



Statistical Office of the Republic of Serbia

ACTIVE AGEING INDEX IN SERBIA

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The Serbian demographic image in the early 21st century is essentially characterized by the following facts:

- high average age of population,
- extremely negative natural increase,
- insufficient population renewal/growth,
- widening of depopulation areas,
- insufficient labour capacities and fertile potentials required for the reproduction of new generations,
- adopted modern norms of reproductive behaviour among female population that prevent birth rehabilitation.

An intensive aging process is expressive for the the Serbian population and this is regarded as the result of an extremely falling trend noted for live births from the mid-fifties of the last century, and a rising trend of deaths. However, the most significant and the most complex problem that we encounter nowadays, appearing as a consequence of the previous demographic movements, is the disordered age structure of population.

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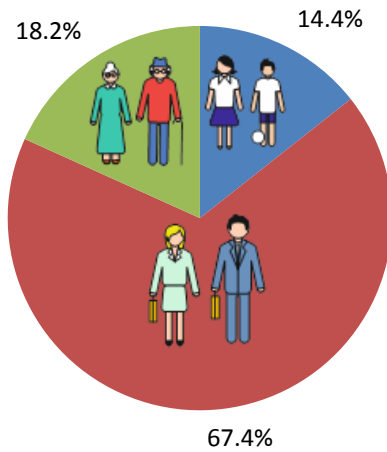
The Serbian population, according to all features of demographic age, could be classified as an extremely aged population, not only according to the European, but also the world standards.

The average population age in the Republic of Serbia (2014) is about 43 years.

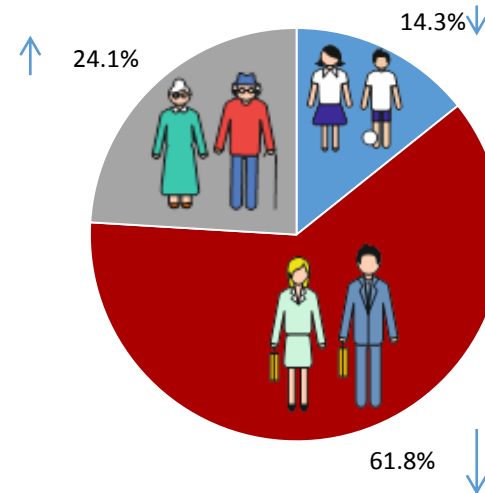
The 2002 Census results for the first time expressed the larger share of persons aged over 65 (16.5%), than of those under the age of 15 (15.7%).

In the last 50 years the share of young age group in the total population almost double decreased, and the share of elderly population was 2.5 times increased.

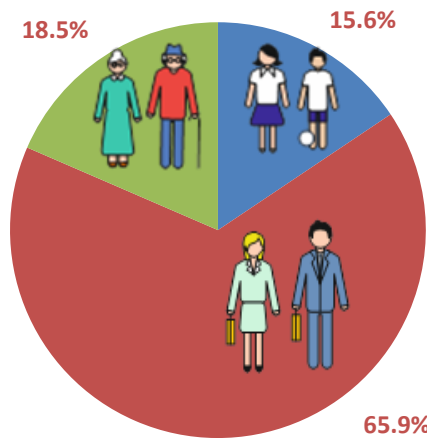
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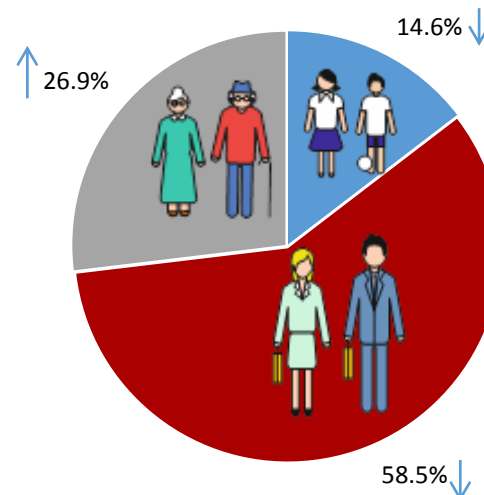
Serbia, 2014



Serbia, 2041



EU-28, 2014



EU-28, 2040

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All variance of population projections indicate a significantly increased share of elderly persons (aged 65 and over) in the total population.

According to the variance of medium fertility, the share of elderly persons tends rise from 17.3% in 2011 to 24.1% in 2041.

