

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

**Guidelines**  
**for Reporting on National Follow-up**  
**to the UNECE Regional Implementation Strategy (RIS)**  
**of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA)**

**April 2011**

**Adopted by the Bureau of the Working Group on Ageing**

## Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b> .....	
<b>Outline of the Report on the Follow-Up to the Regional Implementation Strategy (RIS) of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) in [country]</b> .....	
Executive Summary .....	
General Information.....	
<b>1. National ageing situation</b> .....	
<b>2. Methodology</b> .....	
<b>3. Review and Appraisal of National Actions to fulfil Commitments of UNECE MIPAA/RIS</b> .....	
a) General framework .....	
b) Instrumental assessment .....	
c) National capacities .....	
RIS Commitment 1: To mainstream ageing in all policy fields with the aim of bringing societies and economies into harmony with demographic change to achieve a society for all ages .....	
RIS Commitment 2: To ensure full integration and participation of older persons in society.....	
RIS Commitment 3: To promote equitable and sustainable economic growth in response to population ageing.....	
RIS Commitment 4: To adjust social protection systems in response to demographic changes and their social and economic consequences.....	
RIS Commitment 5: To enable labour markets to respond to the economic and social consequences of population ageing.....	
RIS Commitment 6: To promote lifelong learning and adapt the educational system in order to meet the changing economic, social and demographic conditions .....	
RIS Commitment 7: To strive to ensure quality of life at all ages and maintain independent living including health and well-being .....	
RIS Commitment 8: To mainstream a gender approach in an ageing society .....	
RIS Commitment 9: To support families that provide care for older persons and promote intergenerational and intra-generational solidarity among their members.....	
RIS Commitment 10: To promote the implementation and follow-up of the regional implementation strategy through regional cooperation.....	
<b>4. Conclusions and Priorities for the Future</b> .....	
<b>Annex</b> .....	

## Introduction

The report of the United Nations Secretary General “Further implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002” (MIPAA) to the 48<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission for Social Development in 2010 (E/CN.5/2010/4) stated that it is highly important for countries to share information, experiences and good practices, to draw conclusions and to set priorities for future cooperation and technical assistance. This is most relevant **at the regional level and in particular during the review and appraisal exercises** organized by the regional commissions. In the UNECE region, the first cycle of review and appraisal of implementation of MIPAA/RIS was concluded in 2007 at the UNECE Ministerial Conference hosted by Spain in León. The secretariat of the UNECE is currently engaged in conducting the second review and appraisal cycle<sup>1</sup> receiving support from the Working Group on Ageing and its Bureau and the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, Vienna (ECV). The UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing, to be hosted by Austria in Vienna on 19-20 September 2012, is planned as a concluding regional event of the second cycle of review and appraisal of MIPAA/RIS implementation.

The present guidelines are designed to assist member States in reporting on the national follow-up to the UNECE Regional Implementation Strategy (RIS) of MIPAA. They are intended for national focal points on ageing and all the others involved in preparing the report. It is hoped that the outline provided in this document will help the focal points on ageing to organize existing and newly collected material into a concise report. The harmonized structure of country reports is also helpful for summarizing ageing related developments across the region and for exchanging experiences between member States.

Information provided through these member States’ reports will form the basis for discussions at the 2012 UNECE Conference on Ageing in Vienna, Austria. “**Ensuring a society for all ages: promoting quality of life and active ageing**” will be the main theme of the Ministerial Conference therefore it is expected that national reports will focus on these aspects where relevant and possible. A synthesis report based on national findings will be prepared by the UNECE secretariat and presented at the Conference.

It is suggested that the length of the country report is 6000 to 8000 words (12-16 A4 pages, single spaced, excluding annexes), including an executive summary of 500 to 700 words. The **deadline for submitting this report to the UNECE secretariat is 31 October 2011**. For additional background information, you are referred to the following documents available on the UNECE Population Unit’s website <http://www.unece.org/pau/>

- *Regional Implementation Strategy (RIS) of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing* ([http://www.unece.org/pau/\\_docs/ece/2002/ECE\\_AC23\\_2002\\_2\\_Rev6\\_e.pdf](http://www.unece.org/pau/_docs/ece/2002/ECE_AC23_2002_2_Rev6_e.pdf))
- *Berlin Ministerial Declaration – A Society for All Ages in the UNECE Region* ([http://www.unece.org/pau/\\_docs/ece/2002/ECE\\_AC23\\_2002\\_3\\_Rev2\\_e.pdf](http://www.unece.org/pau/_docs/ece/2002/ECE_AC23_2002_3_Rev2_e.pdf))
- *León Ministerial Declaration - A Society for All Ages: Challenges and Opportunities* ([http://www.unece.org/pau/\\_docs/ece/2007/ECE\\_AC30\\_2007\\_2.e.pdf#Page=6](http://www.unece.org/pau/_docs/ece/2007/ECE_AC30_2007_2.e.pdf#Page=6))
- *Guidelines for the review and appraisal of MIPAA: bottom-up approach* (<http://www.un.org/ageing/documents/MIPAA/GuidelinesAgeingfinal13%20Dec2006.pdf>)

---

<sup>1</sup> The modalities of the second review and appraisal of MIPAA, to be carried out on national and regional levels in 2011-2012, were outlined in the Secretary General’s report to the 49<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission for Social Development in 2011 (E/CN.5/2011/7)

## Outline of the Report on the Follow-Up to the Regional Implementation Strategy (RIS) of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) in [country]

### Executive Summary

Please provide an executive summary of 500 to 700 words (1-1.5 A4 pages, single-spaced) according to the structure below:

- *Methodology used for this report, in particular an explanation of the bottom-up participatory approach used, if any*
- *Brief review of national progress in fulfilling (or lagging behind) the commitments of MIPAA/RIS. Include **three to five major achievements** since 2007 and **three to five important aspects to be improved** in the future*

**Relevant Sources:** Official reports and interviews of members of the Government Ageing Council (GoAC) and relevant representatives of ministries (and public institutions) and representative of the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit (Go SIPRU) and NGOs. The official reports (websites) of the GoS<sup>2</sup>, relevant ministries and public institutions (MoLSP, MoH, MoERD, MoHMR<sup>3</sup>, etc.), and NGOs including results of research work provided mainly by NGOs, Science Institutes and Academia.

**Bottom-up participation:** 1. Qualitative results of research poverty in old age in Serbia of NGO Amity in cooperation with UNDP Serbia and Help the Aged, in 2009. 2. Reports of the focus groups discussions of elderly Serbian citizens in 2010, 2011 (realized with elderly by NGO members of network HumanaS).

- I. **Acknowledgement and mainstreaming ageing into all aspects of social development policies**, as well as all other commitments of MIPAA/RIS, are strategic directions of action stipulated in the National Strategy on Ageing (NSA, 2006). In the period between 2007 and 2010, important steps forward were made.

1. Important success was achieved in the process of mainstreaming ageing. The National Strategy on Ageing (adopted in September 2006) encouraged and contributed to the fact that ageing was mainstreamed into development plans, and the Strategy's goals were transferred into many other strategic documents, both at the local and at the national levels (for instance, the Sustainable Development Strategy of the Republic of Serbia from 2009). The progress is reflected in the fact that, in the period 2007/10, the Government of Serbia has adopted more than 20 strategic documents (and several laws) in various fields, which did include the interests of the elderly (for instance, the National Employment Strategy, the National Strategy for Prevention and Elimination of Domestic Violence against Women, the National Strategy for Improving the Position of Women and Advancing Gender Equality, the National Strategy for Palliative Care, the National Strategy on HIV/AIDS, the National Strategy for Resolving the Problems of Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons, The National Strategy for Protection and Rescue in Emergency Situations, restitution of property, etc.). In the upcoming period, the greatest challenge will be to improve cooperation and coordination between the line authorities and within the line authorities.

---

<sup>2</sup> Government of Serbia

<sup>3</sup> Ministry of Labour and Social Policy, Ministry of Health, Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, Ministry for Human and Minority Rights

- II. The value of the progress achieved **in the field of inclusion of elderly and encouragement of integration of aged persons in the society** resides in the fact that senior citizens themselves have contributed the most to their active involvement in the community, thus spreading a positive image of the elderly.

2.

The integration of elderly in the society is illustrated by the success accomplished among the elderly, but also among other generations, in relation to development of volunteerism and expression of intergenerational and intragenerational solidarity. The majority of actions aimed at senior citizens were implemented by elderly persons and elderly volunteers. The **Pensioners Union** of Serbia, of which the entire program is dedicated to social inclusion of the elderly, with units all over country, gathers almost 500 thousand of pensioners (1.6 million). They served as the basis for creation of the political Party of United Pensioners of Serbia. In elections 2008 Party became parliamentary and with growing influence.

The **Red Cross** of Serbia has registered last year more than 12 thousand elderly volunteers. In actions varying from dealing with the consequences of the Kraljevo earthquake to providing various forms of aid, in 2010, has registered as many as 60,000 volunteers, out of whom 20% were persons in their third age.

<http://www.blic.rs/Vesti/Drustvo/279005/Solidarnost-se-vraca-u-Srbiju>.

- III. In practice, **the commitment pertaining to macroeconomic distribution** is being implemented as work on promotion of just distribution and sustainable economic development. After the year 2008, the Government and the relevant ministries were busy trying to mitigate the harmful consequences of the international crisis, rather than focusing on sustainability of the pension system.

The key consequences of the international crisis in Serbia were insolvency, drop of production and export, decrease of employment and increase of unemployment, decline of standard of living and growth of poverty. In such circumstances, attained level of social solidarity, needed for functioning of the pension system, did assure social and financial security of the majority of elderly citizens – the pensioners.

The expenditures for pensions have doubled in the period from 2005 to 2010, amounting to 13.8% of GDP. Even though the pensions are really high: in June 2011, the average pension stood at 206 €, i.e. 55% of the average salary (source: 2011 Newsletter of the Ministry of Finance). Improving the sustainability of the pension and disability insurance system, will be the greatest challenge in the period to come.

