

National Report for the fourth Review and
Appraisal Cycle of the Madrid
International Plan of Action on Ageing and
its Regional Implementation Strategy
(MIPAA/RIS) 2018-2022
(Slovak Republic)

September 2021

Part I

Executive summary

In Slovakia the goals of MIPA/RIS were implemented and assessed mainly in relation to goals and actions of the *National Programme for Active Ageing 2014 – 2020* (NPAA-I). The adoption of NPAA-I also followed up on implementation of goals and actions of the *National Programme for Protection of the Elderly* (1999) and on calls of the *European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations 2012*.

For the purpose of assessing the implementation of MIPAA/RIS in the last 20 years, with an emphasis on the last five years after adoption of the Lisbon Declaration (2017), a questionnaire survey was conducted in early 2021 with all relevant actors of policies of active ageing in Slovakia where they reflected on the national progress as well as on obstacles hampering the progress in three key areas of active ageing policies – supporting and acknowledging the potential of the elderly; promoting their employment and employability; and also supporting dignified and safe ageing. An analysis of the findings from the survey has shown an interconnection of all the three areas and existence of certain **systemic** elements which form a joint base for meeting the global goal of support policies of active ageing, as well as particular goals and actions included in individual areas of support. The *Adoption of NPAA-I* itself was praised repeatedly, as it helped launch a joint effort towards inter-generation solidarity and towards perception of active ageing as an "opportunity for the society" in Slovakia. The adoption of NPAA-I initiated a gradual change in attitudes of people and organisations to ageing and to the options to influence it. When focusing on active ageing as a public interest, specification of *ESIF projects monitoring criteria* in 2014 – 2020 from the point of view of representation of persons aged 50+ (particularly elderly women), both in the area of promoting employment and employability as well as in the area of supporting their social inclusion, was a systemic element as well. It was praised that progress had been achieved in ensuring *active involvement of the elderly* and their representation in drafting and adopting important legislative and other decisions and documents at the national, regional, local and organisational level. The involvement and joint decision making were carried out mainly through the *Council of the Government of the Slovak Republic on the Rights of Elderly and the Adaptation of Public Policies to Population Ageing Process* which was established in 2014 as a result of transformation of the *Committee for the Elderly* of the Council of the Government of SR for Human Rights, National Minorities and Gender Equality (2012). The involvement and joint decision-making were carried out also at lower levels – through participation of older persons in local government bodies or through the civic sector and its cooperation at a local, district and regional level. From the point of view of the possibility to influence the factors of active ageing, the issues of a *lifestyle of people in the ageing process* proved to be systemic as well, mainly through activities focused on an appropriate support of public health and healthcare or on supporting leisure-time activities of people in the ageing process. That is also the reason why the 'active ageing' concept was intensively connected to the 'healthy ageing' concept. The actors stated that progress in the area of *lifelong learning* also had a systemic and cross-cutting position since it was considered a tool for increasing the employment and employability of the elderly in the changing world of labour, personal and civic participation of older persons requiring informed decisions in all areas of their lives. Lifelong learning was identified also as a tool for legal protection of those who are vulnerable due to their older age.

During the assessment process it was also shown that meeting individual goals and implementing individual actions is a *dynamic and continuous process*. It was indicated by findings that even though certain progress had been achieved in previous years in different indicators of the support of active ageing, according to the actors, limits of the progress are obvious at the end of the period under review. It is therefore necessary to continue with the set key policies also in the new NPAA-II programming period 2021 – 2030. The need to apply the principle of continuity was emphasized also with regard to the negative impact of the COVID-19 pandemic which in 2019 – 2020 hampered or completely disabled implementation of numerous project initiatives aimed at supporting active ageing Slovakia. *Supporting human resources in the life cycle process* in the form of lifelong learning; promoting employment and employability of the ageing persons, their social participation through socially beneficial activities (e.g. volunteering) or creating the conditions for dignified and safe life of persons in the process of their ageing, including the phase when they are dependant on the help of others, continue to be *prioritized* in the next period. Particular attention is paid to the *position of the family institution* in supporting active ageing and to the necessity of inter-generation solidarity on a family, community and society-wide scale. At the same time, an emphasis is laid on the necessity to set up *institutionalized mechanisms* of monitoring, coordinating and assessing both progress and obstacles in meeting the projected goals and actions.

With its goals and actions, NPAA-II immediately follows up on the cross-cutting programme priorities defined in *Slovakia 2030*, a basic implementation document of performance of national priorities of the UN Agenda 2030 for sustainable development. By implementing NPAA-II, Slovakia will thus pursue its ambitions in the area of sustainable goals during the new decade of 2021 – 2030.

1. National ageing situation

1.1 Current demographic indicators and their projections

In the last 20 years the demographic evolution in Slovakia was marked by *overall ageing of the population* as a combination of bottom-up ageing (decrease in the birth rate and lower representation of the children component in the population), top-down ageing (increase in representation of the older component in the population) and increase in the average age of the population from the centre of the age pyramid (see Annex 1). By the end of 2020, children aged 0 – 14 had a 15.8 % share in the total population of SR, while the share of persons aged 65+ was 16.6 %. Compared to 2020, total population increased by approximately 1 %, while the age group 65+ saw a rise by more than 40 %, compared to a drop by about 19 % in the age group 0 – 14. Forecasts indicate that the burden of the productive component in the population by the component of the elderly will be increasing, namely from the current approximately 25 persons to 36 in 2030, and in 2060 there will be 63 – 67 persons aged 65+ per each 100 persons aged 20 – 64.¹

1.2 Key quantitative social and economic indicators

Last years were marked by a growth of the Slovak economy, peaking in **2018** at 4.1 %. Investments and household consumption contributed most to the growth. Employment was rising and unemployment was decreasing. Nominal wage exceeded the level of EUR 1,000.

¹ Bleha, B., Šprocha, B., Vaňo, B. (2018): Forecast of the Slovak population until 2060. Review of knowledge and assumptions in the context of continuing transformation. Bratislava: INFOSTAT.

Wage growth was accelerating above 6 %; inflation was speeding up. In **2019** the dynamics of the Slovak economy slowed down to 2.3 % with a historically low unemployment rate and increasing wages. Household consumption was stagnating and savings were increasing. A stable situation on the labour market stimulated also a growth of consumer prices which increased by 2.7 %. As a result of the global crisis caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, Slovak GDP dropped by 5.2 % in **2020**. Economic performance decreased mainly in Q2 with a historical decrease in industrial production. The labour market was more resilient during the pandemic, also thanks to measures supporting employment maintenance. That stabilised household consumption and accelerated a restart of the industry after relaxation of the measures (see Annex 2).

1.3 Description of the social, economic and political situation

From the point of view of **medium-term prediction** of economic development for **2021 – 2024**, the second wave of the pandemic is expected to slow down the recovery of the Slovak economy to 3.3 % in **2021**. Disbursement of funds from the Recovery and Resilience Plan of SR, the total amount of which is supposed to reach EUR 6.1 billion by 2026, will also contribute to the expected economic growth to 6.3 % in **2022**. In **2023** the Slovak economy will also be supported by disbursement of EU funds from both the finishing and the new programming period. Development of key economic indicators since 2016 and their medium-term forecast until 2024 are shown in Annex 2.

1.4 Important measures to revise/adjust social and economic policies due to the COVID-19 pandemic

In order to mitigate the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on employment and on the situation of employers or self-employed persons, a series of **compensation measures** have been adopted since 2020, in particular:

- a) promoting the maintenance of employment (First Aid project; later First Aid +; First Aid ++; for more details see Annex 3);
- b) payment of employers' costs related to repayment of sickness benefits in relation to the pandemic (for more details see Annex 4);
- c) extending the period of payment of unemployment benefits (for more details see Annex 5);
- d) forbearance and deferral of the obligation of employers and self-employed persons to pay the premium for social insurance for March 2020, May 2020, June 2020, July 2020, December 2020, January 2021, February 2021, March 2021, April 2021 and May 2021;
- e) waiver of the obligation to pay the premium for April 2020.

2. Method

In Slovakia the MIPAA/RIS National Report (hereinafter referred to as NR) was being prepared simultaneously with the process of assessment of a 7-year period of implementation of the *National Programme for Active Ageing 2014 – 2020*² (NPAA-I) and preparation of a new programming document for *2021 – 2030* (NPAA –II). Such circumstances enabled to synchronize works for three purposes at the same time: a) assessment of NPAA-I; b) preparation and approval of NPAS-II; c) preparation of NR. Not only the common period for

² Available online on: <https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/ministerstvo/rada-vlady-sr-prava-seniorov/npas-2014-2020.pdf>

preparation of individual types of works was advantageous, but mainly important overlaps of their main goals and content domains. They are summarized in the table and specified in more detail in Annex 6.

