Stocktaking on Mainstreaming Ageing in the UNECE region

Selected Highlights of Ireland's approach to mainstreaming ageing

1. **About**
   - Briefly describe the historical development of a mainstreaming approach to ageing in your country and the role MIPAA/RIS has played to motivate policy action in this area.

In 2007, the Irish Government made a commitment to 'better recognise the position of older people in Irish society' and to develop a National Positive Ageing Strategy. In early 2011, the Programme for Government committed to completing and implementing the National Positive Ageing Strategy so that 'older people are recognised, supported and enabled to live independent full lives'.

The development of the Strategy was informed by:

• Consultations with a Cross Departmental Group (CDG) and NGO Liaison Group (NGOLG) that were convened to assist in the preparation of the Strategy

• Review of international strategies on ageing and international developments (WHO, UN (MIPAA), EU) in relation to ageing and older people

• A public consultation process

The Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) proposes that a necessary first step in changing attitudes towards older people is to mainstream ageing and the concerns of older people into national frameworks and strategies. The implementation of this National Positive Ageing Strategy should be considered as a first and necessary step in mainstreaming the concerns of older people in all policy fields.

The Regional Implementation Strategy has encouraged Ireland to look across government and reflect on progress being made especially against our own Positive Ageing strategy and the wider MIPAA and subsequent reviews. By compiling a national report an opportunity is presented where, as a country, Ireland notes the on-going progress in supporting ageing whilst also acknowledging aspects for improvement. Irelands most recent national report noted how population ageing with inevitably increase pressure on health and social care services, informal care and availability of a trained workforce. Ireland benefits from a committed and vibrant 'not-for-profit' sector that supports many of the daily living needs of older people, finding how best to integrate and direct such a diverse range of organisations remains a challenge.

National Positive Ageing Strategy

The National Positive Ageing Strategy (NPAS) published in 2013 provides a framework for cooperation to address age-related policy and service delivery across Government and society in the years ahead. The Strategy is intended to promote older people's health and wellbeing so that older people can continue to contribute to social, economic, cultural and family life in their own communities as long as possible. The Strategy highlights that ageing is not just a health issue, but rather requires a whole of Government approach to address a range of social, economic and environmental factors that affect the health and wellbeing of our ageing citizens.

Many of the objectives included in this Strategy are quite broad and can be viewed as a set of principles to which Government has committed, and which will inform policies that affect older people on an indefinite basis into the future, rather than concrete objectives that can be delivered in the short term.

New arrangements to implement and monitor implementation of NPAS were approved by the Cabinet Committee on Social Policy and Public Service Reform in 2016. These include an annual forum for stakeholders to identify their key priorities for the next 3 years. The inaugural stakeholder forum took place in 2017. Stakeholders were asked to identify key priorities to propose to Government to consider for its focus in the coming year. Through this forum, clear channels of communication between the stakeholder representative group and relevant Government Departments to discuss these priorities have been facilitated by the Department of Health.

Healthy and Positive Ageing Initiative

The Healthy and Positive Ageing Initiative (HaPAI) is a collaborative initiative established to implement the research objectives of the National Positive Ageing Strategy (NPAS). It was jointly funded by the Department of Health, the HSE's Health and Wellbeing Programme, and the Atlantic Philanthropies until December 2017, with a commitment to Department of Health funding for a further two years.

The initiative aims to monitor changes in older people's health and wellbeing linked to the goals and objectives of the NPAS. This is done primarily through the development of national positive ageing indicators to be published every two years. The initiative is intended to provide evidence of the factors contributing to healthy ageing, including at local level and ultimately inform policy responses to population ageing in Ireland. The first National Positive Ageing Indicators report was published in 2016 and again in 2019, these reports highlight many of the positive and negative aspects of growing old in Ireland.

Healthy Ireland

The National Positive Ageing Strategy and the activities of the HaPAI are strongly embedded within the vision and actions set out for Healthy Ireland, the Government-led initiative which aims to create an Irish society where people of all ages can enjoy good physical and mental health, and where wellbeing is supported at every level of society. The Healthy Ireland Framework was launched in 2013 and seeks to provide people and communities with accurate information on how to improve their health and wellbeing and to make the healthy choices easier choices. Healthy Ireland takes a whole-of-Government and whole-of-society approach to improving health and wellbeing and the quality of people's lives and a number of new structures have been put in place to ensure that all sectors of society are given opportunities to participate.