- IV. **The social welfare sphere** is adapting to the consequences of ageing in a gradual and successful manner. The state assists the development of the non-governmental sector and supports the growth of the private sector that provides services to the elderly (2008/09 and 2010). The reform is in its final stage, and some of its results are already felt in practice - the number of elderly social beneficiaries has grown by 40% in the public social welfare sector, from 60,000 in 2007 to 106,000 in 2010. (Source: webpage of the Republic Institute for Social Welfare).

3.

**The success** in the field of development of various social services for the elderly within the local

communities **was achieved through a dynamical growth** of the number and type of services offered for independent living in one's own household. In only three years (from 2007 to 2010) the number of elderly who use social services in their local environment has doubled. Given that many more requests for social services were registered, we can expect that this trend will continue to grow, and that more NGOs and especially private service providers will become involved in the offer.

- V. The Government invests a lot of effort **to adapt the labor market**. Until 2008, there was some success in the field of employment, but afterwards unemployment is on the rise. The Government has adopted the second National Employment Strategy (for the period from 2012 to 2020) with actions targeting all vulnerable groups – aged workers, women, persons with disabilities.

Growth of the unemployment rate cannot be contributed solely to negative effects of the economic crisis. Therefore, further adapting the labor market to ageing is an important challenge in the upcoming period.

- VI. **Encouragement of lifelong learning** – Individual actions were successfully initiated, but as they weren't sustainable enough, they were not able to last. New initiatives do exist, but it is not enough from the perspective of the adopted Strategy and the proposed Law on Education of Adults.

- VII. **The sphere of achieving better health and independence** – The strategic framework is made and the reforms of the healthcare sector are ongoing, but the level of adjustment and attaining of foreseen conditions for health protection of the elderly is not satisfactory. There are visible steps forward in terms of promotion of healthy lifestyles, but geriatric knowledge should be more available and contain more research efforts.

The greatest challenges reside in securing the funds for establishing of a more organized connection between the healthcare authorities and the social welfare authorities, with the aim to create a unique concept and program of LTC policy.

- VIII. **Gender equality sphere** – The Gender Equality Law and the pertaining Strategy were adopted. However, there are still no real effects in practice, such as, for example, improvement of the financial position and health of elderly women living in remote rural areas.

- IX. **Support to families of the elderly** – Even though the services of providing assistance to elderly households in local communities are getting more and more developed, the waiting lists are still full. Some actions in the field of healthcare services, targeting the families of elderly, were also implemented.

One of the greater challenges in the period to come will be finding sources and providing support to informal caregivers and providing more assistance to families that care for the very old and ill persons.

- X. **International cooperation in MIPAA/RIS implementation**. Serbia was active in the field of international cooperation on regular basis. Representatives of Serbia were involved in WGA and its

Bureau work regularly. Monitoring of implementation of strategic documents pertaining to the topic of ageing in Serbia is performed in the public sector, while in the non-governmental sector it is done within projects. The Government Ageing Council is competent for coordination and support to the international cooperation in UN system. The 2010 Gerontology Congress of Serbia, which had international participants, was dedicated to the issues of **MIPAA/RIS** and the implementation of the NSA also.

- **Conclusion**

There are positive results or steps forward were achieved in accomplishing all ten commitments of **MIPAA/RIS**. However, in the period to come, there will be challenges demanding from the entire society to have a more active approach to the consequences of ageing, and from the senior citizens to be more proactive, especially in actions aiming to reduce and prevent poverty, to involve the elderly in the labor market, to protect the most vulnerable groups, to develop the concepts of LTC, and to improve lifelong learning and social inclusion.

---

## **General Information**

This introductory section should contain general information about the member State that is submitting the report, in particular:

1. **Country name:** Republic of Serbia
2. **Name of and information about the author(s) of the report:** Lydia Kozarchanin, PhD, Republic Institute for Social Welfare; Mirjana Rasevic, PhD, Institute for Social Sciences; Milena Prica, Ministry for Economy and Regional Development; Natasa Todorovic, Serbian Red Cross; Biljana Mladenovic, Government Unit for Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction; Danijela Cukic-Vlahovic, Ministry for Labour and Social Policy.
3. **Contact details for the author(s) of the report**
  1. Ms Mirjana Rasevic, PhD, Director, Institut for Social Sciences, Kraljice Natalije 45, 11000 Belgrade, Serbia, Phone: +381 11 3616 002, e-mail: [IDN@eunet.rs](mailto:IDN@eunet.rs)
  2. Ms Milena Prica, Senior advisor, Serbian Ministry for Economy and Regional Development, Phone: + 381 11 285 52 47; e-mail: [milena.prica@merr.gov.rs](mailto:milena.prica@merr.gov.rs)
  3. Ms Natasa Todorovic, Program Manager, Serbian Red Cross, Simina 19, 11000 Belgrade, Serbia, Phone: + 381 11 3032 125, e-mail: [natasa@redcross.org.rs](mailto:natasa@redcross.org.rs)
  4. Ms Biljana Mladenovic, Economic analyst, Government Unit for Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction, Mihaila Pupina 2/East Wing/RM 119, 11000 Belgrade, Serbia, Phone: +381 11 311 4605, e-mail: [biljana.mladenovic@gov.rs](mailto:biljana.mladenovic@gov.rs)
  5. Ms Danijela Cukic Vlahovic, Advisor, Serbian Ministry for Labour, Employment and Social Policy, Department for Social welfare, Nemanjina 22-26, 11000 Belgrade, Serbia, Phone: +381 11 363 1490, e-mail: [danijela.cukic@minrzs.gov.rs](mailto:danijela.cukic@minrzs.gov.rs)
4. **Name and contact details for National Focal Point on Ageing**

Lydia Kozarchanin, PhD, Head of Research Department, Republic Institute for Social Welfare, Terazije, no34, Belgrade, Serbia, Phone: +381 11 36 21 565; Cell: +381 63 8910 557; e-mail: [lidija.k@zavodsz.gov.rs](mailto:lidija.k@zavodsz.gov.rs)
5. **Name, reference, and date of adoption or status of preparation of national strategy, action plan or similar policy document on ageing (please attach relevant documents in the annex)**

National Strategy on Ageing, adopted by the Government on September 7<sup>th</sup> 2006.

---

## 1. National ageing situation

This first section (about 500 words, or one A4 page, single-spaced, excluding annexes) should include an overview of the national ageing situation with respect to demographic, social, economic and political developments, and in particular major challenges related to population ageing in the country.

One of the key objectives of the national reports is to allow member States to share good practices and novel approaches to similar challenges and opportunities related to the ageing of their societies, taking into account the different contexts in which population ageing evolves.

Therefore, this section *may* consist of the following:

- *Presentation of **demographic indicators** that could help better understand the country's development regarding the issues discussed*
- *Presentation of key quantitative **social and economic indicators** and features that may help to put into focus the issues treated and to permit quantitative analysis*
- *Brief description of the **social, economic and political situation**, which may help to understand the context in which ageing-related issues are dealt with in your country*

- **In Serbia, demographic ageing was caused by the influence of basic factors (such as decrease of birth rate and life expectancy prolongation), but mainly by additional population migrations. These migrations resulted from the war conflicts in the region, and from the long-term economic, political and social crisis that the country has experienced in the 1990s. The 2002 census concluded that the ageing process was largely spread throughout the entire population of Serbia (Kosovo and Metohia excepted), and that the Serbian population was extremely old, according to all demographic criteria. From the total number of 7.5 million citizens, 1.3 million citizens were older than the age of 65, which means that the share of the elderly was higher than 17%. At the same time, the average age of the population was already more than 40 (Republic of Serbia without the data for AP Kosovo and Metohia).**

**The assessments show that by 2030, the share of persons older than the age of 65 will grow by at least 22% in Serbia, which means that approximately every fourth citizen will belong to the elderly population category. According to projections, with the increase of life expectancy by 1.4 years annually, with figures jumping from 69.7 to 71.1 for men and from 75 to 76.4 for women, the percentage of persons older than the age of 80 will be more than double. (Demographic indicators are given in the Annex also - Republic of Serbia without the data for AP Kosovo and Metohia).**

**The flow of GDP per capita in Serbia in the period from 2006 to 2010 clearly demonstrates the financial grounds for development of the country, as well as the strategic actions in the field of ageing. In €: 2006 – 3,144.4; 2007 – 3,856.6; 2008 – 4,444.5; 2009 – 3,945.4; 2010 – 3,870.7. In 2008, the real growth of GDP stood at 5.5%, in 2009 there was a drop (-3.1%), in 2010 it stood at 1.8%. For 2011, the assessments predict a growth of 2.5%. (source: Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia <http://webrzs.stat.gov.rs/WebSite/Public/PageView.aspx?pKey=62>).**

**The country had accomplished important democratic and economic advancement, especially until the year 2008, after which the development dynamics slowed down. One of the essential political goals of Serbia is integration into the European Union family of countries. The social, political and economic situation is also marked by certain transitional weaknesses (privatization problems, corruption, crime). In this process, a new ageing policy was developed, relying on the MIPAA/RIS documents. With the new policy, the capacities of services in local communities are growing in a dynamic manner. The achieved economic growth helped to reduce poverty among the elderly (in**



particular among the pensioners). However, with the arrival of the new crisis, after the year 2008, the poverty among the most vulnerable groups, such as the elderly, is growing again. The already achieved positive effects were diminished, and poverty reduction among the elderly reemerged on the top of the priority list, thus pushing away some other issues important for senior citizens, such as lifelong learning or inclusion in the community.

The Republic of Serbia has also achieved progress in the reform of the previously damaged pension system, by securing regular payments and adopting a stricter criterion for retirement. However, a substantial part of public expenditures is still allocated for pensions, standing at 13% of GDP, while the insufficient number of those who pay contributions in comparison to beneficiaries requires budgetary transfers in order to cover more than 40% of the difference. From a political standpoint, pension system reform is a very delicate issue, being a factor in the negotiations with the International Monetary Fund (IMF), and a debatable issue for the social partners. Also, a large part of the electoral body is gathered around this issue. The reform must continue, in order to improve the sustainability of the pension system. (Source: *Toward the Framework for Active Ageing*, Kara Stern, Government of the Republic of Serbia, SIPRU 2011).