Table 1: Content overlaps of the main goals and subject-matter domains of NPAA-I, MIPPA/RIS, Lisbon Declaration (LD) and NPAA-II.

Goals and domains of MIPAA/RIS and LD	Goals and domains of NPAA-I	Goals and domains of NPAA-II
Recognizing the potential of older persons	Protection of human rights, active independence and civic participation of older persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthcare supporting active ageing • Supporting human resources in the life cycle • Promoting social participation and involvement of older persons • Active ageing policies closer to citizens and their management
Encouraging longer working life and ability to work	Employment and employability of older persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting human resources in the life cycle • Supporting economic activities in the life cycle
Ensuring ageing with dignity	Independence, safety and quality of life of older persons	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting active ageing in the family perspective • Ensuring income for older persons • Promoting dignity, independence and quality of life of older persons

The **coordinating body** for assessing the existing documents and designing new policies and measures to promote active ageing was the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic in cooperation with the Institute for Labour and Family Research. A **combination** of quantitative and qualitative methods was used to obtain the necessary data. **Quantitative methods** included mainly analysing available statistical data, mainly from the Statistical Office, Social Insurance Agency, Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family or the National Health Information Centre. The **qualitative methods** used involved in particular:

- *study of documents and research reports*

In particular, it concerned the NPAA-I document and individual reports which annually assessed performance of its goals and actions³; draft NPAS-II and a baseline analytical report on its preparation⁴; Vision and Strategy of the Development of Slovakia until 2030 – long-term strategy of sustainable development of the Slovak Republic – Slovakia 2030 (Vision)⁵;

- *group consultation with key actors involved in active ageing policies*

Consultation of 27 August 2020 between the management of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic and representatives of state administration, local government, public-legal institutions, employees and employers, civic society and

³ Available online on: <https://www.employment.gov.sk/sk/ministerstvo/rada-vlady-sr-prava-seniorov/narodny-program-aktivneho-starnutia-roky-2014-2020.html>

⁴ Available online on: <https://ivpr.gov.sk/narodny-program-aktivneho-starnutia-na-roky-2021-2030-analyticka-cast-kvetoslava-repkova-ed/>

⁵ Available online on: <https://www.mirri.gov.sk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Slovensko-2030.pdf>

- academia regarding a wider assessment of policies and actions related to active ageing, including the context of preparation of the MIPAA/RIS National Report;
- *special consultation* organized on 15 December 2020 with representatives of the civic sector regarding the initial proposal of priorities related to policies aimed at supporting active ageing in the following decade of 2021 – 2030;
 - *continuous individual consultations* with selected actors (e.g. with the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic, Association of Slovak Universities of the Third Age, National Health Information Centre or Association of Providers of Social Services in the Slovak Republic).

An **integrating methodical element** was a *questionnaire survey* which was conducted in January 2021 with key actors and concerned assessment of the progress which Slovakia had made in implementing the policies supporting active ageing in individual areas (domains); identifying the goals and actions which managed or failed to be accomplished in the last decade; and determining priorities for the next period. A dominant part of the below-stated text relies on the results of the questionnaire survey. For full wording of the questionnaire, see Annex 7.

Part II: 20 Years of MIPPA/RIS (20 rokov MIPAA/RIS)

The start of the reference period for preparing the NR (last 20 years) in SR is related to preparation and implementation of the *National Programme of Protection of Older Persons* (approved in 1999)⁶ and only then to NPAA-I. In the original programme from 1999, individual areas of intervention and actions were arranged rather according to the subject-matter competence of individual central state administration authorities than according to key horizontal domains operating across the sector. It included the areas of social security and family policy; healthcare; housing; education; culture and media policy; taxes and fees; transport, post and telecommunication; security; judicial protection; economy; agriculture; environment; information systems.

Domains and individual policies or actions were systematically divided into the three key areas as in MIPAA/RIS only within NPAA-I. The text below relies on them.

1. Recognizing the potential of older persons

1.1 Empower individuals to realize their potential

In NPAA-I it is the domain of *protection of human rights, promoting active independence and civic participation of older persons* (chapter 5) Several policies and actions were implemented in such domain which were focused on enforcement of rights and legally protected interests of older persons, supporting organisations of the elderly, their involvement in decision-making about important social issues which concern their lives; as well as policies focused on promoting volunteering as a source of social participation and personal fulfilment of older persons. This domain included also the issues of legal protection of older persons including their protection against misuse and elder abuse.

1.2 Slovakia's participation in relevant global / UN wide campaigns (WHO/GCCA; UN/OEWG-A)

Slovakia did not participate in GCCA nor in OEWG-A activities. Representatives of the civic sector have long been fostering the requirement for adoption of an act on protection of elderly persons, what they perceive as compensation of the absence of the UN Convention on the Rights of Older Persons and commitments that would result to

⁶ Available online on: https://www.er2012.gov.sk/data/att/5578_subor.pdf

Slovakia from ratification of such document . They point out to an uneven attention paid to protection of older persons compared to the attention paid to women, children and persons with disabilities through UN Conventions. The need to adopt a special legal regulation on the protection of older persons has become a subject of expert discussions also within preparation of NPAA-II.

1.3 Policy achievements during last 20 years

In the survey organized in January 2021 the actors responded to a question **what goals and actions have contributed most to strengthening the physical, mental and social potential of elderly persons and what helped meet them in the last few years**. They emphasized the importance of measures focused on the provision of high-quality and accessible *healthcare*, chronic diseases *prevention programmes* or monitoring of health risk factors. They appreciated measures focused on supporting a *healthy and active lifestyle* (e.g. advisory and education through Health Advisory Offices), recondition, sport and leisure-time activities (also through employers after retirement) or ensuring participation of older persons in creating cultural values through increasing accessibility to cultural activities (e.g. through the subsidy scheme of the Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic). Several actors mentioned the importance of measures focused on *raising awareness and improving the education* of older persons in different areas of life and for different purposes (e.g. new RTVS programme service "Trojka"; activities of the National Bank of Slovakia aimed at supporting the financial literacy; activities of universities of the third age and education coordinators and their cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic in prioritizing further education of persons aged 50+; promoting the volunteering of the elderly and looking for lonely older persons). Implementation of programmes and actions focused on *improving their digital skills (digital literacy)* that are supported by adopted documents such as the "Strategy of Digital Transformation of Slovakia 2030"⁷ and its "Action Plan for 2019 – 2022"⁸ or by establishment of the "National Coalition for Digital Skills and Occupations" (2017)⁹ were also believed to have a strategic position in strengthening the potential of older persons. Actors considered awareness raising and education of older persons to be preconditions of their social activation, as well as a tool of their legal protection (e.g. against fraud and abusive practices, ill treatment or increasing the resistance against different crisis situations, e.g. also in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic). They believed *discounts in transportation or subsidies for cultural events* for disadvantaged groups, including the elderly, also supported the activation of the potential of older persons.

The actors think that **no** systemic mechanisms for ensuring appropriate *material and technical conditions for operation of basic organisations of older persons* as a way to use the experience and wisdom of the elderly, or mechanisms for *financing universities of the third age and interest-based education of older persons* **were** adopted in the programming period NPAA 2014 – 2020. This was also reflected in insufficient public awareness of the possibilities of volunteering of older persons. As for the actions intended for the *elderly dependant on the help of other persons*, it was criticized that certain older persons continued living in degrading living conditions and in the risk of abuse and ill treatment, often by their relatives, due to an absence of systemic support of the families who look after them; that there was no affordable

⁷ Available online on: <https://www.mirri.gov.sk/wp-content/uploads/2019/06/Strategia-digitalnej-transformacie-Slovenska-2030.pdf>

⁸ Available online on: https://www.mirri.gov.sk/wp-content/uploads/2019/07/Akcny-plan-DTS_2019-2022.pdf

⁹ Available online on: <https://digitalnakoalicia.sk/>

internet access as a basic precondition of access to information also for persons who are immobile or live in families with a lower economic status. Ambitions in the area of *deinstitutionalisation and transformation* of social services were also considered as not fully achieved, namely due to real limits given by the nature of the buildings where the daily residential social services are provided, and also as a result of a lack of nursing personnel providing social services or stereotype attitudes of certain employees to potential changes. The transformation effort was slowed down also by the COVID-19 pandemic and its impacts as a result of which certain project initiatives were implemented in only a limited scale.