SláinteCare

The Oireachtas Committee on the Future of Healthcare recognised in the 'Sláintecare Report' (2017) that the Irish population are getting older and that this inevitably creates increased demand for health and social care, especially with regards to managing chronic diseases and multi-morbidity. Managing chronic disease accounts for a growing share of finite health resources and demands new approaches. To meet this challenge, health services must be delivered in an efficient, integrated manner at the lowest level of complexity. Population health approaches can prevent chronic illness from developing in the first place, so prevention is a strong focus of the Irish health system.

Although we have one of the youngest populations in Europe, the share of the population aged 65 and over is projected Central Statistics Office. Population and Labour Force Projections for the period 2017-2051 (2018 (M2F2 Scenario)) to increase, by 59% over coming years, while the number of people aged 85 and over is projected to increase by 97%. This increase is happening sharply and quickly, and older age cohorts are the highest users of most health and social care services.

To help address this increasing demand on health services, models of care have been designed around groups or cohorts in the population, including frail older people (Integrated Care Programme for Older People), people with complex needs and those with long-term chronic conditions.

Initially there will be an acceleration in the implementation of integrated care programmes focused on chronic conditions and older people to provide appropriate and effective care in the community. The 2019 Sláintecare Action plan states that programmes will focus on commencing and scaling projects to improve the management of older people's services.

In addition, the Sláintecare Programme Implementation Office considers age-specific organisations as being central to the reform agenda and have therefore invited several to participate in a stakeholder engagement event that is being organised in conjunction with the Health Reform Alliance.

https://health.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/03/Sl%C3%A1intecare-Action-Plan-2019.pdf

- Briefly describe how ageing policies are approached: adaptation to demographic change & population ageing (macro perspective) or a range of specific measures to benefit older persons which are not embedded in an overall ageing strategy for the country?

The provisional data from Census 2016 shows an overall increase of nearly 4% in the total population in Ireland since the last Census in 2011 but a significant slowdown in growth over the period. One of the most significant demographic developments in Ireland in the last decade is the acceleration in population ageing. Since 2007 the population aged 65 and over has increased by 33%. Population projections produced by the CSO indicate that the most dramatic change in the structure of the population in the coming decades will be the increase in the number of older people. This is already occurring with an increase in the number of people over the age of 65 approaching 20,000 per year. Ireland's population is also projected to age with the percentage of people over 65 making up a larger proportion of the population. A similar trend is projected to occur in the EU population. The largest proportional increase in Ireland is expected in the 85+ age group which is projected to double by 2031. Population ageing clearly has major implications for the planning, provision and funding of services. It is also a measure of success in improving health and extending life expectancy. Life expectancy in Ireland has increased by 2.4 years since 2006 and is now above the average for the EU. While female life expectancy in Ireland has tracked the EU average over the last decade, the life expectancy of males in Ireland has consistently been over one year greater than that in EU countries. In addition, the gap between male and female life expectancy in Ireland has narrowed over the last decade. The greatest gains in life expectancy have been achieved in the older age groups reflecting decreasing mortality rates from major diseases. In Ireland at age 65, although women have a higher life expectancy than men, men will experience a slightly higher proportion of healthy life years than women. The proportion of life expectancy at age 65 to be lived in good health is higher for both men and women in Ireland compared with the EU average. In the areas of self-reported chronic illness and limitations in activities, Ireland continues to compare favourably with the EU average.

2. **Structures**

This section is about the institutional setting of ageing policies.

- Which Ministry/department/unit is in charge of coordinating ageing issues across your national government? Are there ageing units in different ministries?

The Department of Health has responsibility for the implementation of the National Positive Ageing Strategy which is a whole of government approach to ageing in Ireland. However, many other departments have their own policies that impact in some part on older people including;

- Department of Employment Affairs & Social Protection
- Department of Rural and Community Development
- Department of Business, Enterprise and Innovation
- Department of Housing, Planning & Local Government
- Department of Justice & Equality
- Department of Finance
- Department of Public Expenditure & Reform

- Is there (yes/no) a coordinating mechanism for mainstreaming ageing in place? (If yes, please describe what it is and how it works).

Yes

The National Positive Ageing Strategy is the overarching blueprint for age related policy and service delivery across Government and society. Progress on the goals set out in this strategy is monitored through the Healthy & Positive Ageing Initiative (HaPAI).