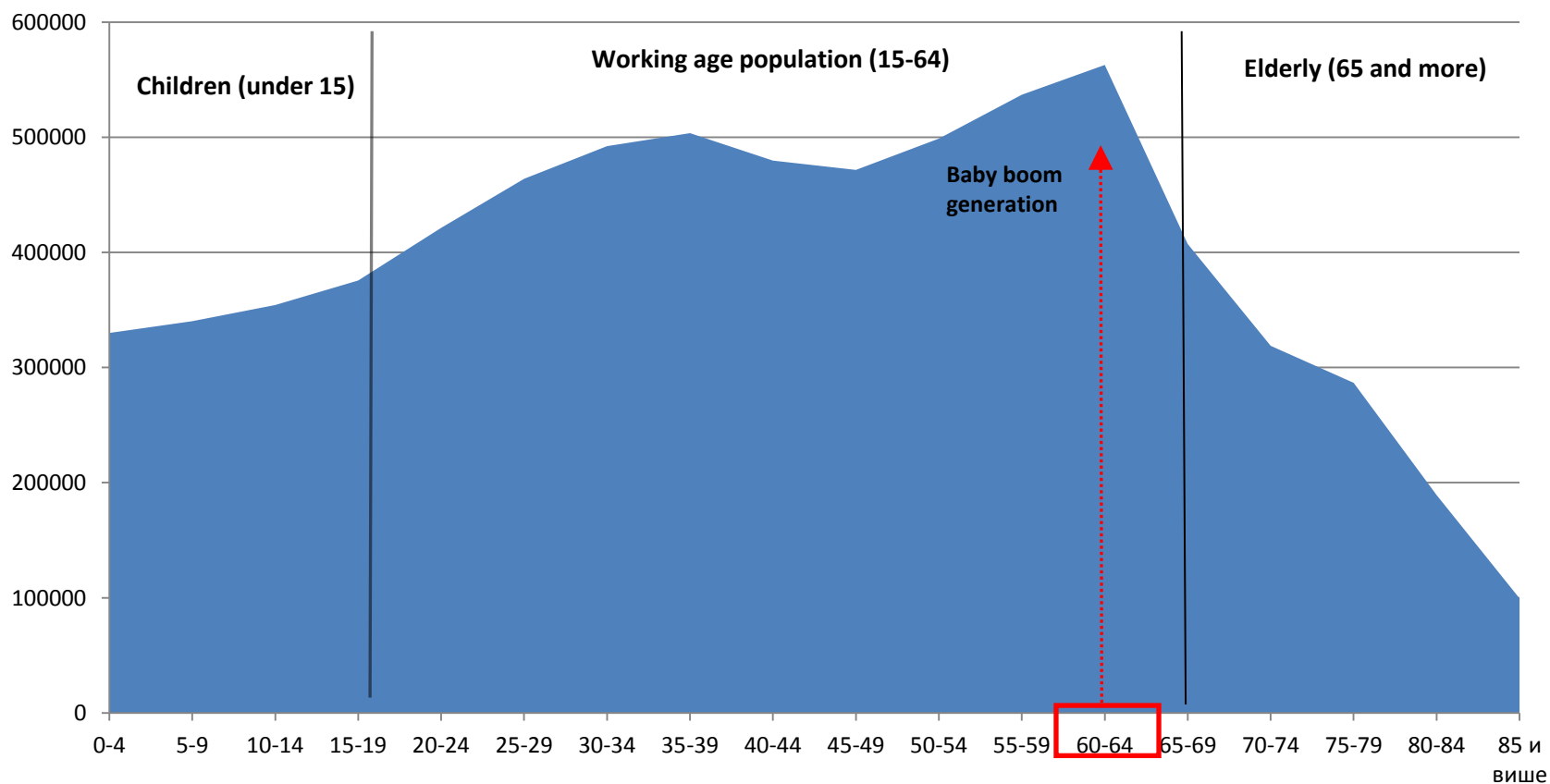
It is expected that in 2041 every fourth citizen of the RS will be over the age of 65.

Also, the share of extremely old persons (aged over 80) in the total population is projected to rise from 3.5% (2011) to 7.5% (2041).

These data indicate an ever more expressive ageing process prevailing in Serbia and this is expected to carry on in future.

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Serbian population by age, estimate 2014



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In Serbia, due to an ever increasing share of elderly population in the total population, and likewise because of the fact that since 2012 also the Baby Boom generation has entered the contingent of 65+ population, it is felt required on national level to define measures and undertake steps aimed at upgrading the social role of elderly people.

The objective of these measures is to help improving the life quality for elderly people through making sustainable their healthy and productive life. Therefore, evident is the necessity to estimate the active aging index in Serbia, i.e. the composite index designed to measure unused capacities of elderly people.

