promoted and safeguarded

Support for timely diagnosis of tumour diseases and lowering the number of deaths due to cardio-vascular diseases

In 2014, the National Programme of Prevention of Heart and Blood Vessels Diseases, the National Diabetological Programme and oncological screening programmes were implemented to the National Programme of Health Support (further as NPHS). The NPHS relies on the results of health status monitoring of citizens of Slovakia and also on projects and programmes focusing on monitoring of risk factors of chronic non-infectious diseases. The Ministry of Health has allocated financial resources in order to lower mortality from cardio-vascular diseases and increase timely diagnosis of tumour diseases, as well as for the prevention activities from the NPHS related to diabetes mellitus. The resources amounted to 200 000 EUR and were used for preventive information programmes and a mass-media campaign related to these health issues broadcasted by the Radio and Television of Slovakia and also for establishing the Consultation Centre for Health Protection and Support at the Public Health Authority of the Slovak Republic.

Education activities for healthy lifestyle

The Public Health Authority and its regional offices regularly organize education activities aimed at support of active ageing and healthy lifestyle throughout the territory of the Slovak Republic at the occasion of the so-called “world days”. These include e.g. The Week of the Brain, The World Day of the Alzheimer Disease, The World Day of Activities, The International Day of the Elderly, The World Day of Osteoporosis, or activities organised in October during the Month of Respect towards the Elderly. During the International Day of the Elderly in 2015, a country-wide activity called Days of Health for Seniors took place, during which 1366 seniors in total (1037 women and 329 men in the age group 65 – 69 years) were medically examined.

Improving the access to decent and available housing

The State Fund for the Development of Housing has provided 618 200 EUR for the creation of social services establishments to selected municipalities in order to support social rental housing.

Legislative adjustment of the quality of social services

An amendment of the Act on Social Services effective as of January 1, 2014, introduced changes and adjustments to the legal regulation of the provision of social services. A new aspect of the quality conditions of the provided social services was introduced – strengthening of human rights and freedoms in the assessment of the quality of social services provided. A new Annex No. 2 to the act adjusting the quality of social services according to set criteria, standards and indicators, as well as assessment framework for the quality of social services was established.

Better accessibility, quality and financial sustainability of social services

The Regional Operational Programme (further as “ROP”) via its measure 2.1 called “Improving the quality of the provided social services by renovation, enlargement, modernisation and construction of social services establishments and establishments for social and legal protection of children and social guardianship, including their additional equipment” improved the quality of life of seniors in the respective establishments by construction, renovation, enlargement and modernisation of social services establishments, as well as the so-called community centres as institutions of civil infrastructure focused on support of social inclusion. 6 calls for the support were declared within this priority axis which amounted to 240 558 847 EUR – more than 100 social services establishments were supported in this way.

Legislative support of deinstitutionalization of social services

An amendment of the Act No. 448/2008 Coll. on Social Services from 2014 created legal conditions for the process of deinstitutionalization of social services with the aim of providing community oriented social services. Introduction of changes related to the transformation of resident social services towards community social services supporting the process of deinstitutionalization of social services resulted in the creation of adequate conditions for prolonged stay of clients in their natural environment.

Financial support of deinstitutionalization of social services

As of December 31, 2015, a pilot project called “National Project of Support of Deinstitutionalization of Social Services” focusing on the creation of fundamental conditions for successful transformation of institutionalized care to community care and starting of deinstitutionalization process of social services in 10 selected establishments throughout the Slovak Republic was concluded. 409 participants were trained (mainly employees of social services establishments and recipients of social services, as well as employees of state and regional institutions) during this project. The participating establishments are trained in the process of transformation and they are currently working on their Transformation Plans. Experts created the so-called Manual of the Creation of Transformation Plans and methodology of each individual key area of the transformation of institutionalized services to community based services in field of supported employment, provision of community services and

changes of the environment during the project. Another two national projects are going to be created as follow-ups to the pilot project. The aim of the first one is a specialised education and training of the management of the providers – social services establishments – as well as the employees of founders – self-governing regions – to be able to manage changes arising from the deinstitutionalization process. Its duration is planned for 66 months and the number of expected establishments participating annually is 16, with 96 establishments being expected to participate during the whole project. The project will be tied to investment support through the Integrated Regional Operational Programme (further as “IROP”). Social services establishments which prepare a transformation plan of high quality and will be able to apply for the support from IROP, will also participate on the second national project of the MOLSAF ensuring support for education of social services employees – the National Project Support of the Transformation of Institutionalized Care to Community Care in the Field of Social Services – Phase 2 – education and preparation of employees and recipients of social services in the process of deinstitutionalization.