More recently the departments of Health and Housing Planning & Local Government worked on a joint policy entitled [Housing Options for our Ageing Population.](#) The policy statement provides a framework by which the Government can facilitate and promote a variety of housing options, including housing with care/supported housing, for older people. While a variety of housing models for older people have emerged at local level, there is a need for a more strategic and collaborative approach to ensure the best possible outcomes for all. It is also important to recognise that housing with supports is a vital element in facilitating older people to remain in their communities.

- Differentiate between the national, regional and local levels as appropriate. Is mainstreaming ageing applied across different levels of government? Is there a coordination mechanism across different levels of government?

The Department of Health co-ordinates the cross-departmental approach to ageing at government level. The Age Friendly Ireland programme supports positive ageing activities across the local government structures.

3. **Laws, Policies, and Strategic Framework**

This section addresses the mandate for mainstreaming ageing at national level and policy decisions facilitating the establishment of mainstreaming processes, methods to use etc.

- Is there (yes/no) a national strategy on ageing (date/history if it is not the first one)?

Yes

- Is there (yes/no) an action plan to implement it?

No

- Is there (yes/no) a monitoring framework to assess progress towards its implementation?

Yes

- Is there any government-internal policy/guidance on the inclusion of ageing issues /stakeholders in policy development?

Yes, in general policy and/or legislative change requires the relevant Department to undertake a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA). This requires the authors of the change to consider its impact on different cohorts of people, existing laws and regulations, the economy and society in general.

The majority of significant policies, strategies and legislation undergoes a public consultation, where citizens and representative groups have an opportunity to put forward their opinion.

- Are there any other legislations or policies in place that directly support mainstreaming ageing?

No

4. **Methods and tools**

   This section will provide an overview of the mainstreaming tools used in the country.

   Data collection and analysis

   - Is there a coordination mechanism for the production and use of national statistics on ageing?

   Yes, the Central Statistics Office (CSO)

   https://www.cso.ie/en/csolatestnews/pressreleases/2017pressreleases/pressstatementcensus2016resultsprofile3-anageprofileofireland/

   - Is ageing-related data centrally compiled and disseminated, for instance through websites focusing on ageing or annual ageing reports?

   The Irish Longitudinal Study of Ageing (TILDA) commenced in 2006 and collected its first wave of data in 2009/2010. Waves of data collection have occurred every two years since. Reports on the findings from each wave have been published and made available online (https://tilda.tcd.ie/publications/reports/). Additionally, once cleaned and made compliant with data protection regulations, this data is publicly archived (https://tilda.tcd.ie/data/accessing-data/).

   - Is there dedicated government funding to advance ageing-related research?

   The Irish Government provided funding of €10 million to conduct Phase II of TILDA. Phase I was jointly funded by the Irish Government and philanthropic donations.

   The Department of Health and Atlantic Philanthropies co-funded the HaPAI programme, see 1.1 above

   - Are there known data gaps related to ageing statistics? If yes, what are those gaps? How were the gaps addressed? Yes there are gaps

   Awareness raising, advocacy and education

- Are there any awareness raising mechanisms in place to increase mindfulness of government officials regarding ageing-related issues?

The annual National Positive Ageing Strategy Stakeholder forum (see 4.9 below) creates a platform for issues and new research on ageing to be shared across government and relevant organisations.

The Age Friendly Ireland Advisory Group meets every 2 months to review the Age Friendly programme and progress / new developments in the area of Positive Ageing by the group's members. The membership is made up of Departments of Health, Housing Planning & Local Government, Rural & Community Development, the Health Service Executive, An Garda Síochána (Ireland's police force), Chambers of Commerce Ireland and the Local Authorities.

Within the framework of the WHO's Age Friendly Cities and Communities model, city and county-based stakeholders are making commitments to shared action plans addressing pillars spanning housing, our health services, built environment, transport and employment. Under the leadership of the local authority Chief Executive's and senior managers in each local authority area an Age Friendly Alliance is established, involving senior decision-makers from public, commercial, academic and not-for-profit organisations. Through the establishment of an Older People's Council in each participating local authority area older people exercise a strong, guiding influence on age-friendly local development. Age Friendly Alliances plan and implement strategies and oversee progress in each county

The TILDA Oversight Board is a key element of the TILDA Governance structure. Meetings take place three times per year. There are representatives from a number of Government Departments, including the Department of Health and the Department of Social Protection, on this Board.

- Are there training courses on ageing-related issues offered to government officials?

There is no mandatory programme of learning on age-related matters, however there are courses available mainly managed through the NGO sectors that officials can avail of such as Age & Opportunity Agewise programme https://ageandopportunity.ie/engage/agewise/

Age Friendly Ireland has supported the delivery of training to key practitioners whose actions and decisions have an effect on the lives of older people in Ireland. The outcomes include increased awareness of design techniques and good practice that can be used in their ongoing work.