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Data sources and availability

To ensure the data required for the indicators defined by domains, the results of the listed surveys were used:

EQLS (European Quality of Life Surveys, 2011/2012)

SILC (Survey on Income and Living Conditions, from 2013)

LFS (Labour force survey. In 2008 the questionnaire and methodology were revised in accordance with the Eurostat recommendations)

TUS (Time Use Survey, 2010/2011)

Survey on corruption in Western Balkans 2011

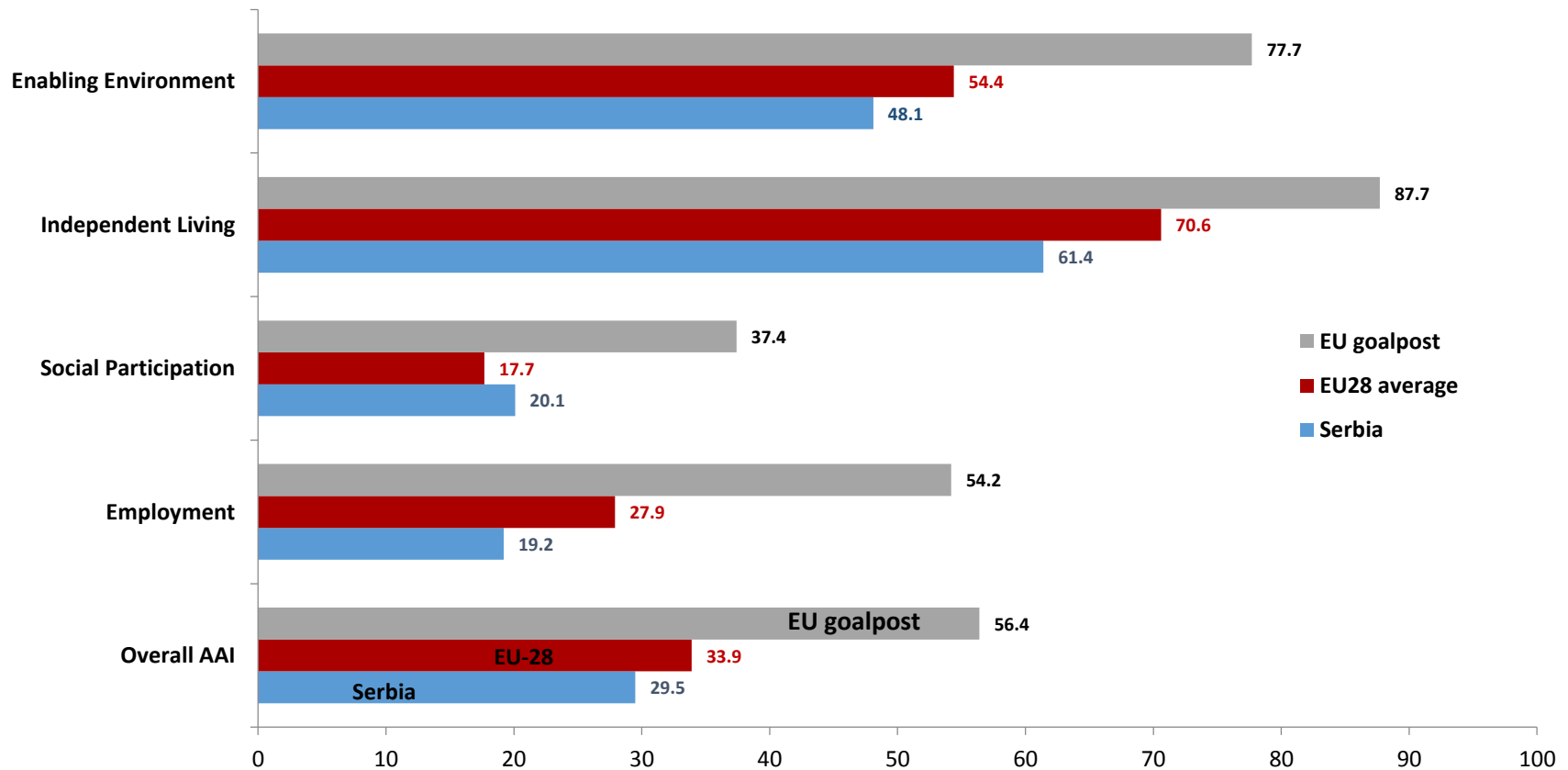
Serbia did not take part in the European Social Survey (ESS)

SORS also calculated the indicator 4.2 using the abridged life tables and SILC data on limitations in activities due to health problems.