2. Encouraging longer working life and ability to work

2.1 Recognizing the potential embedded in the employment of older workers; developing labour market strategies

Chapter 6 of NPAA-I named *Employment and employability of older persons* contained goals, policies and actions focused on promoting the educational structure of the middle-aged older and old-aged population; on strengthening the position of older persons on the labour market by applying the principles of age management, employment services for such target group and promoting the development of the silver economy; through securing non-discriminating, safe and healthy work conditions; or through lifelong learning.

2.2 Special measures to close the gender pay and pension gap (special situation of older women)

The actors in the survey admitted a disadvantage of older women compared to older men, mainly with regard to the amount of average pensions which are lower for women as a result of the impact of structural aspects of the labour market. The position of women on the labour market in Slovakia is characterized by lower wages, shorter and also interrupted career leading to a lower number of worked-off years for the purposes of pension insurance as well as a higher risk of unemployment of women with lower education compared to men with comparable education. In 2019 the average gender pension gap was 10.8 % in Slovakia (fourth lowest value from among EU countries), even though it increased by about 3 % compared to 2016)¹⁰.

In order to mitigate the pension gap between women and men, the following **measures** have been adopted:

- *13th pension* (the Act No 296/2020 Coll. on the 13th pension establishes that all pensioners are entitled to a 13th pension regardless of the amount of their pension, while the amount of the 13th pension will decrease linearly with the increasing amount of the pension or the combined amount of pensions, with a guaranteed amount of at least EUR 50);
- *revaluation of pensions* (since 1 January 2018 a minimum revaluation rate of pension benefits has been determined for a temporary period of 2018 – 2021 in order to guarantee a minimum increase in pensions also in low-inflation periods);
- *minimum pension* (applicable since July 2015 for insured persons whose awarded pension is lower than the determined minimum pension; the amounts of minimum pensions in 2021 are contained in Annex 8).

¹⁰Source: Closing the gender pension gap? Eurostat. Available on: <https://ec.europa.eu/eurostat/web/products-eurostat-news/-/ddn-20210203-1>

- *amendment of the Constitution of the Slovak Republic approved by the Parliament of 9 December 2020*. Effective from 1 January 2023, the Constitution of the Slovak Republic guarantees to every person insured the right to decide that part of the tax paid or part of the payment made in connection with participation in the system of adequate material security in old age shall be provided to the person who raised him/her and to whom the material security at old age is provided. It is also guaranteed that the impossibility to perform gainful employment due to long-term care for a child after their birth cannot have a negative impact on appropriate material security in old age and also the possibility to be entitled to pension if the person has worked off a determined number of years. Details will be specified in an implementing regulation.

1.4 2.3 Policy achievements during last 20 years

In the survey the actors also commented on **what goals and actions contributed most to promoting the employment and employability of older persons in the last few years**. Based on various answers, three groups of such measures could be identified. The first group included actions focused on *age-management and age-friendly environment of employers*. The actors appreciated progress in ensuring non-discriminating, safe and healthy work conditions; intergenerational education in companies and activities of age-combined teams, or the importance of collective bargaining in this area as a tool to support the interest of older employees to work also after reaching the retirement age. All the above-stated actions were applied with an intention to strengthen the age diversity and inclusion at the workplace overall, also as a part of the "Diversity Charter Slovakia"¹¹ and involvement of employers in the initiative (since 2017).

The next group emphasized actions to *increase the attractiveness of employing older persons*, to a large extent thanks to implementation of national projects within OP Human Resources, intended specifically for job-seekers aged 50+ (e.g. NP "We want to be active on the labour market (50+)"¹²; NP "Chance for employment"¹³; NP "Way to the labour market 1,2,3"¹⁴) or for larger disadvantaged groups. Educational (retraining) programmes, mainly REPAS¹⁵ and KOMPAS¹⁶ actions, or expert advisory services of the offices of labour, social affairs and family also helped support the employment and employability of older persons and improve their position on the labour market. Also regulation of legal entitlements in the area of pension benefits, decreasing the tax burden for employing older persons but also use of the institute of shared work positions or occasional works for older persons (e.g. during tourist seasons). Certain actors reported their first experience with employing persons from residential social services as a part of application of the supported employment model.

Since May 2018, employment of older persons aged 50+ has been supported also as a part of implementation of the Act No 112/2018 Coll. on social economy and social enterprises. The Act gives an opportunity to older persons to find employment in social enterprises, many of

¹¹ Available online on: <https://www.chartadiverzity.sk/charta-diverzity-sr/>

¹² Available online on: https://www.upsvr.gov.sk/narodne-projekty-oznamenia-o-moznosti-predkladania-ziadosti-o-poskytnutie-financneho-prispevku/narodny-projekt-chceme-byt-aktivni-na-trhu-prace-50.html?page_id=563740

¹³ Available online on: https://www.upsvr.gov.sk/tn/sluzby-zamestnanosti/narodne-projekty/np-sanca-na-zamestnanie.html?page_id=546098

¹⁴ Available online on https://www.upsvr.gov.sk/narodne-projekty-oznamenia-o-moznosti-predkladania-ziadosti-o-poskytnutie-financneho-prispevku/narodny-projekt-cesta-na-trh-prace-3.html?page_id=944120

¹⁵ Available online on: <https://www.macrosoft.sk/kurzy-repas>

¹⁶ Available online on: https://www.upsvr.gov.sk/br/sluzby-zamestnanosti/kompas.html?page_id=732676

which operate as intermediate labour markets and support the disadvantaged population groups towards an open labour market. In September 2019 a national project named "Supporting integration enterprises" started to be implemented through the Central Office of Labour, Social Affairs and Family, focused on supporting registered integration social enterprises and implementing active measures on the labour market intended to support the employment and decrease the unemployment of disadvantaged persons. The national project provides a placement contribution and compensation contributions to integration social enterprises, as laid down in the Act No 5/2004 Coll. on employment services.

A significant group of actions promoting progress in the employment and employability of older persons concerned *lifelong learning* activities, not only in the form of upskilling of older persons (e.g. call of the Ministry of Education, Science, Research and Sport of the Slovak Republic "Do not disQUALIFY YOURSELF"¹⁷) but also through overall development of key competencies and increasing the digital, financial or legal literacy of older persons. Educational institutions also responded to the needs in this area within their educational programmes (e.g. introducing a subject named "Advisor for age management" at the Faculty of Arts of the Comenius University in Bratislava) or operation of highly specialized workplaces (e.g. Lifelong and Competency Learning Centre of the Prešov University as a member of the European University Continuing Education Network/EUCEN).

All groups of actions where a certain progress has been identified in the area of support of the employment and employability of older persons were also a subject of **criticism**. It was pointed out that educational activities for the target group of 45+ focused on the labour market were not connected to interest-based education of persons aged 60+ efficiently enough to apply the *life cycle principle* in supporting the employment and employability of the ageing persons. According to the actors, the reason was a continuing absence of a corresponding legislation in this area as well problematic financing of lifelong learning institutions.

What was criticised as well was an *insufficient awareness raising* of employers about the issue of active ageing and age diversity at the workplace, what the actors considered a starting point for managing human resources and a part of everyday principles of managing organizations, profitable for both employers and employees. Certain actions implemented in the area of age management were considered to be more declaratory (issuing a brochure or organizing a workshop) without a real impact on the behaviour of employers and their motivation to internalize the need for an age-managed organisation (e.g. through an information campaign, their systemic education, promoting implementation or "exemplary" behaviour of state organisations). It was pointed out that the "cult of youth" continued, with young age preferred over professional experience of employees, what was also connected to age discrimination at a workplace (even though a rather latent one) or reluctance of employers to employ persons who are traditionally perceived as being outside the labour market (e.g. clients of social services establishments).

'Inertia' and stereotypes on the part of both older persons and employers are still strengthened by certain "*demotivating*" legislative rules supporting quitting a job more than keeping it as long as possible. Determining the age of 65 as a potential reason for dismissal, which is supposed to become effective from January 2022, is the subject of criticism at the moment.