## 2. Methodology

This section (up to 500 words, or one A4 page, single-spaced, excluding annexes) should deal with the methodology for an evaluation of policy actions taken towards the implementation of MIPAA/RIS within the framework of the ten commitments of RIS. It is suggested that both a quantitative and a qualitative approach be used for assessing the impact of policy actions.

**Quantitative information** can be taken from ongoing and new studies on ageing, both cross-sectional (assessing the impact of policies across several sectors) and longitudinal (observing a specific policy impact over a period of time).

**Qualitative information** can be obtained through a **bottom-up participatory approach or other available qualitative data from recent research** (preferably undertaken since 2007). If member States wish to conduct new qualitative research for the purpose of this report the participatory approach may be a suitable tool, as it calls for the involvement of older persons in assessing the impact of policy actions on the quality of their lives. This approach is flexible, and can be adapted to country-specific challenges and opportunities.<sup>4</sup>

In general this section should refer to interactions with the different stakeholders – such as ministries, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), the private sector, academia and older persons – and on how these interactions contributed to the report. If applicable, the links between the review and appraisal of MIPAA/RIS and other established monitoring mechanisms in your country should be discussed here.

- The results of the following studies and articles were used: 1. *“They Can’t Wait”*, NGO Amity, 2009, Belgrade. (This research was done on a representative sample of 1,021 aged poor persons, from the entire territory of Serbia); 2. *“Elderly Abuse in the Family Context”*, Nevena Petrusic, PhD, the Red Cross and the NGO network HumanaS, Belgrade 2010; 3. *“Social Welfare in Serbia”*, Ljubomir Pejakovic, “Survey”, Republic of Serbia, No 1/2011; 4. *“Poor Elderly Persons and Health”*, “Survey”, Republic of Serbia, No 1/2009; 5. *“Golden Chances – Toward the*

---

<sup>4</sup> For a detailed description of the bottom-up participatory approach see UNDESA (2006), ‘Guidelines for Review and Appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing: Bottom-up Participatory Approach’ at <http://www.un.org/ageing/documents/MIPAA/GuidelinesAgeingfinal13%20Dec2006.pdf>

*Framework for Active Ageing*”, Kara Stern, Government of the Republic of Serbia, the SIPRU team, Belgrade 2011; 6. “Recent Trends in Growth of Population and its Age Structure in Serbia and other Balkan Countries and Prospects of Population Ageing Until the Middle of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century”, Goran Penev, Gerontology Congress of Serbia 2010, and 7. “Serbia in the Middle of the 21<sup>st</sup> Century – Few in Numbers and Old in Age?”, Demographic Overview, 25/2007, IDN Belgrade, 8. Cvejic,S. at all, “Social exclusion in Serbian rural area”, 2010, UNDP, Belgrade.

- The quality data from summaries of focus groups discussions and in-depth interviews were used (especially IPA Project *Dialogue of Civil Society Organizations on Problems of the Elderly in Western Balkans – Serbia*, 2010).
- Official and specially drafted reports were used, as well as analyses and scientific articles from the public, the scientific and the NGO sectors, and in particular the following – analyses of the 2002 Population Census from the Republic Statistical Office; reports of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, the Ministry of Economy and Regional Development, the Ministry of Healthcare, the Ministry of Human and Minority Rights, the Ministry for Kosovo and Metohia and the Ministry of Finance; studies and articles of the Institute for Social Sciences – Demographic Research Center, Republic Institute for Public Health, Republic Institute for Social Welfare, and as for the NGO sector, reports of the Society of Gerontology, the Red Cross, the NGO network HumanaS, the Pensioners Union of Serbia. At the meetings of the special working group of the Government Ageing Council, there were discussions on all the issues from this document. Out of 15 members of the Council, 5 persons are older than the age of 65, and 6 are NGO representatives, and in the Council working group, there were additional experts appointed in line with their field of expertise.

### 3. Review and Appraisal of National Actions to fulfil Commitments of UNECE MIPAA/RIS

This part of the report is expected to be divided into subsections devoted to the individual RIS commitments (about 400-500 words per commitment on average or one A4 page, single-spaced, excluding annexes). Since many of the commitments stress several aspects, the guidelines provide some indicative prompts on each aspect, aligned with the content of the corresponding RIS commitment. *The prompts are provided for guidance to stimulate your ideas – you are not expected to report on every aspect mentioned in the bullet-pointed prompts, but rather to choose those most relevant to the situation in your country.*

#### **a) General framework**

You are expected to **report on all commitments**. Note that at the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the Bureau of the Working Group on Ageing it was decided that member States should also report on commitments where no progress had been made. This should help to indicate areas where further work is needed and may assist in facilitating the discussion during the 2012 Ministerial Conference on Ageing.

The report is expected to include evidence of **results and outcomes** that the measures, programmes or initiatives described have achieved, especially in the **period after the León Conference** (2007 to 2011 or the latest available). For empirical evidence, longer time series might be preferable and could be presented in the annex.

#### **b) Instrumental assessment**

The reporting on the RIS commitments should include instrumental assessment, focusing on **policies, laws and regulations** adopted and/or modified since the León Conference (for instance, a new law on palliative care, etc.); on **programmes** established to adjust to demographic change (such as a new programme for

home care, etc.); on measures to adapt the **physical environment** (such as new housing or new transport facilities for older persons); and, if available, on the allocation and rates of change per annum of **budgets** relevant for ageing-related issues.

### ***c) National capacities***

Reference should be also made to available national capacities, if applicable, under each commitment. You may include information on:

- *institutions responsible for follow-up to MIPAA/RIS*
- *organizations of older person taking part in the follow-up activities*
- *educational, training and research activities on ageing*
- *data collection and analysis of the ageing-related situation in your country*
- *mobilization of financial resources dedicated to MIPAA/RIS follow-up*
- *monitoring mechanisms in place for the review and appraisal of MIPAA/RIS*

### ***RIS Commitment 1: To mainstream ageing in all policy fields with the aim of bringing societies and economies into harmony with demographic change to achieve a society for all ages***

This subsection should focus on analysis of whether and to what extent mainstreaming ageing is part of national priorities. It should reveal whether ageing is included in development plans and policy strategies on the national, regional and local levels.

In your analysis you *may* consider:

- *areas in which ageing is mainstreamed*
  - *extent to which the different policies related to ageing pursue a holistic approach and are coordinated and applied consistently*
  - *initiatives taken by your country to tackle age discrimination*
  - *participation of older persons in the development of policies and strategies and in their implementation*
  - *involvement of NGOs and the private sector in policy development and their role in the implementation of policies and programmes.*
- **At the level of the adopted national strategic actions (laws), the phenomenon of ageing was incorporated into the following areas, at various levels: poverty reduction; social welfare; employment; sustainable country development; discrimination; domestic violence; health protection and safety of patients; control and prevention of chronic non-contagious diseases; palliative care; mental health; resolving the problems of refugees and IDPs; protection and rescue in emergency circumstances; strengthening the relations with the Diaspora; development of official statistics; etc. In the field of humanitarian work and volunteerism, the elderly are present both as beneficiaries and as active volunteers. At the local level in Serbia, out of 167 municipalities, in more than two thirds of municipalities social policy strategic documents that include the elderly interests, are being implemented.**
  - **Public policies are not coordinated enough among themselves. There is no closer cooperation not only between the different ministries (for instance, between the MoLSP and the MoH), but also between the different levels within the same ministries. Consequently, research has shown that the elderly are often not familiar with their own rights in certain areas.**
  - **In combat against discrimination, in 2009 the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination was adopted, which particularly identified the phenomenon of age-based discrimination. In 2010, the Office of the Commissioner for Protection of Equality was established and started operating. Since 2006, in line**

with the Family Law, the social security system has kept updated national records on elderly persons who were exposed to domestic violence. In the period from 2007 to 2010, there were averagely 800 senior citizens victims of elderly abuse per year, who were given social services or some other form of services.

- Sensitizing the public to the topic of discrimination against the elderly became a continuous activity of the NGO network “HumanaS”. The network consists of 15 NGOs, out of which five have headquarters and branches in various towns in Serbia, which means that the network covers the entire territory of the country. Network consists: the Red Cross of Serbia, the Society of Gerontology of Serbia, Caritas, Amity, Victoria, Lastavica, the Circle of Serbian Sisters, the Charity Foundation of the Serbian Orthodox Church *Philanthropy*, the Society for the Care of the Elderly, the National Foundation for Dignified Ageing, the Pensioners Union of Serbia, the University of the Third Age Network, the Christian Humanitarian Association *The Bread of Life*, Moka and Rosa. For the past five years, the network has regularly organized public campaigns and marked the 15<sup>th</sup> of June as the International Day of Fight against Elderly Abuse. In the same period, the several surveys were produced on the topic of discrimination against the elderly, and recommendations for elimination of discrimination were submitted to the Government. In 2010 and 2011, the NGO Rosa represented Serbia in the International Network for Prevention of Elderly Abuse (INPEA). In 2009, the network HumanaS got involved in the global campaign for passing of a new UN Convention also (<http://www.humanas.rs/>).
- Senior citizens of Serbia are involved in development of public policies on ageing not only by voting for their preferences on elections, but also by having representatives of the elderly organizations, such as the Pensioners Union of Serbia, the Pensioners Trade Union “*Independence*” and various NGOs which work with the elderly in their interest, and which participate in public debates on laws, in policy evaluations, in the work of the Government Ageing Council, etc. Even though there are no precise figures, the senior citizens are considered to be the most loyal voters in Serbia. The 2008 parliamentary elections have illustrated the strength of the Party of United Pensioners of Serbia (PUPS), which joined forces with the Socialist Party of Serbia and United Serbia Party, and managed to get 313,896 votes (7.58% of the total number of votes), thus winning 5 places in the National Assembly of Serbia. The Party’s president was appointing as Deputy Prime Minister. The current webpage of PUPS claims that the party has more than 280,000 members, at the moment (<http://www.pups.org.rs/>).
- The non-governmental sector is actively involved in creation of ageing policies. In order to achieve a more efficient cooperation between the Government and the non-governmental sector, in 2010 the Government established the Office for Cooperation with NGOs. The most intense field of cooperation is protection of the poorest. NGOs are also becoming direct service providers for the elderly in local communities. For instance, in 2010 the home care – day center program organized by only one NGO, “Caritas” had 2,128 beneficiaries and 110 volunteers. NGO “*Philanthropy*” implements a project called *Mobile Medical Assistance at Home*, for 40 to 50 persons in Belgrade and Kragujevac.
- In the past few years, the private sector is also experiencing intense development, in the field of health protection services and accommodation in homes for the elderly, but in different other kinds of domestic services too. According to data of MoLSP, which registers the private homes for the elderly, since 2007 the number of such homes grew tenfold (in 2010, there were 81 private homes, in Belgrade mostly) and the overall capacity in them goes to 2000 places.