Development of nursing services

The MOLSAF Implementation Agency carried out the Support of Nursing Service National Project (further as “SNSNP”) from January 2014 to October 2015 with a total allocation of 28 mill. EUR throughout the Slovak Republic, with the exception of the capital city region. The project was financed from the resources of the European Social Fund under the Operational Programme Employment and Social Inclusion. The aim of the project was to enable the provision of home nursing service to a larger amount of persons requiring assistance of another person and to establish the pre-conditions of broadening of provision of nursing service to regions which were able to provide this service in a limited amount or not at all. The project increased the availability of nursing service for citizens with serious health disability, with unfavourable health condition and for seniors and at the same time it also supported their stay in their natural environment within their family and community and it also decreased the demand for institutionalised care. Another aim of the national project was support of social inclusion through the newly created jobs for persons working in nursing services.

Improvement of social services at the regional level

Each employee of a social services establishment within the Košice self-governing region has a personal life-long learning plan. In accordance with these plans, the employees participate on training courses in the field of memory training, ergotherapy and basal stimulation, social rehabilitation, job morale, stress overcoming, diabetes mellitus (symptoms and first aid), burnout syndrome, decubitus prevention. All of these employees currently participate on a training focused on how to deal with an aggressive client. The Prešov self-governing region organizes a competition of nursing services employees, the aim of which is experience sharing. The Žilina self-governing region makes use of various instruments for creation of community environment for the social services recipients, e.g. they decrease the capacity of individual establishments by introducing single bed rooms or create specialised outpatient service premises within the establishments focused on day stay, or create conditions for clients able to live independently with only a certain kind of support.

Activities for higher safety and quality of groceries

The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development of the Slovak Republic also participates on policies focused on the elderly by guiding groceries producers towards the need to produce nutritionally adequate products for older persons. This is achieved through professional trade unions constituted of individual producers. In the field of preparing the relevant European legislation, the ministry enforces application of elements necessary for the specific needs of the elderly (e.g. font size on food packaging, nutritive value, preparation); the ministry also supports specialised lectures and mass-media discussions focused on rational eating habits of the elderly, publishing of articles and specialised magazines; publishing of information on food legislation and protection of consumers focused on older persons.

Goal 4: Intergenerational solidarity is maintained and enhanced

Introduction of the minimum pension

As of July 1, 2015, an amendment of the Act No. 461/2003 Coll. on Social Insurance introduced the minimum pension, the amount of which depends on the years worked. The aim is to ensure that an insured person who has worked throughout most of their life has access to an income during their pension age at the level that would not force them to be dependent on the material need assistance. As a result, any old-age pension or invalidity pension paid after reaching the pension age will be increased so that the sum of this pension will be higher than the subsistence minimum for a single adult person, provided the person meets the prescribed requirements for the minimum pension.

Support of easily reachable and affordable transport for pensioners

The Ministry of Transport and Construction of the Slovak Republic enables seniors to travel by public rail transport at a reduced tariff in order to ensure these persons have access to affordable and even free of charge transport. Persons aged 60+ are able to purchase the so-called SENIOR RAIL PLUS card enabling them to pay reduced prices up to 40% for rail transport during the whole year. The price of this ticket is 9.90 EUR. Persons aged 62+ travel by rail transport free of charge. Mobility of older persons is supported by modernisation of rail stops.

Strengthening of inter-generational understanding by the means of cultural activities

The Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic (further as "MC") has created a special funding scheme – Culture of the Disadvantaged Groups focused especially on supporting of culture accessibility for vulnerable groups, including seniors. The MC has used 375 300 EUR in 2014 and 375 500 EUR in 2015 through this scheme. The Union of Pensioners asked the MC for a grant (which it got) to be used for XV. Nationwide Parade of Seniors' Folk Bands, II. Nationwide Exhibition of Handmade Products made by seniors in 2014 and Nationwide Presentations of Prose and Poetry. These activities lead to the support of members of the Union of Pensioners and members of their families. Children and young persons are invited to these events in order to strengthen intergenerational solidarity and positive perception of the seniors by the youngsters.

Prevention of social exclusion and support of physical and psychological health of seniors

In the 2015 the MOLSAF has, in accordance with Act No. 544/2010 Coll. on Grants by MOLSAF, provided a grant focused on prevention of social exclusion and renewal of physical and psychological health of persons who are beneficiaries of the old-age pension, early old-age pension or retirement pension and who at the same time do not carry out a gainful activity, amounting to 538 250 EUR via 3 subjects – Confederation of Trade Unions of the Slovak Republic, Trade Union of Food Producers and the Union of Pensioners. A total of 10 765 persons participated on activities organised through this grant.