¹⁷ Available online on: <https://www.minedu.sk/21112016-vyzva-na-predkladanie-ziadosti-o-nenavratny-financny-prispevok-na-podporu-celozivotneho-vzdelavania-oplz-po12016dop141-01-vyzva-uzavreta/>

3. Ensuring ageing with dignity

3.1 Protection of older persons' enjoyment of all human rights and dignity, promotion their autonomy, self-determination and participation in society

In the national conditions it is a traditional domain of support (since 90's) which was regulated in NPAA-I in Chapter 7 called *Independence, safety and quality life of older persons*. It integrated the issues of healthcare, housing, retirement scheme, social services, material need and poverty or wider social conditions of improving the quality of life of older persons (mobility, awareness, food safety and quality, environment, affordability of energy; or goods, services and technology friendly to older persons).

1.5 3.2 Most important achievements during the last 20 years

In the survey we asked the actors about **goals and actions which in the last five years most contributed to the protection of human rights and dignity of older persons, their autonomy, self-determination and participation in the society**. They mostly identified actions focused on *promoting permanence of older persons in their natural environment*, namely thanks to a certain progress achieved in the development of field and outpatient social services, deinstitutionalisation and transformation of the existing social services (mainly from ESIF resources); extending social rehabilitation programmes or introducing the quality of social services and their professionalisation. They also appreciated introduction of the mechanism of co-financing selected social services intended also for older persons from the state budget. In the area of *social and legal protection of older persons* they appreciated the start of preparation of a nursing reform; acknowledgement of older persons as a particularly vulnerable group and their right to specialized professional assistance, also as a part of activities of intervention centres for victims of domestic violence or the office of the commissioner for persons with disabilities. They also praised activities in the area of *civic education*, with a particular focus on the area of human rights and preventing ill treatment, misuse through abusive practices (e.g. operation of a free-of-charge line for the elderly¹⁸). They emphasized the role of civic organisations, organisations of the elderly and self-help groups, partially supported from selected subsidy schemes (e.g. Ministry of Culture of the Slovak Republic, Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic, towns and municipalities). Progress towards *more dignified living conditions of older persons* was possible also thanks to removing outdoor barriers and improved access to public services, including their computerisation; also thanks to supporting the income situation of older persons as a way to eliminate their poverty and material deprivation (e.g. stabilisation of energy prices, discounts in transportation, culture, supporting access to appropriate housing within subsidies from the State Housing Development Fund or increasing the protection of income in payment for the social service). Measures and policies of certain employers focused on *reconciling family and professional life* of members of nursing families were also seen as positive.

However, the **issue** of *designing and deploying a system of integrated/interconnected health and social care* remains to be **pending** for the next period; it could not be accomplished in spite of the "Strategy of Long-Term Health and Social Care in SR¹⁹" initiative elaborated in 2019. Progress in the area of *transformation and deinstitutionalisation of social services* was also considered insufficient as well, also in the context of a stagnating development of the

¹⁸ Available online on: <https://www.teraz.sk/ekonomika/bezplatna-senior-linka/67868-clanok.html>

¹⁹ Available online on: <https://www.health.gov.sk/Clanok?strategia-dlhodobej-socialno-zdravotnej-starostlivosti-v-sr>

domestic nursing service or the absence of targeted services for informally nursing persons so as to ensure a smooth transition between individual types and forms of social services according to the development of the needs of dependant older persons and their families. *Non-systematic support of activities of organisations of the elderly* was also criticised in this respect. This is also related to a small interest of a part of older persons in public issues and their low involvement in designing public policies at different levels (national, regional, local, organisational).

Part III: Healthy and Active Ageing in a Sustainable World

1. Contribution of ageing-related policies to the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its Sustainable Development Goals

1.1 Submission of the VNR to the HLPF

In the **Voluntary National Review of the Slovak Republic on the Implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (2018)**²⁰ main *principles* how Slovakia can contribute to sustainable development at home and abroad, were outlined, as follows:

- P1: sustainable development must lie at the heart of all policies;
- P2: individual commitment and cross-generational engagement is vital;
- P3: partnerships are essential for findings sustainable solutions;
- P4: global responsibility.

Following the main principles the *national priorities (NP)* for sustainable development were focused on these areas:

- NP1: vocational training focusing on access to the labour market and self-employment as well as upgrading educational facilities;
- NP2: creating conditions for the availability of quality employment opportunities in the open labour market for all population groups;
- NP3: access to potable water and sanitation for all, while respecting environmental sustainability and quality waste management;
- NP4: adapting human settlements and the countryside to the adverse effects of climate change, good governance and civil society capacity development;
- NP5: quality healthcare along with the education of healthcare personnel.

All the mentioned national priorities, either explicitly (NP1, NP2, NP5) or implicitly (NP3, NP4) were addressed on population ageing and older person's issues and are elaborated in more detail within the document *Vision - Slovakia 2030* (see below).

1.2 Links between ageing issues and the 2030 Agenda

In December 2020 the Government of the Slovak Republic approved **Vision and Strategy of the Development of Slovakia until 2030 – long-term strategy of sustainable development of the Slovak Republic – Slovakia 2030**²¹ which is a basic implementing document of Slovakia related to performance of national priorities of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The Vision defines both priorities and goals in the development of Slovakia in three *integrated development programmes* (IDPs) covering key areas of the

²⁰ Available online on:

https://sustainabledevelopment.un.org/content/documents/20131Agenda2030_VNR_Slovakia.pdf

²¹ Available online on: <https://www.mirri.gov.sk/wp-content/uploads/2021/01/Slovensko-2030.pdf>

development of Slovakia until 2030, particularly a) IDP I – Protection and development of resources; b) IDP II – Sustainable use of resources; c) IDP III – Development of communities.

A key change expected *within IDP I* is population growth and health, education and social development or issues of the rule of law and security. It is supposed to be brought about *inter alia* by measures focused on stopping the population decrease and supporting the growth of the proportion of the economically active population; measures for designing and implementing a plan to support the development of silver economy and to keep the population economically active; or a reform of the pension scheme so that it becomes sustainable with regard to demographic evolution.

The goal and key change in *IDP II* will be transformation of the national economy based on sustainable evaluation of the potential of the regions, on the added value with the support of high-quality infrastructure or on environmental and social sustainability. From the point of view of (active) ageing policies, what is particularly worth mentioning are the intentions to support green innovation and cooperation of different social sectors in this area; to support environmental education towards sustainable use of resources and to environmental protection; or designing and deploying a system of efficient crisis management of regional economies with regard to potential social implications, health, safety, environment and natural resources.

The support of active ageing of the population is intensively incorporated within *IDP III* the aim of which is to develop communities and to increase the quality of life for all social groups. Tools include bringing governance closer to people and supporting their social inclusion, also in the form of accessible, high-quality and efficient services. Supporting the development of the civic society, participation of citizens, strengthening the territorial principle in defining development policies, sustainability of infrastructure development – that all is supposed to contribute to healthy and coherent communities for all, regardless of the fact where they live or what social and economic background or disadvantage they have. Accessible and sustainable infrastructure leading to a healthy and fulfilling life of communities concerns the social and health, school, technical, transport and cultural area or the areas of housing, public spaces, buildings, and service and retail facilities.

1.3 Most relevant SDGs which could be nourished by current policy measures (1-3 good examples)

There are obvious subject-matter interconnections between the finishing NPAA-I, NPAA-II which is being approved and the approved Vision – Slovakia 2030 in terms of the reflection of issues of promoting active ageing as a cross-cutting priority applied in public policy. As stated above, there are interconnections in all three integrated development programmes of the Vision – Slovakia 2030.

As an *example* of such interconnection, we may mention measures to support keeping older persons economically active (cross-cutting priority of the protection and development of resources in the Vision – Slovakia 2030) which both goals and actions in NPAA-I as well as projected goals and actions in NPAA-II were focused on. They address permanence in economically active life in connection to setting a sustainable social security scheme for older persons (e.g. also thanks to introducing age management in the activities of employers) or through programmes of lifelong learning and increasing key competences for employment and employability of the ageing and older persons in digital world.

Another *example* of overlapping priorities of NPAA-I/NPAA-II with Vision – Slovakia 2030 is an intensive attention paid to the issues of long-term health and social care for dependant persons, subsequent and palliative care, which the Vision considers a way to improve the health condition and length of the active life of the population.

In summary, we may state that implementation of the Vision – Slovakia 2030 will be assessed also through performance of goals and actions of NPAA-II as a sectoral strategic document, as the Vision directly foresees in its implementation mechanism.