- Training delivered to 1,000+ Practitioners - Local Authority Planners, Architects, Engineers.
- A guide to Age Friendly Communications training delivered to Local Government staff, service providers, etc.
- Healthy & Positive Ageing Train the Trainer Workshops (delivered to all 31 Local Authorities)
- Age Friendly Public Services Recognition Programme – training to enhance public services for older people.

- Are there any government sector-specific notes, presentations, or other tools disseminated within government to raise awareness about ageing-related issues, for example in transport, housing, security, health ….

A programme of dissemination of the results emanating from the HaPAI Indicators reports exists which includes sharing of information, presentations and workshops. This is seen as an important bridge between the development of evidence and the development of policy on age related matters.

TILDA liaises with all Government Departments and seeks their input when designing the next wave of data collection. Furthermore, a number of age-related topic reports have been completed and provided to the relevant Government Department. (https://tilda.tcd.ie/publications/reports/pdf/Report_TransportPatterns.pdf; https://tilda.tcd.ie/publications/reports/pdf/Report_HousingConditions.pdf)

Age Friendly Ireland

- o Age Friendly Walkability Audit Tool
- o Age Friendly Hospital Walkability Audit
- o Guidelines to Being Age Friendly in the Public Realm
- o Guide to Age Friendly Communications
- o Age Friendly Towns Guidelines and Toolkit
- o Housing for Older People: Future Perspectives
- o The Healthy and Positive Ageing Initiative (HaPAI): National Indicators plus City and County Indicators Report
- o Age Friendly Hospital Guidelines
- o Age Friendly Airport Guidelines
- o Crime Prevention Ambassadors programme
- o Integrated Care Programme for Older People - Local Government & HSE Collaboration (Older Peoples Champions | Patient Leadership Workshop | Service Design Workshops | Networking Days | Hospital Walkability Audits)
- o Age Friendly Directory of Services
- o Directory of Age Friendly Initiatives
- o Age Friendly Business Recognition Programme

- Has population ageing been included in school/education curricula?

Population ageing is not specifically included on school/education curricula however the reform of the Junior Cycle (children between ages of 12 -15) includes short courses on Civic, Social and Political Education and Social, Personal and Health Education which help children to learn to be active citizens and build positive relationships https://curriculumonline.ie/Junior-cycle/Short-Courses

Age Friendly Ireland have forwarded a proposal to the Age Friendly National Advisory Group around how to integrate age friendly principles into the national schools curricula across Primary, Secondary and Third Level education.

Stakeholder engagement

- Are stakeholders consulted on ageing-related issues?

As part of the NPAS a stakeholder forum is held each year since 2017. The purpose of this stakeholder forum is to highlight areas of policy impacting older people in Ireland that the stakeholders believe the government should prioritise. The forum is attend by representatives of Government Departments, States Agencies, Local Authorities, Civic Society and older people themselves. In 2018, the Stakeholder forum identified Ageing Well in the Community, Health Literacy for older people and transport for older people in rural areas as key areas for action. The Department of Health working with the stakeholders have made progress in each of these 3 areas during 2019.

TILDA liaises with a number of advocacy organisations and seeks their input when designing the next wave of data collection. Representatives from these groups sit on the TILDA Oversight Board.

Public and Participant Involvement has commenced in TILDA and will inform future waves of data collection and research prioritisation.

Through the 31 Local Authority led Age Friendly Alliances which are high level cross-sector group involving senior decision-makers from public (Local Authority, HSE, An Garda Síochána), commercial, academic and not-for-profit organisations, chaired in the main by the local authority Chief Executive, whose member agencies form an overarching strategic partnership to develop and oversee the realisation of the Age Friendly City or County Strategy.

Through the establishment of an Older People's Council in each participating local authority area older people exercise a strong, guiding influence on age-friendly local development. Age Friendly Alliances plan and implement strategies and oversee progress in each county.

- Are there examples of outreach to non-governmental stakeholders e.g. the private sector, the media, civil society on ageing-related issues?

See 4.9 Stakeholder forum above and 4.7 Age Friendly Ireland tools and presentations

Also, the Department of Health meets with an Alliance of older people's stakeholders to discuss the on-going implementation of the Positive Ageing strategy.