## **RIS Commitment 2: To ensure full integration and participation of older persons in society**

The member States committed to further enhancing the social, economic, political and cultural **participation** of older persons. In reporting on the follow-up to this aspect of the commitment you *may* take into account:

- *measures undertaken by your country to recognize, encourage and support the contributions of older people to society (e.g. media campaigns, school curricula)*
- *mechanisms put in place to take into account the views of older persons on the services provided to them*
- *channels for recognising older persons as a significant consumer group with shared and specific needs, interests, and preferences*
- *actions promoting active ageing and encouraging the participation of older persons in society, culture, and economy*
- *activities undertaken to promote the political participation of older persons and in particular of older women*
- *mechanisms and organizations that provide a political voice for older persons*
- *existence of a national advisory body on ageing or a similar institutional mechanism that includes older persons to ensure a dynamic and coordinated contribution of older persons to national policy responses to ageing*
- *adoption of policies and programmes to improve the housing and living environment of older persons, especially in rural areas (access to and affordability of services, such as housing, utilities, sanitation and, in particular, transport).*

The member States also committed to promoting the **integration** of older persons by encouraging their active involvement in the community and by fostering **intergenerational relationships**:

- *steps taken to promote age-integrated communities where facilities are made available to people of all ages and where they can meet and interact (e.g. joint community centres for the elderly and the young)*
- *actions to promote volunteer activities enabling younger and older people to interact and help each other.*

The RIS commitments also refer to the need to **promote a positive image of ageing**:

- *steps undertaken by your country to promote a positive image of ageing (e.g. media campaigns, incentives for employers to promote continued employment of older persons, initiatives within local communities and with the participation of other social actors to facilitate dialogue and a better understanding between the generations)*
  - *measures taken to promote a differentiated and heterogeneous view of the life of older persons to better reflect reality*
  - *actions taken (in particular in cooperation with mass media) to encourage older persons to make the general public more aware of the positive aspects of ageing.*
- **The policy of integration of elderly in the society is clearly defined in the strategic framework at the level of the law, while in practice it is mostly based on actions and initiatives of the NGO sector. With this purpose, in order to mark the International Day of the Elderly, the organizations belonging to**

the network “HumanaS” and the Society of Gerontology of Serbia have organized, since 2008, a set of activities for the elderly called *Olympics of Sports, Healthcare and Culture for the Third Age* (with 500 participants from 56 towns). Since 2008, this program is held every year in early October, for the duration of three days, in Soko Banja, a touristic spa center in South Serbia. In these few years, this program of integration of the elderly and intergenerational solidarity grew to become a real movement (in 2011 - the Olympic Movement of the Third Age of Serbia), popular among the elderly as a widely accepted manifestation of the senior citizens’ potential in the field of sports, healthcare and culture. In 2011, the program had more than 750 participants from 70 towns, as well as 150 volunteers, students who have participated in its organization (<http://olimpijada3d.org/> ).

- After the introduction of the quality system, in line with the laws on health protection and social welfare, it became mandatory to develop user evaluation mechanisms for reformed services in healthcare and social welfare.
- Within the HumanaS network’s campaign *Ageing Calls for Action*, representatives of the elderly have the opportunity to directly speak to some of the highest representatives of the state authorities, at meetings organized by the Red Cross and the HumanaS network. Specifically, in the past three years the delegations of the elderly have spoken with the Minister of Labor and Social Policy on the topic of October 1<sup>st</sup>, and in 2011 they also met with the Minister of Healthcare.
- The private sector was the first to identify the specific needs, interests and preferences of elderly consumers with regard to shopping (sales and discounts for pensioners and the elderly), services (bank credits, accommodation in private homes for the elderly) and tourism (spa centers and field trips for pensioners). Other sectors are gradually getting there as well, such as, first and foremost, the civil sector’s associations of the elderly (Pensioners Union of Serbia and other NGOs). We cannot help but notice that the public sector is the slowest one to adapt to the specific needs, interests and preferences of the elderly.
- In order to improve access to social and healthcare services, the Gerontology Center for Aged Persons from Belgrade established, in early 2011, a special “Info Center” for 24 hours providing information to the elderly from Belgrade and Serbia, on the topics of social welfare, health protection, pension and disability insurance, culture, counseling, support in crisis situation, etc.
- As for the actions that promote active ageing and encourage the participation of elderly in the society, the greatest contribution was made by the Red Cross of Serbia, which hires averagely 1000 elderly volunteers per year in its programs for the elderly in towns and municipalities all over Serbia. Among these volunteers, there are many persons who used to be beneficiaries of these programs for the elderly.
- The Party of United Pensioners of Serbia obtaining the position of Deputy Prime Minister and several other higher offices which are important for the social position of the elderly citizen.
- The Government Ageing Council was reestablished in 2011. Out of 15 members, 5 are pensioners, the age of 65+.
- In order to improve the housing and living conditions, the state has established the mechanism of Social Housing (the strategic framework and the **Law on Social Housing** were adopted in 2009). This service is now used in order to resolve the housing problems of persons older than the age of 65 who cannot deal with this issue in another manner. Today, in 404 apartments in more than 40 municipalities, there are over 2000 persons, out of whom 25% are older than the age of 65 and they mostly live in single households. By means of IPA funds in 2011 and 2012, it is planned to construct around 140 new apartments for these purposes.
- Previously introduced incentives for employers (which consisted of exemption from contributions for 2 years) with the purpose to promote employment of workers older than the age of 45 (exemption from up to 80% of contributions) and 50 (exemption from 100% of contributions) did have some positive effects, but these effects have lessened since the year 2008. In addition, it was foreseen that an employer was obliged to keep the worker employed for three years after the end of

the exemption period, i.e. for at least five years from the day when the employment contract was signed. This exemption from paying the contributions cannot be granted to public authorities and organizations, public services and other budgetary beneficiaries (Source: Ministry for Economic and Regional Development).

#### Employment of persons older than the age of 45/50

Persons employed on the basis of exemption from contributions in line with the Law on Contributions	2008		2009		2010	
	Total number of persons employed	Older than 45/50	Total number of persons employed	Older than 45/50	Total number of persons employed	Older than 45/50
	10.008	3.509	4.469	1.942	3.794	1.750

#### ***RIS Commitment 3: To promote equitable and sustainable economic growth in response to population ageing***

The member States committed to promoting **equitable and sustainable economic growth** in response to population ageing. To ensure that growth is environmentally and socially sustainable, efforts to boost economic growth and productivity must be accompanied by a broad strategic policy response, including to population ageing. Equitable growth ensures that resources are available for transfer and distribution amongst generations and helps to ensure the financial sustainability of social protection systems in general and pension schemes in particular. You *may* refer to:

- *strategies adopted to transform your economies with a view to eradicating poverty, especially among older persons*
- *measures taken to review and adjust macroeconomic policies to address the needs of a growing ageing population.*
- The strategic framework of Serbia, which supports the transformation of economy with the goal to reduce poverty, was created with the **Poverty Reduction Strategy** (2003), the umbrella strategy in the field of social policy. At the time, 14% of citizens, i.e. around one million people lived under the absolute poverty line. A special part of this strategic document was dedicated to poverty of pensioners and the elderly, as well as reestablishing of functions of social welfare and pension and disability insurance system.
- Implementation took place at the level of six ministries of the Government of the Republic of Serbia: the Ministry of Finance, the Ministry of Economy, the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, the Ministry of Education and Science, and the Ministry of Healthcare. A special Government Poverty Reduction Unit was established, competent to prepare responses to the issues of identifying and monitoring of the phenomenon of poverty. The Republic Statistical Office introduced the regular annual Household Consumption Survey, as well as the Labor Force Survey in 2006.
- Implementation of the Poverty Reduction Strategy entailed the establishing of focal civil society organizations, with the aim to allow a flow of information and communication between the beneficiaries and the Government. The focal organization for the elderly, managed by the NGO Amity, managed to gather almost 70 civil society organizations from all over Serbia, including



pensioners associations, Red Cross offices in Serbia, religious communities and others. Out of this number, 54 organizations provide direct services to the elderly. (Citizens' Association Amity, *Guide for Civil Society Organizations Working with the Elderly*). The lowest poverty rate dates from 2008 (6.9% of citizens below the absolute poverty line). In 2009, we have a situation in which 18.2% of persons older than the age of 65 are still jeopardized by poverty (relative poverty), while 7.5% of elderly live below the absolute poverty line.