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2014 AAI results for Serbia

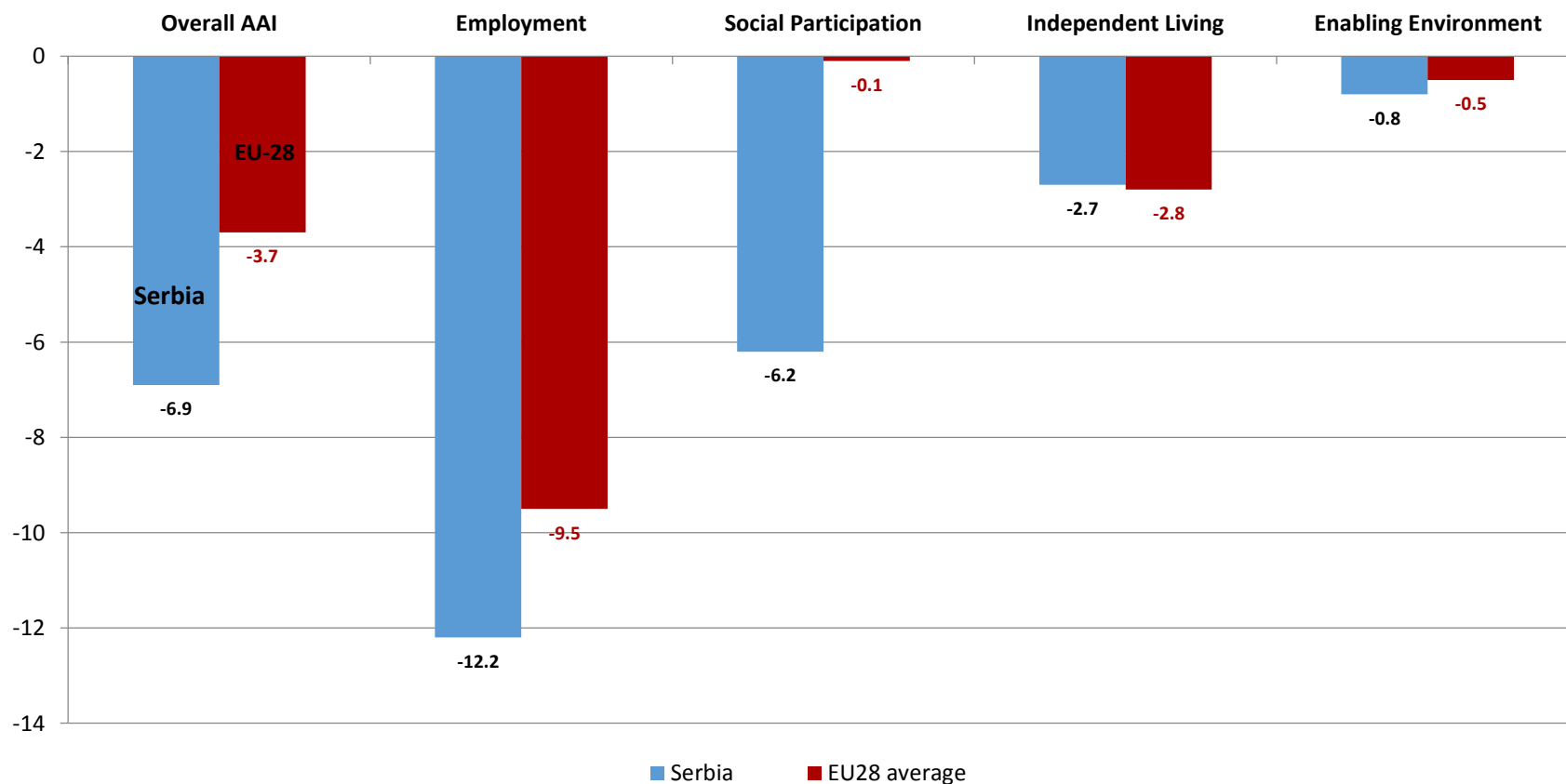
Overall 2014 AAI results and its domain scores for Serbia and EU 28 average



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2014 AAI results for Serbia

Gender gap for Serbia and EU 28 average: overall and by domains



Source: Data provided by SORS based on national Labour Force Survey (LFS), 2008, 2010 and 2012

Employment rate for the age groups (specifically age group: 55-59, 60-64, 65-69 and 70-74)

Definition: Employment rate is the share of employees specific years old in the total population specifically aged by sex.