2. Lessons learnt from managing the consequences and impacts for older people in emergency situation: the COVID-19 pandemic

2.1 How were older people affected by Covid-19 in Slovakia?

According to statistics of the National Health Information Centre²², the average monthly number of *deaths* before the pandemic in Slovakia was 3 – 3.5 thousand persons, doubling during the pandemic (e.g. in January 2021 to as many as 7,000 persons), what is interpreted as a consequence of COVID-19. Development of the *number of hospital admissions* in 2016 – 2020 indicated a gradual slight drop in all age categories (in aggregate from 1.2 million in 2016 to almost 979,000 in 2020). However, in relation to the pandemic the *number of hospital admissions* increased in all age groups, though mainly in the group of older persons (for more details see Annex 9). From August 2020 to May 2021 new hospital admissions accumulated mainly in the case of persons aged 61 – 70 (22 – 34 % with 12 % share in total population) and in the case of persons aged 71 – 80 (17 – 31 % with 6 % share in total population). The highest number of deaths in such age categories was seen in December 2020 – April 2021.

2.2 What has been done to ensure that difficult health-care decisions affected older people are guided by a commitment to dignity and the rights to health?

During the pandemic the healthcare followed the then-valid legislation governing healthcare and its providers (including the Code of Ethics²³) which reflects relevant UN recommendations and other commitments focused on protecting the dignity of older persons and their right to healthcare. During the pandemic the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic in cooperation with expert companies elaborated *methodological guidelines and expert recommendations* for provision of outpatient or institutional healthcare. The guidelines are disclosed on the website of the Ministry of Health of SR with an aim to unify and set healthcare provision in such a way as to decrease the risk of COVID-19 transmission and to create conditions for providing healthcare to everyone in the right and safe manner. In particular, *standard procedures* were elaborated for hospitals, outpatient departments, emergency medical services, palliative care; procedures for management of social service facilities the clients of which include mainly older persons or procedures for psychological and social and religious assistance²⁴. Another example is the *vaccination strategy of SR* which prioritized vaccination of older persons and the most vulnerable part of the population.²⁵ Activities of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic were

²² Available online on:

http://www.nczisk.sk/Statisticke_vystupy/Tematicke_statisticke_vystupy/Hospitalizacie/Pages/default.aspx

²³ Annex 4 of the Act No. 578/2004 Coll. as amended; available online on: https://www.slov-lex.sk/pravne-predpisy/SK/ZZ/2004/578/vyhlasene_znenie.html#prilohy

²⁴ Available online on: <https://www.standardnepostupy.sk/covid-19/>

²⁵ Available online on: <https://www.google.com/search?client=firefox-b-d&q=vakcina%C4%8Dn%C3%A1+strat%C3%A9gia+SR>

focused on an intensive *support of providers of social services*. The Ministry was continuously preparing and issuing guidelines regarding operational procedures of providers (e.g. standardized Procedure for cooperation with families; rules governing visits during the pandemic),²⁶ while information was provided also through info-graphics via social networks.

2.3 What has been done to strengthen social inclusion and solidarity during physical distancing?

With regard to a demonstrably worse progress of COVID-19 and a higher mortality of persons aged 65+ caused by it, the Ministry of Health of SR in cooperation with other central state administration authorities, expert companies and media launched an *education campaign* already during the first wave of the pandemic, focused on the elderly population and on the importance of following the pandemic measures. A special campaign focused on older persons was also running after the start of *vaccination* (from the end of 2020). From the point of view of provision of postponable healthcare, older persons and their families were instructed to use *telemedicine* as a treatment paid from the public health insurance. They could consult their health problems with their general practitioners or specialists by telephone or online. Several *legislative amendments facilitating the access to healthcare* were adopted for such purpose (e.g. in the area of prescribing pharmaceuticals and medical devices, examinations by specialists or access to vaccination).

2.4 What has been done to fully integrate a focus on older persons into the socio-economic and humanitarian response to COVID-19?

At a system level, the *Recovery and Resilience plan of the Slovak Republic*²⁷, focused on five key areas of public policies – green economy; education; science, research and innovation; health; efficient public administration and digitalisation, reflects the need for reforms and investments in the area of supporting active ageing. In relation to preparing Slovakia for quick population ageing, it is worth mentioning component 13 in the area of "Health" – *Accessible and high-quality long-term social and health care*. It is targeted at ensuring high-quality, accessible and comprehensive support of persons who need long-term and palliative care. In the area of "Efficient public administration and digitalisation", component 17 – *Digital Slovakia* counts with creating the conditions for digital transformation of the economy, improving the digital skills of persons, primarily focusing on older persons, as a preconditions for extending the possibility to use remote work and education.

In addition to the support scheme specified in 1.4 above, other tools were also adopted in the competence of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic which were specifically focused on the sector of residential social services for dependant persons, particularly the elderly. A *Memorandum was adopted between the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic and the Association of Social Work Educators, Faculty of Education of the Comenius University in Bratislava and Faculty of Orthodox Theology of the University of Prešov* which governs the conditions of provision of voluntary help and support of students of social work in social service facilities and facilities of social and legal protection of children during the extraordinary situation caused by the pandemic²⁸. At the end of the half of 2021, the database of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic

²⁶ Available online on: <https://www.employment.gov.sk/sk/koronavirus-pracovna-socialna-oblast/socialne-sluzby/>

²⁷ Available online on: https://www.mfsr.sk/files/archiv/1/Plan_obnovy_a_odolnosti.pdf

²⁸ Available online on: <https://www.crz.gov.sk/data/att/2494946.pdf>

contained almost 170 students from the entire Slovakia, while 16 of them provided assistance to social service facilities in reality²⁹. Another example of such targeted assistance is an option for interested persons/volunteers to provide personal assistance and work in social service facilities which were experiencing a critical situation during the pandemic, based on *ad-hoc work contracts*.³⁰ On the basis of such scheme, personal assistance had been provided to 24 COVID and 6 post-COVID social service facilities by the end of January 2021 to enable their employees to recover. At the beginning of the second half of 2021, the database contained about 590 volunteers/persons interested in such assistance from the entire Slovakia.³¹

2.5 What has been done to expand participation by older persons, share good practices and harness knowledge and data?

Various ministries and social entities at different levels adopted and adopt measures focused on sharing their knowledge, data and good practices and supporting the decision-making of also older persons and their families in relation to the COVID-19 pandemic. As an example, we may mention activities of the *National Health Information Centre* (organization in the competence of the Ministry of Health of the Slovak Republic) which shows relevant information related to active ageing and its indicators on its website. In relation to COVID-19, they added a Data Cube showing a monthly evolution of the number of deceased persons as per the month of death, sex, age of the deceased person or the cause of death.³²

Since April 2020 the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic has been disclosing on its website *information and methodological guidelines for providers of social services* relevant for coping with the first and second wave of the pandemic. It includes e.g. a summary of measures adopted by the central crisis team of the Slovak Republic and the Government of the Slovak Republic; orders for determining economic mobilization entities; rules for elaborating crisis plans for providers of social services; principles of anti-pandemic procedures and a safe social service for customers; principles governing visits at residential social service facilities; procedure of cooperation with the family during the pandemic; ensuring vaccination in social service establishments, etc.³³

As a follow-up, in June 2021 an umbrella organisation – *Association of Providers of Social Services in SR* – launched its educational activities focused on raising awareness of the clients of social service facilities (particularly older persons and their families) and their staff about the COVID-19 pandemic. Almost 200 persons from the target group participated in the first webinar called *Vaccination and post-covid care for clients and employees of social service facilities*.³⁴

²⁹ Information provided on request from the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic.

³⁰ Available online on: <https://www.employment.gov.sk/sk/koronavirus-pracovna-socialna-oblast/socialne-sluzby/formular-dohodarov-do-covid-zariadeni.html>

³¹ Information provided on request from the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic.