Appreciation of active seniors in the Senior of the Year competition

The Forum for Assistance of the Elderly civil society annually declares a competition called Senior of the Year, the aim of which is to appreciate the most active seniors from various regions of the country who can serve as an example not only for their peers, but also for the whole of society. This event also shows the importance of the elderly for the society, their environment and family which leads to better intergenerational communication and relations. 20 persons were awarded in 2014, while in 2015 the number stood at 21. Three persons were awarded a special prize of the Minister of the Interior for criminality prevention. Representatives of MOLSAF, MI and the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs of the Slovak Republic also participated on this event. The event was also supported by a grant mechanism of the Ministry of Foreign and European Affairs called Support and Protection of Human Rights and Freedoms. The event has gained a lot of attraction from the mass-media as well.

Voluntary activities in the regions

Several regions of the country witnessed voluntary work of the elderly which is perceived as an important phenomenon and it is used to help organise public events, e.g. child events and cultural performances. In the Žilina self-governing region the voluntary work is used to strengthen intergenerational solidarity within creative workshops of seniors and children, amateur artists' workshops as well as when participating on lectures for children within the Support of Community Activities project. The Union of Pensioners confirms that a lot of seniors participate on voluntary work for other seniors and they provide each other with mutual assistance. The topic of voluntarism was a crucial topic for the Union of Pensioners in 2014.

Sensibilization of the public society in relation to active ageing

In connection with its aim related to the provision of adequate time for the seniors, the Radio and Television of Slovakia (further as "RTVS") fulfils its obligation to dedicate its time to seniors in accordance with Act No. 532/2010 Coll. on the RTVS. The support of decent ageing consists of creation of life-long learning systems, adequate social security, strengthening of voluntarism and active participation on the family and civil life. A fulfilling and dignified life for all generations can only be achieved by integrating all age groups in this process. The RTVS supports this interest by preparing and broadcasting TV programmes focusing on the elderly and healthcare, housing, family and professional care, participation on the community life, life-long learning, meeting cultural needs of the elderly, honouring of human rights. RTVS programmes reflect ageing as a life-long process and it has to be perceived as such by the society. Preparation for old age has to be a part of life-long development of physical, economical, psychological, cultural, spiritual and other elements of personality and it is also a natural part of our lives.

Parliament of Seniors' activities

Active seniors "work" in the Parliament of Seniors especially established for them. This parliament is an important subject and can influence political and legal decisions, participate on the creation and adoption of legislative proposals directly related to the elderly in the country. Seniors from different regions have specialised knowledge of this topic and they can actively comment on various documents, provide feedback and find solutions. Seniors use the gained knowledge from various events and lectures they participated on and consequently they provide their organisations with crucial information, where they discuss current issues with their colleagues. They also provide feedback to the municipalities. The Parliament of Seniors has its own statute and plan of work and it represents an adequate form of active participation of the elderly on presenting their proposals for improving their lives. They also invite experts to find solutions for cases of misconduct, violence and abuse.

2. Conclusions and priorities for the future

The Slovak Republic, through its institutions and organizations which participated on preparing the answers to this questionnaire, plans to continue fulfilling the individual tasks and adopting measures in order to support active ageing. Coming from the last report on the status of tasks from the NPAS, the following tasks shall be focused on in the near future:

Age management field

MOLSAF in cooperation with Employers' representatives, Regional self-government and scientific research and academic institutions are about to define age management and establish principles of age management for employers (in both the private and public sector). They will also motivate employers (in both the private and public sector) to apply age management, promote the employment of older people and motivate employees to remain in the labour market. conduct a public awareness and information campaign oriented on employers (in both the private and public

sector) and trade unions in order to draw their attention to the negative demographic development and principles of age management. To draw up a publication aimed at applying the principles of age management, including examples of good practice. Upon agreement with social partners to regularly and publicly evaluate and recognise employers who behave helpfully to older employees. It is also needed to determine the minimum scope of the necessary applied principles of age management, including the audit system for their application. To apply these rules in all organisations and companies, where the state or a self-government acts in the capacity of an employer or a dominant shareholder. To advise the general public of employers to observe these rules.