- The pattern of employment throughout the age groups in Serbia is of interest: the younger is the group the lower relative position in comparison to EU countries it occupies. It applies to the total rates as well as those by sex. This is similar to the pattern of such countries as Portugal , Romania and Turkey.
- The employment in all age groups in Serbia decreased in both relative (in comparison to EU 28) and absolute terms over the period 2008–2012 (except for employment among men in between 2010–2012, when the rate increased by 0.4 points). The overall domain score went down from 25.5 in 2008 to 19.2 in 2012, with the employment among men decreasing by over 8 points, and among women — by 5 points.
- The gender gap (the difference between the results for women and for men) has been narrowing down over the four-year period, **but is still significant: –12.2 points in 2014** AAI results (for comparison, the **EU average gender gap** in terms of employment rate amounts to **–9.5 points**).

2.1 Voluntary activities by sex

2.2 Care to children and grandchildren by sex

2.3 Care to older adults by sex

2.4 Political participation by sex

- **In comparison to the EU countries Serbia scores rather high — 10 out of 29 with 20.1 points.** This result is mainly due to a high level of care to children and grandchildren (indicator 2.2): almost 50 % of people aged 55 and above are providing such care at least once a week. The share of persons 55+ doing voluntary activities at least once a week (indicator 2.1) is rather low.
- 12% of older people are providing care to older adults (indicator 2.3) and 17.7 per cent are active in terms of political participation (indicator 2.4) (these indicators values are respectively just below and just above the average rate of the EU countries).
- Men seem more active in terms of social participation than women across all the indicators of this domain. This is true for both absolute numbers and relative position in comparison to EU. Thus, men score the first in care to children and grandchildren (women occupy the third position); in care to older adults men are the fourth, while women are the 26th.

3.1. Physical exercise

3.2 Access to health and dental care

3.3 Independent living arrangements

3.4 Relative median income

3.5 No poverty risk

3.6 No severe material deprivation

3.7 Physical safety

3.8 Lifelong learning

This domain score is of 61.4 points for Serbia. Only one EU country has a lower result in this domain. Serbia scores high in relative median income and lifelong learning. It is important to note that for women at age 65 and above these indicators values are lower than for men, even in case of the relative median income .

Older women in Serbia appear to be less protected in terms of financial security. Women fare better in physical activities, access to health/dental services, and independent living arrangements. In lifelong learning the difference is of 0.1 points in favour of women.

In addition to the above mentioned gender gap in financial security indicators, men have also significantly higher results in physical safety which is a common trend in the other countries.

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IV Capacity and enabling environment for active ageing

- **In this domain Serbia scores 22 out of 29 with 48.1 points.** This result is mainly due to a rather high level of healthy life years. The social connectedness indicator, for which a proxy was used, is 8 points below EU average: 40.4 per cent of older people engage in social activities with somebody outside of the household.
- As it is the case for the life expectancy at birth, the life expectancy at 55 is also lower in Serbia than in the EU countries, bringing the indicator 4.1 below the EU countries results as well.
- Mental well-being (4.3) and the use of ICT (Internet) are also lower in comparison to EU.
- Women fare better than men in life expectancy and social connectedness. For all the other indicators men have higher results than women. Over a four-year period life expectancy has been gradually increasing, just as have been the use of ICT and the educational attainment.

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Concluding remarks

The necessity of permanent following the overall population development is a well defined social need and an issue of utmost importance for the Serbian population. The very nature of demographic processes is rather complex, which entails the necessity to include various social aspects in order to ensure that demographic phenomena and processes are thoroughly surveyed and the results analyzed.

Ageing presents a challenge that almost all EU countries are faced with. Therefore, in modern societies AAI shall be regarded as a necessary tool for measuring the potential of elderly people.

The main issues recognized in conducting the AAI pilot survey are the following:

- Full comparability of indicator **definitions** is not ensured
- **Timeliness/periodicity** of certain surveys is not harmonized
- Surveys required to ensure data for compiling the defined indicators are **not implemented**.

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Aging process is inevitable for any human society; it is a challenge that shall be necessarily faced. Young population today, becomes old tomorrow.

The measures that are presently defined ask for permanent updating and development; however, good practice of other countries shall be adopted and used when defining the measures, following their effects and also the achievements made with the aim to upgrade the social role of elderly people.



The SORS data have once again confirmed the crucial role of official statistics; namely, to provide a real image of the national social developments and to ensure a sound basis for political decision taking and recognizing social challenges on all levels, from state administration, national and international institutions, to interested citizens.

Thank you!

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