- Due to the current economic problems, the productivity level and the demographic changes, it is still necessary for the state to find a careful balance between its obligations to secure economic growth and to provide social welfare. In April 2011, a new **Law on Social Welfare** was adopted, which opens real possibilities to increase the number of recipients of financial benefits, as well as to increase the amount of financial aid for the poorest citizens. The Law contributes to decentralization of certain services, and it also introduces earmarked transfers of funds for development of services at the local level. A survey on poverty among the elderly has shown that only 6% of interviewed senior citizens had received financial aid (M. Rasevic, Survey, Republic of Serbia, No 2, 2009). It is estimated that, with the new Law, the number of recipients will grow by 50-60%, or even more due to the legal increase of the property margin from 0.5 hectare to 1 hectare. (Lj. Pejakovic, Survey, Republic of Serbia, No 1, 2011, Social Welfare in Serbia).
- One of the measures was analytical consideration of access opportunities and active ageing policies in Serbia. The Government's unit, which was transformed into the Social Inclusion and Poverty Reduction Unit, proposed a set of actions that should be implemented by the Government itself, the local authorities, the international donors, the academia and the professional public, the private sector, the media, and individuals of all ages (*Toward the Framework for Active Ageing*, SIPRU Unit of the Government of the Republic of Serbia, 2011).

---

***RIS Commitment 4: To adjust social protection systems in response to demographic changes and their social and economic consequences***

The member States committed to taking steps to **ensure the financial sustainability of social protection systems** in the face of demographic ageing. They agreed that social security systems should strengthen incentives for citizens to participate in the labour force while protecting the weakest groups in society. Social protection systems should be adjusted so that they can fulfil their basic functions of assisting those who are deprived and safeguarding those who are at risk. They need to be supported by a high level of employment, comprehensive health services, functioning educational systems and active labour market policies.

In this regard, the member States agreed to pursue the objective of preserving and strengthening the basic functions of **social protection**, namely to prevent and/or reduce poverty and provide adequate benefits for all. In addition, the member States agreed to adapt existing social protection systems to demographic changes and changes in family structures. In your report you *may* refer to:

- *actions to adapt social protection systems in your country to societal and demographic changes*
- *steps taken to achieve a sufficient income for all older persons*
- *policies adopted to address in a timely manner the needs of older persons for a variety of social and health services, including sheltered housing and long-term care*
- *actions to improve standards of living for persons with disability and for fragile older persons which allow them to maintain their independence and dignity.*



The member States also committed to establishing a regulatory framework for occupational and private pension provision:

- *steps taken to establish or further develop a regulatory framework for occupational and private pension provision*
- *changes made to the laws regulating mandatory retirement.*

The member States also pledged to pay special attention to the social protection of women and men throughout the life course:

- *policies adopted to ensure the equal treatment of men and women by the social protection system*
- *policies adopted to ensure that social protection system supports a better reconciliation of work and family responsibilities throughout the life cycle (e.g. through special leave arrangements for working parents and other caregivers, or supportive measures such as respite care services – that is, professional care services provided on an ad-hoc basis to give the regular caregiver some time off).*
- A new Law on Social Welfare was adopted and put into force in 2011, harmonized with the strategic framework and the modern European standards. The Law fully supports the reform for achieving the concept of integral social protection and accomplishing two special goals: 1) improving the protection of the poorest groups, by providing them with minimum resources for decent living and securing a more efficient system of benefits; and 2) developing a network of services in the community, by introducing the concepts of integral assessment and community planning, quality system, and territorially and functionally available services. The Law also provides a higher level of protection to poor elderly persons in rural areas, and it encourages capacity building of social services within the NGOs and the private sector. The MoLSP has the leading role in supporting the development of NGOs providers of social services. On the territory of Kosovo and Metohia with Serbian population, the accessibility to social services for the elderly is significantly reduced. In practice, the greatest challenges reside in improving the accessibility of social services in remote rural areas and improving the awareness on the rights of senior citizens.

The number of elderly beneficiaries and realized social welfare rights and services in the period from 2007 to 2010 in the public sector in Serbia

Elderly beneficiaries	2007	2008	2009	2010
Total number of beneficiaries older than 65 during the year	<b>79,874</b>	<b>93,588</b>	<b>99,938</b>	<b>106,800</b>
Rights realized and services provided	2007	2008	2009	2010
Permanent financial aid	15,095	15,054	15,982	17,783
Supplement for help and care from a third person	21,923	23,201	25,258	27,400
Short term financial aid	12,642	14,579	15,956	20,599
Aid in kind	5,377	5,199	4,574	6,656

Home assistance	5,489	6,829	8,548	10,551
Accommodation in homes for the elderly	9,276	9,728	10,122	10,114
Daycare center	1,612	1,873	1,798	1,946
Clubs for senior citizens	16,031	16,559	17,567	25,248

(Source: Annual reports of the Centers for Social Welfare and homes for the elderly in Serbia – Republic Institute for Social Welfare, 2010)

The capacities of public sector institutions in the social protection system for elderly beneficiaries consist of 139 centers for social welfare (Centres for Social Welfare are for users of all ages), 37 gerontology centers and homes for the elderly, 28 senior citizens clubs, 19 daycare centers and 106 centers for home assistance.

- The action undertaken by local NGOs (HumanaS) supported by international organizations (HEI, Help the Aged), which lasted for many years and aimed to introduce social pensions, did end with a positive result – social pensions were introduced in strategic action plans, more precisely in the Strategy for Sustainable Development of Serbia from 2009.
- In Serbia, along with the Fund for Mandatory Pension and Disability Insurance, there is also private, voluntary insurance, even though it has a substantially lower number of insured persons. For the elderly who are in the system of mandatory pension and disability insurance, in the period from 2007 to 2011, the reform of the pension system, initiated in 2001, has continued. 1) The retirement age, as condition for the right on old age pension (in line with the Law from 2005), was gradually raised by two years in the period from 2008 to 2011 (the retirement age for men was raised from 63 to 65 years of age, while the retirement age for women was raised from 58 to 60 years of age, while keeping the additional condition of at least 15 years of service with insurance). 2) At the same time, the retirement age for survivor's pension was raised, from 53 to 55 years of age for men, and from 48 to 50 years of age for women. 3) Due to the consequences of the economic crisis, the amount of pensions was frozen at the level from October 2008, until December 2010, when it was raised by 2%. For 2011 and the years to come, it is foreseen to have pension indexation twice a year, in line with a formula that involves the flow of two new parameters: the flow of real GDP and the flow of consumer prices.
- In late 2010, the amendments of the Law on Pension and Disability Insurance were adopted, representing the next stage of system reforms. 1) It is foreseen to gradually raise the retirement age, with 35 years of service with insurance for women and 40 for men, and at least 53 years of age, by five years, until the level of 58 years of age is reached, in the period from 2011 to 2023. The condition of 35 years of service with insurance for women will be raised to 38 years. 2) It is also foreseen to gradually raise the condition for acquiring the right on survivor's pension by three years in the period from 2012 to 2017, to the level of 58 years of age for men, and 53 years of age for women. 3) Along with the legal changes, it should be noted that all pension recipients who receive pension in the amount lower than 30,000 RSD or 300 €, have also received short-term aid from the Republic in the amount of 5,000 RSD or 50 €, in October 2010. In addition, in the City of Belgrade, the pensioners with the lowest pensions (less than 140 €) have received a thirteenth pension at the end of the year, as a form of short-term aid.

- One of the goals of the National Strategy for Improving the Position of Women and Advancing Gender Equality (2009) with the pertaining Action Plan until 2015 contains the notion of promoting employment policies that contribute to harmonizing the working conditions and the family life, in line with the European model of balance between career and family. In practice, there are still no positively identified indicators which would indicate the effects of Action Plan implementation.

**PENSION DATA** ( Source: Center for Liberal Democratic Study CLDS, Belgrade, 2011. )

Data for 2009

System dependency ratio (insured/pensioners) = 1.47

System dependency ratio (insured workers/pensioners from employee fund)= 1,34

Current replacement rate (average worker 40 years service)= 76.5%

Public pension spending in % of GDP = 13.4%

Public pension benefit ratio (benefit including disability and survivors/net wage)= 68.4%

Take up ratio (pensioners 65+/population65+)=76.9%

Data for 2010

Current replacement rate in 2010 = 71.8%

Public pension spending in % of GDP around 12%

---

***RIS Commitment 5: To enable labour markets to respond to the economic and social consequences of population ageing***

A commitment was made by member States to take measures to **enable labour markets to respond** to the economic and social consequences of ageing. In this regard, they pledged to seek increases in employment rates, especially the employment rates of older persons. In your report, while addressing measures taken to promote access to employment opportunities and to reduce the number of out-of-work persons, especially for older age groups,<sup>5</sup> you *may* refer to:

- *active labour market policies (job search assistance, training, counselling, etc.)*
- *adaptation of curricula to labour market needs; measures to ease the transition between formal education and work*
- *efforts to reduce non-wage labour costs while protecting workers' rights; easing of factors reducing demand for labour (e.g. excessive administrative regulations, etc.).*

The member States also agreed to improve the **employability of older workers**:

---

<sup>5</sup> Please identify specific age groups of older persons if applicable (for instance: 50-64 years, 55+, 65+)

- *measures taken to improve the employability of older workers, e.g. through vocational guidance and training, promoting lifelong learning (delivery of job-relevant training to enable workers to adjust to changing labour markets), improvement of working conditions.*

Raising **participation rates** for all women and men is another commitment of the member States.