Measures related to the labour market

In the field of participation of older persons at the labour market it will be necessary to continue supporting intensive training courses focused on IT for older jobseekers in the future. Support should also be given to the possibility of shortened work time contracts for these persons until they achieve the pension age. Employers should be motivated to create the so-called “shared jobs” for older employees and to support new atypical forms of employment increasing the flexibility of the labour market for older employees. The MOLSAF updates the existing and create new active labour market measures focusing on sustainability of older employees at the labour market, as well as objective assessment of work capacities of older employees.

Continue the support of social services related to deinstitutionalization of social services

A particular focus has to be paid to effective link between health and social services. Because of this it will be necessary make the financing of social services more effective and support the introduction of a new benefit depending on the level of dependency for all establishments. It will also be necessary to find solutions to problems related to wages of social services employees in close cooperation with municipalities. Deinstitutionalization of social services has to continue in the future as well. One possibility is to focus on the concluded national project. Two new mutually related projects focusing on deinstitutionalization of social services are currently being developed. These national projects are prepared in close synergy with financial support within the Integrated Regional Operational Programme. Each high-capacity social services establishment will be able to participate on the NP DI – Phase 1 project under the condition that these establishments will be willing to work on deinstitutionalization process and which will meet the requirements prescribed in the Main Principles of Operation Selection document in accordance with the Integrated Regional Operational Programme. Each participating establishment is going to have an assessment of preparedness and a timescale of activities devised. Education and preparation of transformation plans, as the main activity, is going to take between one to two years – that is why the supposed number of participating establishments is quantified on annual basis. Having finished management education and transformation plans preparation within the Operational Programme Human Resources financed from the European Social Fund, the establishments will be prepared to apply for financial support of IROP and will be able to enter the NP DI - Phase 2 through which the employees and clients of the establishments are going to be trained in the field of transformation from institutionalized to deinstitutionalized community care.

Support of development of nursing care through a national project in new programming period

It will be necessary to continue supporting and development of the nursing service in the following programming period. The National Project Support of Nursing Service supported by the European Social Fund within the Operational Programme Human Resources is going to fund these activities. The main focus of the national project is to support further development of nursing services at home in order to prevent the need of placing natural persons dependant on assistance of others to residential facilities. The project’s ambition is to enable provision of nursing services to a larger group of dependant persons in their natural home environment, increase the availability of nursing services, create adequate conditions for preservation, renewal or development of capabilities of natural persons and their families to live an independent life, support the provision of nursing services in less developed regions which are unable to meet the demand for these services,

create/sustain jobs and therefore support employment in the regions. Several important changes have been conducted within the project coming from implementation practice of former projects. Pre-conditions of support have been reset in order to ensure regional proportionality of support according to the total area of self-governing regions and at the same time new activities are going to be introduced in the Bratislava region. The new project shall enable higher flexibility of nurses' work contract so that the provider will be able to cover the needs of larger groups of persons. Besides the more effective provision of nursing services itself, another important outcome of the project should be a proposal for introduction of a specialised system focusing on optimised financial support of this social service.

Activities within the system of pension security

MOLSAF plans to consider the possibility of introducing alternative conditions for old-age pension. Another task is to consider the possibility of gradual retirement. MOLSAF also plans to prepare a proposal for the structure of gradual retirement. To conduct information campaign about this option and then make a survey of potential interest in gradual retirement. To prepare an impact study and based on its results decide on possible implementation of the measure. Another task for MOLSAF in this area is to analyse the possibility of introducing a new benefit provided from the system of supplementary pension savings, which would be intended for people in pre-retirement age.

Support of life-long learning

For the purposes of improving the quality of life, to create new and develop existing opportunities for education of older people in order to support their active life and extent and enhance their opportunities for employment or self-employment in the labour market. Currently, education of older people are provided by institutions of further education, Universities of the Third Age at universities in Slovakia, Academies of the Third Age which are operated especially with the support of towns and villages, seniors' clubs, and other educational institutions (e.g. civic associations). However, the interest of older people in education is currently much higher than the possibilities of these institutions and it will continue to grow due to the developments in the age structure of the population. It is therefore necessary to gradually expand educational opportunities of older people and focus them not only on interest education and leisure activities, but also on professional education for needs of the labour market. People in pre-retirement age belong among the most vulnerable groups in the labour market. This economically active part of the population will be increasingly numerous as a result of population ageing (increase in the number of older people within the population) and workforce ageing, which will require introduction of specific measures in the labour market. The contribution of education does not consist only in supporting the active lifestyles of older people, but it also manifests itself in increasing the economic and society-wide benefits of older individuals.

Annexes

1. National action plan for active ageing for the period 2014 – 2020