³² Available online on:

http://datacube.statistics.sk/#/view/sk/VBD_SK_WIN2/om3801mr/v_om3801mr_00_00_00_sk

³³ Available online on: <https://www.employment.gov.sk/sk/koronavirus-pracovna-socialna-oblast/socialne-sluzby/>

³⁴ Available online on: <https://apssvsr.sk/aktuality/webinar-vakcinacia-a-postcovidova-starostlivost-o-klientov-a-zamestnancov-zariadeni-socialnych-sluzieb/>

3. Activities in preparation and implementation of the WHO Decade of Healthy Ageing 2020-2030

3.1 Is there a National Action Plan for the implementation of the WHO Decade in Slovakia?

Slovakia did not adopt an action plan for the implementation of the WHO Decade of Healthy Ageing 2020 – 2030. The Ministry of Health of SR incorporated its intentions in the area of supporting healthy ageing (healthy lifestyle, implementation of preventive measures or high-quality healthcare) in the framework of preparations for NPAA-II. It includes intentions to introduce payment mechanisms focused on treatment quality rather than quantity; to decrease mortality as a part of implementing action plans of the National Oncology Programme; to support subsequent healthcare provided in the community and at home; to support the protection of mental health of older persons and early diagnosing of its disorders; to introduce a system of long-term health and social care and its financing; to professionally train the staff of medical establishments to be able to detect violence against older persons.

3.2 Would Slovakia agree to report on the implementation of the WHO Decade in the framework of the next national reviews and appraisals of MIPPA/RIS?

Irrelevant with regard to the answer in paragraph 3.1 above.

Conclusions and priorities for the future

The questionnaire survey with the actors of policies promoting active ageing included also a request to identify priorities for supporting active ageing in the future (in 2012 – 2030). Based on their replies, we may identify systemic/cross-cutting and subject-matter specific priorities. **Systemic/cross-cutting priorities** include a request to *support long-term planning of the work and personal life of every person* (in accordance with the life cycle principles), its activation for the work life and community life. In accordance with this priority, individual kinds of care should be coordinated in a systemic and efficient manner (sectoral public policies), its actors at different levels (national, regional, local and organisational) and resources (including resources from the new EU programming period). Similarly, they systematically pointed out to the *need to ensure the sustainability* of individual policies and measures so that they may be evenly distributed and available in the entire Slovak Republic, also after the intensive financial support from European funds finishes.

Subject-matter specific priorities were reflected in the set of NPAA-II domains as:

- *ensuring lifelong learning* with a particular focus on increasing the digital literacy of persons aged 45+ for the labour market as well as for the common personal and civic life; ensuring internet access to all ageing persons, including the necessary training to use it actively; financing a minimum network of organizers of education for the target group of 45+ without which a targeted development in the area of lifelong learning for the benefit of active ageing is not possible, including the support of organisations of the elderly;
- *promoting healthy lifestyle and appropriate healthcare* with a particular focus on supporting mental health in the ageing process, health rehabilitation financed also from the public health insurance as a way to the longest possible permanence on the labour market and to long-term sustainable and adequate financial security in older age;
- *ensuring sustainable employment at every age*, controlling work ability and setting age management processes with employers, including their motivation to employ also older persons;

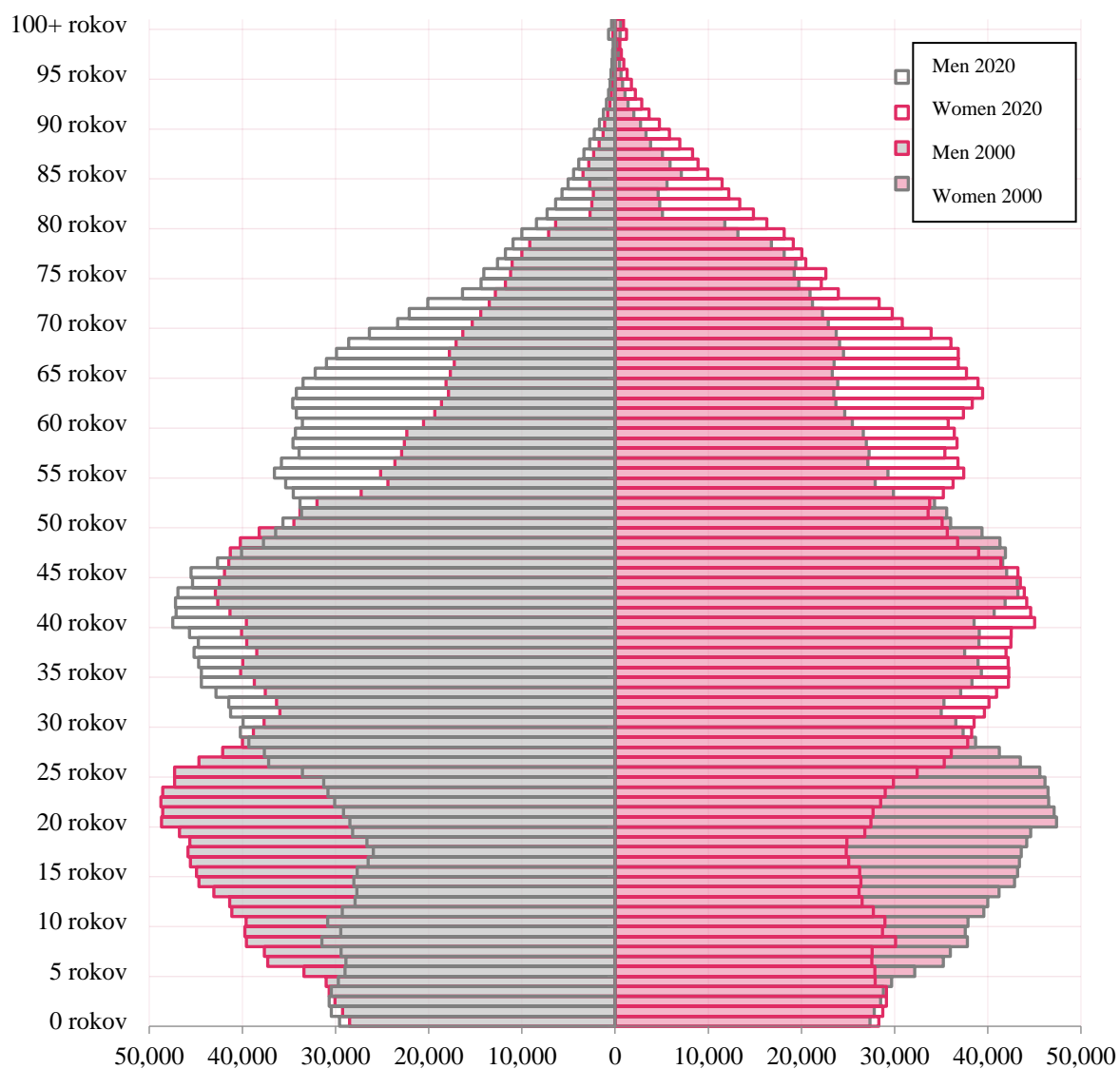
- setting the conditions for *long-term sustainable pension scheme* and for *appropriateness of pensions* (through applying more efficient investment strategies in capitalisation schemes built on the life cycle principle);
- *community social and health care* supported by removal of barriers in public services and spaces, deinstitutionalisation and high quality of services, their geographical accessibility determined in accordance with the demographic evolution;
- *integrated social and health care* connected to an efficient system of health-social beds, by decreasing the period of necessary hospital care, shifting the care from hospitals to outpatient/home care and by strengthening the competencies of district GPs and geriatric nurses in the area of monitoring the living conditions of older persons as a basis of prevention of home abuse of older persons.

An important factor in implementation of priorities will be **the use of regional international cooperation** on the issues of active ageing. The actors in the survey considered only the fact that several former and current initiatives and programmes in the area of employment and social inclusion of older persons would not have been possible without *cooperation and financing from ESIF resources*, particularly from the funds of ESF and its OP Human Resources, as a form of international cooperation. That is one of the reasons why ESF Transnational Platform was created, since 2020 operating as the Communities of Practice Platform. So from the start, NPAA-I and NPAA-II were perceived as part of a wider international effort for joint direction in supporting active and healthy ageing and building the society for everyone. In the domain of *strengthening the potential of older persons* they mentioned e.g. the international cooperation of NBS as a part of OECD/INFE membership (International Network for Financial Education). Establishment of the Slovak Age Management Association (2016) and its partnership in international projects (e.g. Erasmus+, Work ability management) or membership of the Association of Slovak Universities of the Third Age in the Danube association DANET were considered important. Also the exchange of experience of organisations of the elderly as a part of their membership in the European Seniors' Union or in EURAG (European Federation of Older Persons) or an intensive cooperation of organisations of the elderly in the Czech Republic and Slovakia at a national, regional and local level. Progress in the area of *increasing the employment and employability* of older persons was, to a large extent, achieved also thanks to participation of Slovakia in the EURES platform but also thanks to newer initiatives focused on transnational awareness-raising of age management and on overcoming age barriers in employment (e.g. through the Slovak Age Management Association). Based on the partnership of the National Union of Employers in the "Bridging the AgeGap" project, common recommendations of the participating countries for age management will be formulated in 2021. Finally, in the area of *supporting dignified and independent life* of older persons, activities of NBS in EIOPA (European Insurance and Occupational Pensions Authority), cooperation of the Ministry of Economy of the Slovak Republic with the European Consumer Centre in SR or activities of the Forum for Assistance to the Elderly in expert groups of the AGE Platform Europe were mentioned. The actors emphasized also micro projects implemented from ERDF, e.g. between SR and Poland or SR and CR; similarly services of the Slovak Library for Persons who are Blind, located in Levoča, provided also for expatriates. Foreign cooperation in the area of supporting a dignified and independent life of older persons was carried out also at an organisational level, particularly in the social service sector, most often in the form of an exchange of experience and internships.