- *steps taken to raise participation rates in labour markets of all women and men, e.g. through removing barriers and disincentives to stay in employment*
- *specific measures to increase the labour force participation of women, e.g. through suitable education and training, efforts to broaden their job opportunities and avoid discriminatory situations in relation to pension benefits or personal income.*

The member States committed to taking steps towards increasing the age at which people stop working and towards making **retirement** more **flexible** and **gradual**:

- *steps taken to introduce incentives for the participation of older persons in the labour market*
  - *abolition of incentives to take up early retirement*
  - *mechanisms put in place to promote a smooth and gradual retirement*
- In the period from 2007 to 2011, the institutional and legislative framework for adoption and implementation of an employment policy was substantially improved. In a wider sense of the notion, the employment policy is focused on job creation and encouragement of employment. The National Action Plan for Employment (NAPE) was established as the basic instrument of the employment policy, and since 2009, it has been adopted annually.
  - In 2009, two reform laws were adopted – the Law on Employment and Insurance against Unemployment, and the Law on Professional Rehabilitation and Employment of Persons with Disabilities. These modern legal solutions encourage employment and support decentralization of the employment policy, and they opt for making employment-related decisions in the local labor markets and creating necessary conditions for active integration of aged persons and persons with disabilities in the field of labor.
  - With regard to social welfare, the practice in several towns of Serbia is to implement the accredited education courses for ageing, as well as trainings of caregivers for the elderly. The trainees are selected from groups with otherwise low employability (such as the elderly women in rural areas). In 2010, the Gerontology Center of Belgrade has trained 40 caregivers, and half of them managed to find employment immediately after the training.
  - In March 2010, the Strategy on Career Guidance and Counseling and the pertaining Action Plan for its implementation were adopted, which support the processes of changes and modernization in the field of education of adults.
  - The Law on Social Welfare from 2011 gave the possibility to centers for social welfare to make contracts with beneficiaries on their activation. In that context, the Law stipulates the terms of cooperation between the centers for social welfare and the National Employment Service.
  - The National Employment Strategy for the period between 2011 and 2020 was adopted on May 19<sup>th</sup> 2011 (*Official Gazette No 37/11*), defining the basic goal of the employment policy of the Republic of Serbia, which is to establish, by the end of 2020, an efficient, stable and sustainable trend of growth of employment, and to fully harmonize the employment policy and the institutions with the EU requirements. The following basic challenges that the Republic of Serbia will need to resolve in the upcoming period were also identified: demographic challenge, labor migrations and regional differences, institutional challenges and duality in the labor market.
  - Even though the Republic of Serbia is trying to encourage employment and reduce unemployment by means of various programs and measures, due to long-term negative

economic trends, transition restructuring and the economic crisis that struck in 2008, the labor market indicators in the Republic of Serbia are spiraling downwards.

#### Labor market indicators for the elderly, 55-64

Age group 55-64	April 2008	October 2008	April 2009	October 2009	April 2010	October 2010	April 2011
Activity rate	40.3%	41.0%	39.8%	38.9%	36.9%	37.7%	37.2%
Employment rate	37.4%	37.9%	35.9%	35.0%	32.6%	33.1%	31.8%
Unemployment rate	7.3%	7.6%	9.9%	10.0%	11.6%	12.2%	14.6%
Inactivity rate	59.7%	59.0%	60.2%	61.1%	63.1%	62.3%	62.8%

(Source: Labor Force Survey, Republic Statistical Office)

The employment rate is slowly decreasing since 2008 in all age groups, including the 55-64 group, and according to the latest LFS from April 2011, it stands at 31.8%.

#### Employment rate according to gender and age

Period	April 2008	October 2008	April 2009	October 2009	April 2010	October 2010	April 2011
<b>Total 15-64</b>	<b>54</b>	<b>53.4</b>	<b>50.8</b>	<b>50</b>	<b>47.2</b>	<b>47.1</b>	<b>45.5</b>
<b>Men 15-64</b>	<b>62.3</b>	<b>62.2</b>	<b>58.7</b>	<b>57.4</b>	<b>54.3</b>	<b>54.4</b>	<b>52.2</b>
<b>Women 15-64</b>	<b>46</b>	<b>44.7</b>	<b>43.3</b>	<b>42.7</b>	<b>40.2</b>	<b>39.9</b>	<b>38.8</b>
15-24	21	21.2	16.8	17	15.1	15.2	14.1
25-34	65.3	63.4	62.7	60.6	57.3	56.4	54.2
35-44	69.8	76.4	74.3	73.6	71.2	71	69.7
45-54	71.8	67	63.7	64.3	61.6	62.9	60.6
55-64	37.4	37.9	35.9	35	32.6	33.1	31.8
65+	12.9	11.4	10.7	9.7	8.9	7.5	6.1

- In 2010, the Law against Harassment at Workplace (mobbing) was adopted, which prohibits any form of harassment at workplace and related to work, imposing an obligation on the employer to protect the employees and create conditions for a healthy and safe working environment. The Law also stipulates the rights of an employee who believes that he or she was exposed to mobbing, as well as the procedures for realization of these rights.
- Article 175 of the current Labor Law foresees retirement at the age of 65, with at least 15 years of paid contributions, but it also foresees the possibility to arrange with the employer to prolong the work. The arrangement between the employer and the employee allows the establishing of a mechanism for smooth and gradual retirement. However, if such arrangement is not made, retirement becomes the mandatory option.

***RIS Commitment 6: To promote lifelong learning and adapt the educational system in order to meet the changing economic, social and demographic conditions***

The member States committed to promoting lifelong learning and adapting their educational systems in order to meet the changing economic, social and demographic conditions.

In particular, they committed to facilitating and encouraging **lifelong learning**. Addressing this commitment in your report, you *may* refer to:

- *steps taken to adjust educational institutions to the needs of persons in retirement*
- *initiatives undertaken in relation to pre-retirement programmes*
- *learning methods developed to teach older persons the use of new information technologies*
- *adaptation of educational curricula to prepare people for lives of continuous change and to equip them with the necessary skills and attitudes favouring flexibility; promotion of*
- *new didactic methods in this regard.*

The member States also committed to ensure that the **education system** achieves better **employability** of all persons:

- *steps taken to establish closer links between educational institutions and employers and to encourage employers to provide on-the-job training for workers of different ages, including older workers*
- *development and/or promotion of special programmes to facilitate the reintegration into the labour market of those who left the formal educational system early*
- *steps taken to make formal schooling more gender-sensitive, e.g. through the introduction of gender-sensitive curricula, specific programmes for girls and women, and specific programmes for older women to help them re-enter the labour market.*
- The strategic framework was adopted and regulated. The Strategy of Education of Adults, adopted in 2006, was partly based on the Strategy on Ageing, in terms of lifelong education of the elderly. The Law on Education of Adults, which is currently, in 2011, in the adoption procedure, principally assures the accomplishment of interests of the elderly in education. In practice, however, the implementation is somewhat slower.
- The courses of the Third Age University Project in Belgrade, Novi Sad and Vrsac are available for education of aged persons and pensioners, but after the year 2007 the number of participants is decreasing. In Belgrade in 2010 there were only around 600 participants, because the Project implementation relies solely on self-funding, and the standard of living of the elderly has dropped. Among its courses, the Third Age University Project specifically contains courses suitable to attend before retirement.

- In 2010, a new project of international cooperation was initiated in the field of academic education of the elderly (Serbia, Germany, Bulgaria, Romania). The goal was to develop cooperation between universities and NGOs, and to nurture the concept of lifelong learning and active ageing for elderly adults in the Danube region. This specifically entails development of university-based educational courses for the target group of “elderly adults”, and making them available to the public in cooperation with educational and cultural institutions. The central event of the project was the “Academic Day”, organized by each country at its respective university. Prior to that, a research of participants’ interest in academic courses of continuous education was performed, and the findings have shown that there was a lot of interest, mostly among the elderly with college or university degree. As for Belgrade University, the program was implemented at the Faculty of Philosophy in June 2011, with courses on psychology, anthropology and national history, attended by 63 participants.
  - The so-called Workers’ Universities, which exist in 18 towns all over Serbia, develop and promote a set of special educational courses as part of informal education. The goal is to help adult persons, including the elderly, to return to the labor market by acquiring new knowledge, or by changing their vocation or lifestyle. Around 25,000 participants have used the services of such informal education. At the same time, the range of education and training offered by the private sector and NGOs is developing in a dynamic manner.
  - The Program of Encouraging Employment and Self-employment of Vulnerable Groups of Women in the Autonomous Province of Vojvodina 2009-2011 foresees measures for employment of women, persons with disabilities, Roma and elderly women from rural households, as well as gender mainstreaming in employment and self-employment programs, and keeping records on the position of different vulnerable groups of men and women in the labor market.
- 

***RIS Commitment 7: To strive to ensure quality of life at all ages and maintain independent living including health and well-being***

The UNECE member States committed to striving to ensure quality of life at all ages and maintain independent living including health and well-being. In particular, the member States agreed to promote health and well-being over the entire life course, by mainstreaming health through sectoral policies. In your report you *may* refer to:

- *actions taken to integrate ageing issues into sectoral policies.*

In addition, member States committed to ensuring **equal access** to health and social services including long-term care for persons of all ages:

- *targeted measures to reduce inequalities in access to health and social services, including for people in rural and remote areas*
- *initiatives to improve long-term care services for older persons, in particular community-based services that are needed to overcome the mismatch between the homebased services that are usually desired and the residential care services that are in fact supplied*
- *actions to improve the coordination and integration of services provided to older persons (e.g. through case management systems)*
- *initiatives concerning special needs in case of dementia and Alzheimer’s disease*
- *efforts to improve the training of care providers: professionals, volunteers and family members*
- *efforts to improve the skills of older persons in terms of self-care, health promotion, prevention of disease and disability.*

The member States also committed to ensuring appropriate financing of health and social services for persons of all ages:

- *steps taken to ensure efficient, equitable and sustainable financing of health and social services for persons of all ages.*

In addition, member States pledged to enable people to make healthy choices:

- *measures undertaken to facilitate the adoption of healthy lifestyles (e.g. information campaigns).*
- In 2008, the Ministry of Healthcare established the Commission for Improvement of Aged Persons Health, of which the members were 23 experts and representatives of institutions and organizations that provide health protection services to the elderly. This included the representatives of all public healthcare institutions (primary, secondary and tertiary medical care); social welfare institutions – homes for the elderly; academic circles – the Faculty of Medicine; public institutions – the Institute for Gerontology and Palliative Care, the Republic Institute for Public Health and the City Institute for Public Health; humanitarian/NGO sector – the Red Cross, various NGOs. The Commission produced the draft version of the National Program of Health Protection of the Elderly in Serbia.
- Republic Institute for Public Health in last 4 years organized 74 campaigns for whole Serbia in order to mark important days dedicated to health in accordance to UN WHO Calendar.
- As for manifestations, there are health festivals organized in all towns of Serbia with the objective to promote healthy lifestyles for all generations, and thus raise the access to some services of preventive healthcare. In late September every year, Belgrade organizes its health festival which lasts for 3 days and has more than 25,000 visitors. Along with promotion of health and knowledge, the festival also offers several types of preventive healthcare services, and aims to draw together all generations with its contents, thus promoting intergenerational cooperation. The health festival also marked the 1<sup>st</sup> of October, and it promoted more than 20 NGOs, as well as several private and state institutions that offer various social services to the elderly.
- The public sector capacities for health protection of the elderly consist of the following: 161 healthcare offices, 40 general hospitals, 40 special hospitals, 5 healthcare centers, 9 clinical centers, 6 clinics and 50 institutes – with 30 thousand beds. Share of the capacities are for elderly patients but in this moment not sufficient.  
(Source Republic Institute for public health: [http://www.batut.org.rs/download/health\\_indicators\\_rs.html](http://www.batut.org.rs/download/health_indicators_rs.html).)
- By amending the Law on Health Protection in 2011, some legal measures that directly concern the older population were implemented in practice. It was foreseen to introduce the institution of treatment, healthcare and palliative care at home into all major cities in Serbia along with Belgrade which has this kind of service for more than two decades. This service will now be provided in Nis, Kragujevac and Novi Sad. Amendments of the Law on Health Insurance from 2010 were made in order to have a more efficient funding of health protection.
- The amendments of the Law on Healthcare and the adoption of the Law on Social Welfare, both dating from 2011, foresee the mechanisms for quality control of healthcare services and social welfare services, with the aim to reduce inequality in access to quality services and equalize the quality level of healthcare and social services in the entire country.
- Geriatrics is a mandatory or optional course on basic studies at four faculties of medicine, while at the Faculty of Belgrade it is available as a specialization within the sphere of internal medicine. The introduction of curricula accreditation at the national level improved the trainings for service providers in the sphere of social welfare.
- The Government Ageing Council recommended the Government to initiate legal activities on long-term care for the elderly within the Action Plan pertaining to the National Strategy on Ageing. The message is particularly aimed at regulating the issue of local level cooperation between healthcare



and social welfare institutions with regard to protection of the elderly (2011). Two thirds of towns and municipalities in Serbia have Social Service Centers (for home assistance) and at the same time, healthcare offices (as centers for primary health protection) develop mobile medical teams for the elderly.

- As for the academia, the Faculty of Medicine of Belgrade University – the Neurology Institute opened the Center for Dementia in 2010. The Ministry of Healthcare is considering the initiative to introduce such Centers into the newly formed institutes for gerontology and palliative care, in order to deal with early detection of dementia and treatment at the primary level of health protection.
- For the past ten years, the Red Cross of Serbia is securing the funds for its program of care for the elderly. The emphasis is on the most vulnerable elderly population. The goal of the program is to keep an aged person in his or her surrounding as long as possible, while reducing the need for various forms of institutional assistance. The program is implemented through a set of prevention activities, such as home assistance, psychosocial support and club activities for senior citizens. In 2011, this program is active in 53 municipalities in Serbia, it is based on full volunteerism and it has around 1000 volunteers. In 70% of the cases, the volunteers are aged persons themselves – they provide services to the population of 6200 elderly beneficiaries. In addition to these 53 municipalities, in 20 more branches of the Red Cross there are programs developed with the aim to help around 250 elderly beneficiaries through funding provided by local self-governments, the Ministry of Healthcare and other donors. The Red Cross of Vojvodina has educated 20 educators for training of family members for home care and psychosocial support to ill persons in 8 municipalities, in 2011.
- As for the palliative care, the Red Cross of Serbia has trained 88 educators from civil society organizations for palliative care. Through its municipal branches, the Red Cross of Serbia continuously educates volunteers and family members to provide as quality services to elderly as possible, and there is a manual distributed to all organizations that implement programs aimed at care-giving and assistance to caregivers.
- The Red Cross of Serbia is also continuously educating the elderly themselves on the topic of prevention and healthy lifestyles, and this is organized in almost all local environments where there are municipal branches of the Red Cross, at least once a year. For these purposes, a manual is used, distributed to all branches that implement the program aimed at care-giving and assistance to caregivers.
- The new Law on Social Welfare from 2011 has fully regulated the mechanism of funding of social services for the elderly at the local community level, binding the local community to open a public procurement process for the territory of the municipality, and securing transfers from the national level for poor municipalities.
- The Republic Institute for Public Health “*Dr Milan Jovanovic Batut*” (the Center for Health Promotion), in collaboration with 23 district institutes for public health, implements the activities of prevention and health promotion among the elderly in Serbia – at the national level, by means of professional methodological support and collaboration with district institutes. In the period from 2007 to 2010, more than 85 professional meetings were held, with more than 5,000 medical workers and other practitioners attending. At the district level, district institutes collaborate with institutions for preventive healthcare, the media and the population. At the local community level, healthcare offices (161 of them) connect all sectors and organizations that provide primary healthcare services and implement their activities in line with the population’s needs.

---

***RIS Commitment 8: To mainstream a gender approach in an ageing society***

The member States committed to mainstreaming a **gender** approach in an ageing society. In your report you may refer to:

- *measures taken to mainstream gender, to remove all obstacles for achieving gender equality, to eliminate all forms of discrimination against women, and to promote individual development of women throughout their entire life cycle*
  - *actions to give particular attention to collection and analysis of gender- and age-disaggregated data*
  - *measures to promote the economic rights of women (such as legislation to ensure equal pay for equal work, to protect women's rights in the workplace, to reconcile family life with work life, etc.)*
  - *social protection policies reviewed to ensure full and equal participation of men and women in social protection systems*
  - *measures to encourage and facilitate equal sharing of family and care responsibilities between women and men.*
- In 2009, the Republic of Serbia adopted the Law on Prohibition of Discrimination, which is the key national legal instrument in regulating equality and securing human rights. The same year, the Law on Gender Equality was adopted, which prohibits gender-based discrimination in various fields: employment, social welfare and health protection, with pertaining bylaws. Two strategic documents were adopted in 2010: the National Strategy for Improving the Position of Women and Advancing Gender Equality, and the pertaining Action Plan for this Strategy was adopted, covering the period from 2010 to 2015.
  - In 2011, the National Strategy for Prevention and Elimination of Domestic Violence against Women was adopted, with the aim to establish a system of primary, secondary and tertiary prevention, to improve the normative framework for protection of women victims from violence, to advance intersectoral cooperation, to build the capacities of authorities and services, and to improve the support system for victims of violence.
  - The Law on Gender Equality emphasizes the obligation of state authorities to keep gender disaggregated statistics, as well as age disaggregated data, for all spheres of social life (Article 40). In addition, according to Article 12, the employers have the obligation to keep records on the age structure of their employees, and to report to the competent ministry about it. In 2008, the Republic Statistical Office, in cooperation with the Gender Equality Directorate of the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy, released a bilingual publication (in Serbian and English) called *Women and Men in Serbia*. The webpage of the Gender Equality Directorate has a data matrix with gender sensitive indicators, depicting the position of women and men in various fields. The matrix is available on the Gender Equality webpage – [www.gendernet.rs](http://www.gendernet.rs)
  - All regulations pertaining to social welfare were reviewed from a gender equality standpoint, in 2010 and 2011. This includes the Law on Pension and Disability Insurance, last amended in 2009. This Law stipulates that, when setting the retirement age for old age or disability pension for an insured woman, her number of years of service with insurance shall be increased by 15%. This practically means that a woman with 35 years of service shall automatically have 40 years of service with insurance, i.e. it shall be increased by approximately 15%. The retirement age for survivor's pension for widows is five years lower in comparison to widowers, so in 2012, after the gradual increase, it will stand at 50 years for widows and 55 for widowers. On similar grounds, a woman who gave birth to three children has special addition of two years to her total number of years of service.

---

***RIS Commitment 9: To support families that provide care for older persons and promote intergenerational and intra-generational solidarity among their members***

The RIS describes the family as the basic unit of society. The member States committed to ensuring support to families that provide care for older persons and to promoting solidarity among their members, to respond to the needs and changing roles of individual **family** members and strengthen **inter- and intra-generational solidarity**. In your report you may address:

- *adjustments made to family policies in view of changing demographic circumstances*
- *policies and programmes adopted to respond to the needs of family members of different ages*
- *specific elements introduced in these policies and programmes to promote equality between men and women*
- *awareness-raising measures on the contribution of older persons to family, community and society at large*
- *measures adopted to help families deal with the growing responsibilities of care for their older members*
- *mechanisms put in place to strengthen the role of communities, organizations and associations in providing support and care to older persons.*

The member States also committed to supporting families in coping with the social and economic consequences of demographic change:

- *support to care-giving families, family friendly policies and services*
- *adaptation of the infrastructure of towns to the needs of families, and in particular the needs of young and older persons, to ensure that generations can live together; improvements in planning of services.*
- In Serbia, according to the Law on Social Welfare, the local self-government is competent for securing and funding of social services in the community. Out of more than 160 municipalities, the majority of municipalities provide the following services for the elderly and their families: short-term financial aid, aid in kind, home assistance and clubs for senior citizens. In addition to this, at least one third of municipalities and towns provide daycare center services, meals in soup kitchens, subsidies for rent and utility expenses, subsidies for transport, subsidies for purchase of medications. In Belgrade, the amount of financial aid is increased by 17%, and public transport is free for citizens older than the age of 65. In providing social welfare services to families, the public sector is slowly losing its once dominant position, and humanitarian and non-governmental organizations become more of an equal parent in social services provision. The private sector of providers of social services is also developing in a very dynamic manner.
- In most of Serbia municipalities in last 3-4 years there are celebrations of the International day of Elderly, dedicated to different programs for elderly families and intergenerational solidarity
- In order to respond to the family needs, the Government and the Ministry of Labor and Social Policy had established the Social Innovations Fund which, in the period between 2007 and 2010, supported 117 projects for assistance to the elderly (out of which 34 were funded by UNDP) in 71 municipalities, with the total value of 3.5 million €. The most prevalent services were home assistance, daycare center services, development of clubs for senior citizens, and aid to procure medical equipment. Along with this, the MoLSP supported another 82 projects in cooperation with DFID, which introduced the services of home assistance for the elderly and persons and disabilities, and opened a few daycare centers in local communities in 40 underdeveloped municipalities.
- In 2010, the Red Cross of Serbia started to implement a project called *Care for the Elderly in Local Communities*, implemented in partnership with the NGO Yanos Public Health from the Netherlands. Direct beneficiaries of the project are the elderly who need constant care and attention in three municipalities, while indirect beneficiaries are family members (as informal caregivers), Red Cross volunteers, and members of the appropriate bodies and structures in the community. The result of

this project will be development of daycare centers in three project municipalities, while simultaneously strengthening the family environment.