TILDA has a number of strategic partnerships for outreach such as Irish Life and the GAA. TILDA also has a very active Twitter feed with over 3,000 followers. This is its primary means of communication with the General Public. Are there examples of information campaigns to raise awareness on ageing among the general public and/or specific target groups or sectors (e.g. employers)

Through the partnership with Irish Life and the GAA TILDA is undertaking a national public talk series to provide the general public with information on How to Age Well (https://tilda.tcd.ie/gaa/). In addition to the event itself TILDA takes part in interviews with Local Radio and Newspapers highlighting the importance of a proactive approach to successful ageing.

TILDA has developed a free to access online course on Strategies for Successful Ageing available through the Future Learn platform - https://www.futurelearn.com/courses/successful-ageing

- Are there examples of information campaigns to raise awareness on ageing among the general public and/or specific target groups or sectors (e.g. employers)

Age Friendly Ireland are involved with a number of age awareness campaigns which include national events;

- National Safeguarding Inter-Sectoral Committee - Multi Stakeholder Group | Public Awareness Campaign| RTE Crime Call| Christmas Appeal | Financial Guidelines | Legislation – Safeguarding Bill – Safeguarding Standards
- National Falls and Bone Health – AFFINITY
- Understand Together – National Dementia Awareness Campaign
- National Ploughing Championships
- Information Roadshows with service providers

- Library information sessions

- Are there mechanisms in place such as older people councils to involve older persons in the policymaking process?

There is an Older People's Council in each of the 31 Local Authority areas. This is a representative group of older people, established by local authorities as part of the development of the Age Friendly City/County programme. The group of older people identify priority areas of need, raise issues of importance and inform and influence the decision-making process of the City or County Age Friendly initiative. Representatives of Older People's Councils participate, alongside representatives of the relevant member agencies, on the Age Friendly City/County Alliance. In addition to taking on specific commitments related to the implementation of the Age Friendly City/County Strategies, the Older People's Council also provides a citizen or service user perspective in monitoring the implementation of those strategies. The Older People's Councils are representative of the diversity of the older population in the city or county, linked to local older people's groups and supportive of the participation of the most marginalised.

Age-sensitive analysis

- Are there tools to screen and evaluate existing laws, policies and programmes to ensure that the needs of all generations are taken into account? (If yes, please describe them and provide links to documents).

No, although Government Departments would generally have active engagement with their relevant stakeholder group to discuss and review existing programmes and strategies. A good example is the National Carers Strategy which has an annual report which is in turn scored by Family Carers Ireland (a not-for-profit organisation). https://familycarers.ie/wp-content/uploads/2018/12/Family-Carers-Ireland-National-Carers-Strategy-Scorecard-2017.pdf

- Has age-sensitive analysis been institutionalised as a systematic process? Are government actors encouraged/required to do it?

No

Generation-proof / age-sensitive /age-responsive policy development

- Are there methods in use to ensure that all new laws, policies and programmes take the needs and perspectives of all generations into account? (If yes, please describe them and provide links to documents where relevant).

In general policy and/or legislative change requires the relevant Department to undertake a Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA). This requires the authors of the change to consider its impact on different cohorts of people, existing laws and regulations, the economy and society in general.

Policy change is also brought to their Departments Policy Committee and the Senior Officials Group (SOG) which is made up of a number of senior officials across Departments to discuss the merits of the policy change. Any proposals cannot be further progressed without the support of the SOG. Finally, the policy change is shared via the Governments 'eCabinet' system which requires each Minister to support, input or challenge the proposal.

The National Network of Age Friendly Older People's Councils (OPCs) have been consulted and invited to make submissions when strategies/policies pertaining to older people's issues are being developed. For

example, the Dept of Housing Planning & Local Government and the Dept. of Health are producing a joint housing policy for older people under Rebuilding Ireland.

The TILDA study of ageing has the ability to examine the impact of the introduction, or change, of policies to older people's health, quality of life, and behaviour. For example, TILDA examined the impact of the policy change on healthcare entitlements among older people to their attendance at primary care (https://tilda.tcd.ie/publications/reports/pdf/Report_PublicHealthcareEntitlement.pdf).

Generation-proof / age-sensitive / age-responsive budgeting

- Are there any methods/procedures in place for age-responsive budgeting similar to gender-responsive budgeting[1]? (If yes, please describe them and provide links to documents).