In accordance with the requirement for NR preparation, actors in the questionnaire also commented on the question **how international organisations** dealing with the issues of ageing should **support the effort of individual countries in this area**. Their answers could be grouped in certain *groups*.

- *transnational legal protection of older persons* (adoption of the UN Charter for protection older persons);
- *unifying the approach to the issue of active and dignified ageing* (it is a basis for dignified living conditions for older persons in individual countries; determining uniform criteria for persons at a certain age as a basis of their "movement" in the international area; determining joint mechanism of securing a safe social service, mainly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic);
- *raising awareness of the issue of active ageing and of age discrimination* (spreading information and raising awareness; development of the „Age friendly cities" UNESCO philosophy);
- *comparative research and analyses of social and economic needs of older persons* (the findings should form a basis for financing the activities of individual countries from transnational resources);
- *financial support of projects* (e.g. programmes of SMEs employing older persons and using their knowledge, work and human potential; Grundvig programme e.g. in project support of volunteering of older persons);
- *exchange of experience and sharing good/best practice* (through educational programmes, conferences, translations of important materials and knowledge into national languages, organisation of exchange stays, e.g. for employees of social services).

Based on experience with the implementation period of NPAA I, the key in preparation for the next period of 2021 – 2030 seems to be **establishing a mechanism for implementing NPAA 2021 – 2030**, i.e. coordination, monitoring and assessment of performance of goals and actions focused on supporting active ageing in the national conditions, including the support of cooperation of actors at the international level and preparation of the MIPAA/RIS report for next reference periods. A proposal for establishing such coordination mechanism is also a part of negotiations on approving the new NPAA-II.

Chart: Age structure of the population of the Slovak Republic in 2000 and in 2020

Y axis: number of years 0-100+

Source:

Age structure of the population of the Slovak Republic as per sex and age. Statistical Office of SR. Available on: http://datacube.statistics.sk/#!/view/sk/VBD_SLOVSTAT/om2024rs/v_om2024rs_00_00_00_sk

Table: Summary of the evolution of key economic indicators from 2016 to 2020 and their foreseen development until 2024

Indicator	unit of measurement	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024
GDP current prices	billion	81.1	84.5	89.5	93.9	91.1	95.4	103.5	109.3	112.4
GDP constant prices	%	2.1	3	3.8	2.3	-5.2	3.3	6.3	2.8	0.3
Average monthly wage (nominal increase)	%	3.3	4.6	6.2	7.8	3.8	4.9	5	4.7	4.1
Average growth of employment according to the labour force survey	%	2.8	1.5	1.4	0.7	-2	-0.2	0.9	1.1	0.3
Average unemployment rate according to the labour force survey	%	9.6	8.1	6.5	5.8	6.7	7.1	6.5	5.4	4.7
Harmonized consumer price index (HCPI)	%	-0.5	1.4	2.5	2.8	2	1.1	2.2	2.5	2.3

Source: Stability Programme of the Slovak Republic for 2021 to 2024, Ministry of Finance of the Slovak Republic, May 2021

* The data for 2021 – 2024 represent a forecast

Sources

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Table: Summary of the support provided within First Aid projects (as at 30 July 2021)

Action	Number of supported entities	Number of supported employees/self-employed persons	Financial contribution	Average support per working person	Requested amount
March 2020	80,071	370,442	EUR 82,995,566.07	€224.04	EUR 83,025,459.29
April 2020	94,582	465,531	EUR 176,968,264.59	€380.14	EUR 177,036,426.19
May 2020	77,258	459,011	EUR 145,998,107.40	€318.07	EUR 146,075,521.05
June 2020	52,488	278,151	EUR 80,895,638.26	€290.83	EUR 80,926,875.64
July 2020	41,815	225,238	EUR 63,390,034.71	€281.44	EUR 63,394,393.99
August 2020	40,564	201,230	EUR 56,915,546.35	€282.84	EUR 56,926,054.35
September 2020	42,964	186,131	EUR 50,478,738.24	€271.20	EUR 50,488,431.47
October 2020	72,234	254,710	EUR 106,883,986.82	€419.63	EUR 106,933,613.42
November 2020	82,382	246,598	EUR 112,409,760.24	€455.84	EUR 113,181,984.01
December 2020	83,531	264,933	EUR 120,418,495.74	€454.52	EUR 121,062,920.90
January 2021	117,729	365,458	EUR 187,755,149.64	€513.75	EUR 188,000,994.91
February 2021	120,254	350,195	EUR 211,439,375.74	€603.78	EUR 211,542,224.21
March 2021	115,124	321,577	EUR 198,406,270.58	€616.98	EUR 198,532,918.59
April 2021	108,709	318,557	EUR 179,034,644.98	€562.02	EUR 179,047,766.32
May 2021	86,616	256,132	EUR 146,774,580.37	€573.04	EUR 146,784,975.02
June 2021	62,412	146,301	EUR 83,537,158.29	€571.00	EUR 83,795,443.99
Total	X	X	EUR 2,004,301,318.02	X	EUR 2,006,756,003.35

Source: Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic

Sources:

Report on the Social Situation of the Population of the Slovak Republic for 2020 Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic. Available on: <https://rokovania.gov.sk/RVL/Material/26236/1>

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Annex 4

Table: Number of paid pandemic sickness and nursing benefits

Month	Sickness benefit		Nursing benefit	
	Number of paid benefits	Amount of paid benefits (EUR thousand)	Number of paid benefits	Amount of paid benefits (EUR thousand)
April 2020	19,915	1,709.50	62,289	13,045.80
May 2020	27,627	3,229.70	144,096	45,934.93
June 2020	9,187	1,380.60	129,002	44,934.99
July 2020	5,315	788.30	52,444	17,194.87
August 2020	3,142	548.40	21,305	6,859.69
September 2020	4,960	913.10	20,058	6,421.37
October 2020	9,977	1,463.30	12,569	2,100.66
November 2020	51,948	8,306.50	20,687	2,535.82
December 2020	102,333	17,873.70	18,472	2,768.43
January 2021	104,008	20,400.21	20,162	3,451.31
February 2021	122,459	26,722.35	50,727	11,927.41
March 2021	136,727	31,365.25	53,210	10,400.16
April 2021	129,530	32,403.55	37,065	8,158.88
May 2021	66,669	19,957.98	22,206	4,879.50
June 2021	30,178	7,915.75	13,957	2,287.57
Total	823,975	147,104	678,249	175,734

Source: Social Insurance Agency

Table: Age structure of recipients of the unemployment benefit between 2016 – 2020

	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020
0 – 19	8	6	10	16	24
20 – 24	7,568	7,185	7,353	8,000	10,781
25 – 29	19,149	18,224	18,722	19,718	23,559
20 – 34	19,718	18,976	19,534	20,889	24,419
35 – 39	18,644	17,979	18,650	19,829	23,765
40 – 44	16,166	15,734	16,893	18,868	23,451
45 – 49	12,765	12,283	12,990	15,126	20,490
50 – 54	12,645	11,877	12,387	13,703	17,625
55 – 59	12,788	11,965	11,958	13,362	16,917
60+	4,386	4,487	5,670	7,486	10,276
unknown	114	70	55	89	103
Total	123,951	118,786	124,222	137,086	171,410

Source: Social Insurance Agency

Table: Number of paid benefits and the total amount of unemployment benefits in relation to extending the support period in unemployment