- Within the IPA project *Dialogue of Civil Society Organizations on Problems of the Elderly in Western Balkans*, which is being implemented in Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, and Serbia, one of the most important activities is to develop self-help groups. These groups aim to motivate and empower the elderly to independently resolve their own problems, which they have identified themselves. In Serbia, the NGO network HumanaS and the Red Cross of Serbia have initiated the organization of 48 self-help groups, gathering 462 aged persons in 27 municipalities. HumanaS is a network of 15 civil society organizations which promotes a dignified old age, and which supports a greater and more active role of the elderly in developing a society for all generations in Serbia.
  - City of Kragujevac was the first and one local community in which local authorities in cooperation with health and social public institutions and NGOs, were developed the full concept of integrated Long Term Care. The NGO Victoria from Kragujevac develops support services (consisting of washing and ironing clothes, maintenance and repairs, purchase of food and other supplies) for families in Kragujevac – there are 80 beneficiaries at the moment, and the project is funded by MoLSP. There is also a program of psychosocial support with 150 beneficiaries (funded by MoLSP); a public works program including trainings for caregivers and employment for 6 months, with 30 participants (funded by NES); and a program for self-help groups which involves around 200 aged persons in the municipality of Kragujevac and 3 neighboring municipalities (funded by the Disapora).
  - In an attempt to improve the infrastructure and adapt the environment in Serbia, all the relevant regulations that impose the obligation that each constructed building must be accessible to aged persons and persons with disabilities are put into force. In practice, there is no regular and full control of this obligation, and construction works in order to adapt the buildings and install access ramps have slowed down since 2008.
- 

***RIS Commitment 10: To promote the implementation and follow-up of the regional implementation strategy through regional cooperation***

UNECE member States have the primary responsibility for the implementation and follow-up of the RIS. They are encouraged to do so, among other means, through regional cooperation, civil society involvement, and cooperation with the UNECE secretariat.

The analysis of your activities in this field *may* take into account the following:

- *activities undertaken by your country to strengthen cooperation among UNECE member States in the field of ageing (e.g. participation in meetings of the UNECE and the ECV, exchange of information with member States and with the UNECE secretariat)*
  - *opportunities provided for civil society to cooperate in this process*
  - *assistance requested/received from the UNECE secretariat and/or other entities of the United Nations system in the implementation of RIS (if so, consider providing a brief evaluation)*
  - *possible needs for assistance.*
- 
- As a member state, Serbia has actively supported the cooperation between the UNECE countries in the field of ageing. After its active participation in development of the Leon Declaration, as well as at the Ministerial Conference on Ageing in Spain, Serbia has regularly, through its representatives, participated in annual meetings of UNECE on the topic of ageing – in 2008, 2009 and 2010. It also

participated in establishing of the European Group on Ageing in 2009, and in the work of the Bureau of the Group in 2009 and 2010, in which a focal point on ageing was appointed.

- The possibility to cooperate with the NGO sector emerged at the annual UNECE meeting in 2008, when together with the Government's focal point on ageing, a representative of the civil sector (the NGO Lastavica) was present. On the other hand, international participation of NGO representatives of Serbia was assured in the sphere of capacity building on ageing (education) on two occasions: a one-week international workshop at the International Institute on Ageing on Malta in October 2009 (the Red Cross of Serbia), and a 10-days workshop in Haifa, in February 2011 (the NGO network HumanaS), owing to cooperation with the Israeli Agency for International Cooperation and Development and UNFPA.
  - The collaboration between the Serbian focal point on ageing and UNECE Secretariat is of a continuous nature, given that the representative of Serbia is also a member of the Bureau of the Working Group on Ageing, and in particular in relation to translating the policy briefs to Serbian language and uploading them to UNECE's webpage.
  - In 2011, Serbia received and implemented project support from UNFPA, which had a key influence on the higher quality and more dynamical work of the Government Ageing Council (April-December 2011), as well of the Council's working group tasked with providing professional support to the focal point on ageing, with the aim to produce a quality response in Reporting on National Follow-up to the RIS/MIPAA (June-October 2011). In 2011, the Council implemented substantial parts of its activity program. In addition, UNFPA's support to drafting of a special analysis of the census results from the standpoint of ageing is expected to have significant positive effects on ageing policy, but it will come after the currently ongoing population census.
  - Serbia is facing many more challenges in trying to adapt to demographic ageing of the nation. Bearing in mind the prognosis and expectations that the country will experience another wave of the current international crisis, there is still room and reason to ask for assistance.
- 

#### 4. Conclusions and Priorities for the Future

This section (about 1,000 words or two A4 pages, single-spaced) is expected to:

- *briefly summarize the extent to which your country has addressed the challenges and opportunities of population ageing since the León Conference in 2007*
- *indicate, based on the assessment provided and in view of expected future demographic developments, what will be your country's future policy challenges and perspectives related to ageing*
- *indicate major strengths and weaknesses of your country in the field of ageing*
- *outline future activities in the areas of population and individual ageing and other related areas*
- *propose adjustments to existing policies*
- *identify priorities for further policy research*
- *indicate capacity development needs*
- *describe the level of need or wish to exchange experiences across countries*
- *indicate your country's requests, needs and wishes with regard to the work of international organizations in the field of ageing.*
- The family is the primary framework and environment in which the majority of aged persons in Serbia find their elementary support and safety. In the period after 2007, in many spheres of life in Serbia, the awareness on ageing and its consequences has increased. Thanks to the development of NGOs and the private sector, assistance services to aged persons and their families are appearing faster than before. Even though sustainability is a challenge, the basic systems of security and



welfare (pension and disability insurance and social welfare) are functioning. New approach to ageing now often consists of a strategic (or even legal) framework. The basic challenges are poverty of the elderly (in 2009, 7.5 below the absolute poverty line, and 18.2% below the poverty line), better adaptation of the labor market to ageing, higher level of mainstreaming of ageing into healthcare, and lifelong education of the elderly, in order to raise the level of social inclusion.

- Based on the given demographic projections (regardless of which scenario is taken into consideration) according to which the process of population ageing is still continuing in a dynamic manner, we may conclude that the challenges reside, firstly, in the sphere of reform of pension and disability insurance system in order to make it more sustainable, in the sphere of reform of health protection in order to raise the capacities and quality of services for the elderly, in the sphere of social welfare in order to introduce social pensions, in the sphere of employment in order to introduce the active ageing concept, and in the sphere of improvement of lifelong learning and training.
- As for the population level, there is progress in the form of developed solidarity within and between generations. The weakness of our society is that there is no unique response of the state to the challenge of population ageing (from the public, civil and private sector of services for the elderly, in a unique tone and quality), which results from a lack of cooperation and coordination, as well as from a lack of financial resources.
- It is a challenge to find the appropriate resources for capacity building of healthcare services, that is to say LTC services in general, and especially local community services (daycare centers, home assistance and care, palliative care, etc.) aimed at aged persons with dementia or disabilities and their family members. There are no resources for providing support to families that care for the elderly, in the field of services to households (cleaning, washing and ironing of clothes, food delivery, small repairs).
- Ageing policy should be reviewed from the perspective of the results of the latest population census, and the special analysis of the elderly population which will be drafted. Research in the field of ageing should be encouraged more, and research results should be used in practice.
- As it is defined in the recommendations of the Ageing Council, absolute advantage should be given to programs and actions that are already contained in currently valid legal and strategic documents, which aim to promote a larger scope of social transfers, a better position of aged workers in the labor market, more available and higher quality healthcare and social welfare, a better involvement of senior citizens in community life, development of gerontology and ageing policies based on facts.
- By means of professional training, the conditions to mainstream ageing into healthcare, labor and social welfare, education and science, finance etc. should be improved. Professional development of non-governmental and private capacities should be encouraged.
- Exchange of knowledge, experience and good practice examples are an essential motivation and the wish of the majority of professionals who work for the elderly and with the elderly in Serbia.
- International cooperation and collaboration with the UN agencies is first of all needed as support to implement the additional analysis of the census from the perspective of ageing, to perform the research projects concerning the development of services for the elderly, and to raise the capacities and knowledge of personnel working on issues related to ageing.

---

National Focal Point on Ageing,

Lidija Kozarcanin, PhD

*Lidija Kozarcanin*

---



Republic of Serbia  
Ministry of Labour and  
Social Policy  
Mihaila Pupina, 2  
Belgrade  
October, 2011.

This Report is approved by President of the Council for Ageing and Old Age,  
relevant national advisory body, Minister for Labour and Social Policy,

Mr Rasim Ljajic



The image shows a handwritten signature in black ink over a blue circular official stamp. The stamp contains the text 'РЕПУБЛИКА СРБИЈА' (Republic of Serbia) at the top, 'МИНИСТАРСТВО РАДА И СОЦИЈАЛНЕ ЗАШТИТЕ' (Ministry of Labour and Social Security) around the perimeter, and 'БЕОГРАД' (Belgrade) at the bottom. The signature is written across the stamp and extends to the left and right.

#### Annex

1. List and contact details of organizations in your country that are directly involved in preparing this report
2. The national action plan on ageing and the relevant laws on ageing
4. Other applicable materials (tables, charts, methodological explanatory notes, etc).