Equality Budgeting in Ireland

The ongoing work regarding Equality Budgeting in Ireland follows the Programme for a Partnership Government commitment to 'develop the process of budget and policy proofing as a means of advancing equality, reducing poverty and strengthening economic and social rights'. Equality budgeting involves providing greater information on the likely impacts of proposed and/or ongoing budgetary measures, which, in turn, enhances the potential to better facilitate the integration of equality concerns into the budgetary process and enhance the Government's decision-making framework.

Equality budgeting is a process in which the budget is recognised as something more than a neutral process of resource allocation, but is considered a value laden process that embodies – and potentially informs and influences – long standing societal choices about how resources are deployed. It is about moving on from separate Budget lines for specific equality measures to the equality impact of overall budget policy (i.e. the entire expenditure and revenue of Government).

Many elements that are crucial to good equality or gender budgeting, are equally so for good budgeting and good policy formulation more generally, notably the need for clear, multi-dimensional budgetary impact analyses, and the need for evaluation frameworks that feed in to the policy and budget cycle. Equality Budgeting is therefore anchored in the existing performance budgeting framework.

Following the achievements of the pilot programme, Equality Budgeting is being expanded in 2019 to further develop the gender budgeting elements and to broaden its scope to other dimensions of equality including poverty and disability. In addition to the six equality objectives identified in the pilot (Phase 1), a further eight objectives have been added for 2019 (Phase 2). This means nine Government Departments are now actively engaged with Equality Budgeting.

The Department of Justice and Equality in liaison with DPER have commissioned the OECD to undertake a Policy Scan of Equality Budgeting in Ireland. This will take stock of actions taken to mainstream equality considerations as part of the budget process. It will also provide options and recommendations on future directions for Equality Budgeting in Ireland, in light of international experience. This report is expected to be finalised in September 2019.

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[1] The term age-sensitive/age-responsive budgeting for the purpose of this questionnaire is derived from "Gender budgeting" which is a strategy to achieve equality between women and men by focusing on how public resources are collected and spent. Applied to ageing, age-sensitive/age-responsive budgeting would be a strategy applying an ageing perspective to budgeting to ensure intergenerational equity in how public resources are collected and spent. For examples of gender budgeting see https://eige.europa.eu/gender-mainstreaming/methods-tools/gender-budgeting

Following the publication of the OECD report, decisions will be made on how best to progress the Equality Budgeting initiative. These decisions will also be informed by meetings of the Equality Budgeting Expert Advisory Group. While generation-proof / age-sensitive / age-responsive budgeting was not included in the pilot to date, age is a dimension of equality that will certainly be considered as the initiative progresses.

Social Impact Assessment of Budgetary Measures

Social Impact Assessment (SIA) is an evidence-based methodology which estimates the likely distributive effects of policies on household incomes, families, poverty and access to employment. It uses a tax-welfare simulation model known as SWITCH2, which was developed by the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), to measure the distributive and poverty impacts of policies on family types and lifecycle groups, including older people.

The Department of Employment Affairs and Social Protection undertakes rigorous and extensive pre and post-Budget social impact assessments (SIA) of the main welfare and direct tax budgetary policies. It publishes an integrated SIA, which includes the main welfare and direct tax measures in annual budgets on its website each year. For example: the SIA for Budget 2019 found that the weekly rate increase of €5 for pensioners resulted in above average gains for those in the bottom three quintiles of the income distribution.

http://www.welfare.ie/en/pdf/SocialImpact2019.pdf

- Are there any procedures in place to ensure responsible budgeting to ensure sustainability and not to burden future generations (intergenerational equity)?

Pensions: Automatic Enrolment

Ireland's pension system operates on the basis of a multi-pillar approach, which is comprised of a publicly managed 'first pillar' - the State pension, a 'second pillar', consisting of occupational pensions, and a 'third pillar' consisting of private, individual pension plans funded from personal savings.

One of the objectives of the State Pension is to provide a basic and effective protection against poverty amongst older people. The State pension and secondary benefits like the free fuel and free travel schemes, largely achieves this objective, with data on poverty levels showing that people aged over 65 are almost four times less likely to experience consistent poverty compared to the population as a whole. They also have around half the rates of deprivation and at risk of poverty to that of the population as a whole. (CSO, SILC, 2017).

The State pension is not designed or intended to secure a high level of pension adequacy, as the State pension should, in most cases, should be combined with private retirement savings arrangements in the form of 'second pillar' occupational pensions and/or 'third pillar' personal pensions. The objective of

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[2] Simulating Welfare and Income Tax Changes

these supplementary private pension savings arrangements is to secure a payment level in retirement that, when combined with the State pension, replaces a sufficient proportion of an individual's pre-retirement earnings so as to enable the individual concerned to maintain a reasonable standard of living after retirement.