Period	Number	Expenditures in EUR	Average amount in EUR
from 1 May to 31 December 2020	91,245	32,286,358	354
1 January 2021 – 31 January 2021	61	20,648	338
1 February 2021 – 28 February 2021	85	20,876	246
1 March 2021 – 31 March 2021	46	12,360	269
1 April 2021 – 30 April 2021	36,343	7,418,798	204
1 May 2021 – 31 May 2021	40,448	18,090,568	447
1 June 2021 – 30 June 2021	44,718	14,594,099	326
Total	212,946	72,443,707	340

Source: Social Insurance Agency

Table: Content overlaps of the goals of NPAA-I, MIPPA/RIS and the Lisbon Declaration (LD)

NPAA-I	MIPPA/RIS + LD
Protection of human rights, active independence and civic participation	Recognizing the potential of older persons
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fostering the rights of the elderly through supporting organisations of the elderly • Legal protection of older persons • Involvement in decision-making processes, social participation • Prevention of elder misuse and abuse • Supporting volunteering and social contacts of older persons 	<p>MIPAA/RIS: Society for everyone, without discrimination; full integration and participation in the society; gender sensitive approach; promoting family care and intergenerational solidarity; implementation through regional cooperation</p> <p>LD: Responsible and future-oriented economic and financial strategies; policies consulted with representatives of target groups; recognition of the contribution of older persons to the society; volunteering of older persons in different environments; supporting civic organisations; age-friendly environment</p>
Employment and employability of older persons	Encouraging longer working life and ability to work
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Age management • Employment services and supporting silver economy • Non-discriminating, safe and healthy work conditions • Lifelong learning 	<p>MIPAA/RIS: Sustainable economic growth in harmony with population ageing; system of social protection corresponding to demographic changes and their consequences; labour market reflecting the economic and social effects of ageing; lifelong education corresponding to changing economic, social and demographic conditions; gender sensitive approach; implementation through regional cooperation</p> <p>LD: promoting the opportunities for lifelong learning; combating unemployment at every age; reducing financial and gender-based inequalities and poverty; supporting employers in employing older persons; motivating to longer work and more flexible retirement options; planning and implementation of the pension reform with regard to the increasing life expectancy and length of professional life; supporting the reconciliation of family and professional life</p>
Independence, safety and quality of life	Ensuring ageing with dignity
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Healthcare • Housing • Pension system • Available and coordinated social services • Material need and poverty • Social inclusion of older persons with severe disabilities • Improving the quality of life of older persons (mobility and accessible transport, awareness, culture, intergenerational solidarity and coherence, high-quality food, high-quality environment, accessible energy, age-accessible technology, goods and services) 	<p>MIPAA/RIS: Ensuring the quality of life for all, promoting an independent life in the area of health and wealth; gender sensitive approach; supporting family care and intergenerational solidarity; implementation through regional cooperation</p> <p>LD: Protecting human rights and dignity, promoting autonomy and participation; infrastructure to prevent elder abuse; innovative methods, services, technology and products; quality of integrated social and health care and education of staff; research focused on the issues of population ageing; persons with mental and intellectual disability and their families as a part of common communities; supporting dignity, especially towards the end of life</p>



MINISTERSTVO PRÁCE,
SOCIÁLNYCH VECÍ A RODINY
SLOVENSKEJ REPUBLIKY



INŠTITÚT PRE VÝSKUM
PRÁCE A RODINY

Questionnaire to evaluate the progress of Slovakia in the area of supporting active ageing

1. Part: Assessment of implementation of NPAA 2014 – 2020 for 2020

In this part we are asking you for **information about the status of implementation of individual tasks resulting from NPAA 2014 – 2020** falling under your subject-matter competence **for 2020**. With an aim to elaborate a clear and comprehensive report, we would like to ask you to express your ideas about the status of implementation **clearly and briefly and to reflect only performances executed in the period under review, i.e. in 2020**. If no actions have been performed, please state the reasons.

If you were not directly involved in performance of tasks resulting from NPAA 2014 – 2020, please fill in only part 2 of the questionnaire.

Full wording of NPAA 2014 – 2020 may be found on the web page of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic: <https://www.employment.gov.sk/sk/ministerstvo/rada-vlady-sr-prava-seniorov/narodny-program-aktivneho-starnutia-roky-2014-2020.html>

2. Part: Assessment of achievement of goals of MIPPA/RIS with an emphasis on LMD goals from 2017 regarding the issues of active ageing

In this part please focus on the goals and actions to support active ageing not only from the point of view of your own competence and actions you are responsible for. It is assessment of the overall setting and **interaction of individual actions** on the overall life situation of ageing persons in the last five years during which NPAA 2014 – 2020 has been implemented or the last two decades during which MIPPA/RIS has been implemented in individual countries. In your assessment please pay particular attention also to the issues of equality of access of ageing women and ageing men to actions to support active ageing and impacts of such actions on their life situation. Also, please pay attention to using the **regional cooperation mechanisms** (cooperation of several European countries) in implementation of various actions. If possible, state **sources** (hyperlinks) to support the stated measures (examples, actions).

State your brief answers (**maximum 100 words per question**) directly after the question.

The basis for filling in this part of the questionnaire are wordings of individual commitments to support active ageing contained in MIPPA/RIS (2002)³⁵, LMD (2017)³⁶ and in NPAA 2014 – 2020 (2013)³⁷. For better orientation, the annex to the questionnaire contains clear information on how commitments related to individual areas of support are specified in more detail in the above-stated documents.

2.1 Goals and actions focused on recognition and strengthening of the potential of older persons

³⁵ Available online on: <https://unece.org/DAM/pau/RIS.pdf>

³⁶ Available online on:

https://unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/age/Ministerial_Conference_Lisbon/Declaration/2017_Lisbon_Ministerial_Declaration.pdf

³⁷ Available online on: <https://www.employment.gov.sk/files/slovensky/ministerstvo/rada-vlady-sr-prava-seniorov/npas-2014-2020.pdf>

Question 1: Please state maximum two goals achieved and actions implemented in the last few years which you consider most important in the area of strengthening the physical, mental and social potential of older persons. What helped to achieve the goals and implement the actions? ...

Question 2: Which goals and actions in this area could not be achieved/implemented and why? ...

Question 3: Did ageing men and ageing women have equal access to supporting actions focused on recognition and strengthening of their potential? If yes, how was the equal access ensured? ...

Question 4: How was regional cooperation (cooperation of countries within the European space) used to achieve the goals and actions in this area? ...

2.2 Goals and actions focused on supporting longer work life of persons and their ability to work

Question 5: Please state maximum two goals achieved and actions implemented in the last few years which you consider most important in the area of supporting longer work life of persons and their ability to work. What helped to achieve the goals and implement the actions? ...

Question 6: Which goals and actions in this area could not be achieved/implemented and why? ...

Question 7: Did ageing men and ageing women have equal access to supporting actions focused on supporting their work potential and longer work life? If yes, how was the equal access ensured? ...

Question 8: How was regional cooperation (cooperation of countries within the European space) used to achieve the goals and actions in this area? ...

2.3 Goals and actions focused on dignified ageing

Question 9: Please state maximum two goals achieved and actions implemented in the last few years which you consider most important in the area of protecting human rights and dignity of older persons, their autonomy, self-determination and participation in the society. What helped to achieve the goals and implement the actions? ...

Question 10: Which goals and actions in this area could not be achieved/implemented and why?

Question 11: Did ageing men and ageing women have equal access to actions focused on protecting their human rights, dignity, self-determination and social participation? If yes, how was the equal access ensured?

Question 12: How was regional cooperation (cooperation of countries within the European space) used to achieve the goals and actions in this area? ...

2.4 Summarizing, priorities for the future and the position of international organisations focused on the issues of ageing

Question 13: What most significant progress was achieved in Slovakia in the last 20 years in supporting the living conditions of older persons and active ageing of the population? ...

Question 14: Please state maximum two recommendations what should preferably be carried out in the country in the future in the area of ageing of the population with an emphasis on active ageing

Question 15: How should international organisations dealing with the issues of ageing support the effort of individual countries in this respect? ...

Table: Minimum pension in 2021 (in EUR)

OAI period	Minimum pension in 2021
30	334.3
31	338.5
32	342.7
33	347
34	351.2
35	355.4
36	359.6
37	363.8
38	368
39	372.2
40	378.5
41	384.8
42	391.1
43	397.4
44	403.7
45*	410

Source: Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Family of the Slovak Republic; OAI - old age insurance

* The amount for 45 years is stated as the last one but it is not a maximum monthly amount of minimum pension since 46 years of old age insurance will correspond to 33 % PM from 2018 and 39 % ŽM valid in the second half of 2019 etc.