These supplementary private pension savings arrangements are voluntary. However, the rate of supplementary pension coverage in Ireland has remained relatively static over the last 20 years at approximately 50% of those in employment, reducing to just about 35% when the private sector workforce is considered in isolation. To address this low coverage rate, particularly among those on lower incomes, the Roadmap for Pensions Reform, 2018 -2023, contains proposals for the introduction of an automatic enrolment retirement savings system by 2022. This timeframe reflects the scale of such a programme and its importance as being the most fundamental reform of the Irish supplementary pension system in generations.

Automatic Enrolment (AE) will see a transition from the current and purely voluntary supplementary pension system to one which will, subject to certain parameters, automatically enrol employees into a quality assured retirement savings system, with freedom of choice to opt-out. The policy objective of automatic enrolment, then, is to encourage long term saving amongst those who may otherwise suffer an unwanted and significant reduction in living standards at retirement.

In August 2018 the Government of Ireland published a 'Strawman Proposal for an Automatic Enrolment Retirement Savings System'. This proposal detailed a realistically plausible approach to delivering Automatic Enrolment in Ireland and was based on extensive domestic research and analysis of systems internationally. The Strawman proposal formed the basis of a national consultation process designed to help the Government improve the decisions that will need to be made in terms of the operational structure and design of AE.

The formal consultation process on the Strawman proposals concluded in April 2019 and the findings of this process have been submitted to the Irish Government to assist in making decisions as to the next steps for implementation to enable the scheme to commence, as planned, in 2022.

Increases to the State Pension Age

Ireland's pension system, including the State pension and other measures like the free fuel and free travel schemes, has largely protected older people from the effects of poverty. The 2017 CSO Survey on Income and Living Conditions (SILC) report showed that people aged over 65 are now four times less likely to experience poverty compared to the population as a whole and are significantly less likely to be at risk of poverty than they would have been 10 years ago. This may be attributed to substantial increases in the rates of State pensions over the period.

However, in the context of increased longevity and an ageing population, adequate pension provision would not be sustainable without changes to the State pension age. For men aged 65, life expectancy grew 1.3 years in the 2006 - 2011 period, and by 0.7 years in the 2011 - 2016 period; and for women aged 65, the increases were 1 year in the 2006 - 2011 period and 0.2 years in the 2011 - 2016 period. Furthermore, birth rates, while largely stable at present, have fallen considerably in recent decades.

As a result of this demographic trend, this has significant implications for the future cost of pension provision. In the coming decades, the ratio of people of working age to pensioners in Ireland is set to halve, from approximately 5 workers for each pensioner, to about 2.5 workers per pensioner. This has significant implications for the viability of the state pension system, as Ireland operates on a "pay as you

go" basis, meaning that those now receiving pension payments are being funded by the PRSI contributions of those currently working.

In order maintain sustainable pensions into the future, the Social Welfare and Pensions Act 2011 provided that State pension age will gradually increase to 68 years. This began in January 2014 with the standardisation of the State pension at age 66. This will increase to 67 in 2021 and to 68 in 2028. The savings from these increases will assist in maintaining the sustainability of the overall state pension system, and make it more feasible for the rate of payment to grow in line with prices and/or average earnings.

Beyond the changes provided for in the Social Welfare and Pensions Act 2011, the Roadmap for Pensions Reform 2018-2023 has stated that future changes to the State pension age will factor into account research into life expectancy. An assessment of life expectancy will commence in 2022 (and every five years thereafter) and will include a review of the proportionality between time spent in working life and retirement. At that point, informed by the review and assessment, a notice period of no less than 13 years will be given in respect of any planned changes to the State pension age.

Note: There is no legally mandated retirement age in the State, and the age at which employees retire is a matter for the contract of employment between them and their employers. While such a contract may have been entered into with a retirement date of 65, there is no legal impediment to the employer and employee agreeing to increase the duration of employment to account for changes to the State pension age. In this regard, the Workplace Relations Commission has produced a Code of Practice on Longer Working, and the Irish Human Rights and Equality Commission (IHREC) has published guidance material for employers on the use of fixed-term contracts beyond normal retirement age. Arrangements are also in place to provide that jobseekers whose benefit expires in their 65th year can generally continue to be paid benefit up until pensionable age provided they satisfy the relevant contribution conditions.

Monitoring and performance assessment

If there is a national strategy / action plan on ageing, has a monitoring procedure been put in place / benchmarks developed to measure progress in the implementation?

Are there appropriate indicators to understand progress and ensure continuous accountability?

See NPAS and HaPAI above.

Other methods & tools

Are there any other tools/methods for mainstreaming ageing in place that are not covered by the above? Please describe them briefly and share any relevant documentation.

Good practices

Provide a minimum of 2 good practice examples to illustrate ageing mainstreaming in practice in your country.

1. Housing Options for our Ageing Population- Policy Statement

https://health.gov.ie/wp-content/uploads/2019/02/HousingOptionsforanAgeingPopulationEng_Web_compressed.pdf

The statement was developed jointly by the Department of Housing, Planning and Local Government and the Department of Health, with support from a Steering Group, comprising both Departments, the Health Service Executive, the Housing Agency, the Centre for Excellence in Universal Design, Age Friendly Ireland and other key stakeholders, who provided expertise and guidance.

The policy statement provides a framework by which the Government can facilitate and promote a variety of housing options, including housing with care/supported housing, for older people. While a variety of housing models for older people have emerged at local level, there is a need for a more strategic and collaborative approach to ensure the best possible outcomes for all. It is also important to recognise that housing with supports is a vital element in facilitating older people to remain in their communities.

The statement sets out the general guiding principles that will underpin the development of a housing policy for older people. Based on six key principles –
1. ageing in place
2. supporting urban renewal
3. promoting sustainable lifetime housing
4. using assistive technology
5. staying socially connected and
6. working together

It identifies a programme of strategic actions to further progress housing options for older people under the themes of data gathering, collaborative working, delivering choice, support services, comfort and safety and maintaining momentum.

This is a first step in supporting older people to start thinking about, and planning for, their housing needs as they age and to future proofing Ireland so that we have a sustainable range of housing options to meet the needs of the rising ageing population.

The Policy Statement identifies a programme of strategic actions (40 in total) to further progress housing options for older people under the themes of data gathering, collaborative working, delivering choice, support services, comfort and safety and maintaining momentum.

This programme, which requires significant inter-departmental and agency working and collaboration, will inform future policy development in this area. An Implementation Group, chaired independently will monitor, drive, and enable the delivery of the forty actions outlined in the Policy Statement.

2. Age Friendly Ireland

http://agefriendlyireland.ie/

Established in January 2014 as an intermediary organisation, Age Friendly Ireland coordinates the national Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme. The Programme brings together, supports and provides technical guidance to the 31 local authority-led, multi-agency Age Friendly City and County Programmes in every local authority area.

Age Friendly Ireland actively promotes partnerships and collaborations. The Age Friendly Cities and Counties Programme is run by effective city- and county-based Alliances, involving senior decision-makers from public, commercial and not-for-profit organisations. Age Friendly Ireland assists Alliances aim to streamline the work of all key players at local level, putting the views, interests and needs of older people at their core. Through an Older People's Council in each participating local authority area older people exercise a strong, guiding influence on age-friendly local development.

Age Friendly Ireland provides guidance to the Alliances as they engage and consult widely with older people. The Age Friendly City and County Strategies which the Alliances draw up are based squarely on the expressed views, needs and interests of older people. Through an Alliance's Age Friendly Strategy, participating service providers and businesses become accountable to each other, and to older people, for the age-friendly actions they take.

Age Friendly Ireland develops tools and methodologies for age-friendly practitioners at frontline and management levels. It works as a hub for knowledge transfer, brokering connections and information exchange between agency officials, service providers and older people, both locally and nationally. The aim is to foster the exchange of age-friendly best practices that older people want and value, and which are appropriate, sustainable and cost-effective.

Advisory Group

Age Friendly are essentially an umbrella group for the Local Authorities all of whom are signed up to the Age Friendly programme. Age Friendly is an international movement encouraging towns and cities to create age friendly spaces in which older people can live and grow old in their communities. Age Friendly Ireland direct and guide the work of all the local authorities in terms of age friendly actions which cross areas such as Health & Well-being, Policing, Transport, Housing etc.

An AFI Advisory group exists and meets every 2 months. Health, the HSE, Housing, Transport, Rural & Community Development, An Garda Síochána and Chambers Ireland are all represented on the group. Membership is at Assistant Secretary level. AFI is co-funded through the Department of Health, the HSE and Dept of Housing, Planning and Local Government. AFI do a considerable amount of work in realising the objectives of the Positive Ageing Strategy and have an extensive network across relevant Departments and agencies.