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Taking Action on Social Inclusion of Older People

Newsletter No. 4;
31 March 2017

Welcome to the fourth issue of the TASIOP newsletter covering the development in the regional project dedicated to social inclusion of older people financed by European Union, Austrian Development Agency and Austrian Red Cross. In this issue we will talk about the activities of the project partners in the final quarter of the first year of the project, show some of the interesting synergies with other actions in the project countries where the partners have taken part, as well as present the Toolkit for community-based home care for staff and volunteers and Active Ageing Index, two essential sets of tools for professionals in public or civil sectors working in the area of ageing.

ACTIVE AGEING INDEX



(January 2017, by the AAI project team)

Active ageing is a multidimensional concept referring to a situation where people continue to participate in the formal labour market, or engage in unpaid productive activities (such as care provision to family members and volunteering), and live healthy, independent and secure lives as they age. Active ageing policies thus need to address this variety of dimensions: enable possibilities for longer working life, ensure social participation, encourage healthy life style, provide opportunities for independent living etc. for both men and women as they age. In the same manner, monitoring such policy implementation requires a comprehensive tool which would encompass the multitude of aspects of active ageing.

The Active Ageing Index (AAI) is such a tool: looking into the various facets of active ageing it measures how much of the potential of older men and women to contribute to economy and society is used and to what extent their living environment enables them to do so. This contribution is made via being employed, volunteering, providing informal care, living independently (not requiring care or financial support), staying healthy etc. — a variety of ways captured by the indicators of the index.

AAI is a rather simple tool: it includes 22 indicators grouped into four domains: Employment, Social participation, Independent, healthy and secure living, and Capacity and enabling environment for active ageing (see figure below). All the indicators are measured separately for men and women, yielding a perspective on the gender gap in active ageing. The index values range from 0 to 100, higher values indicating higher extent of realising the potential of older men and women, while lower values indicate a larger potential for gaining via suitable policies. However, 100 points cannot be considered a realistic or desirable goal to be achieved, since most of the indicators cannot be expected to achieve 100, e.g. employment rate, care provision etc.



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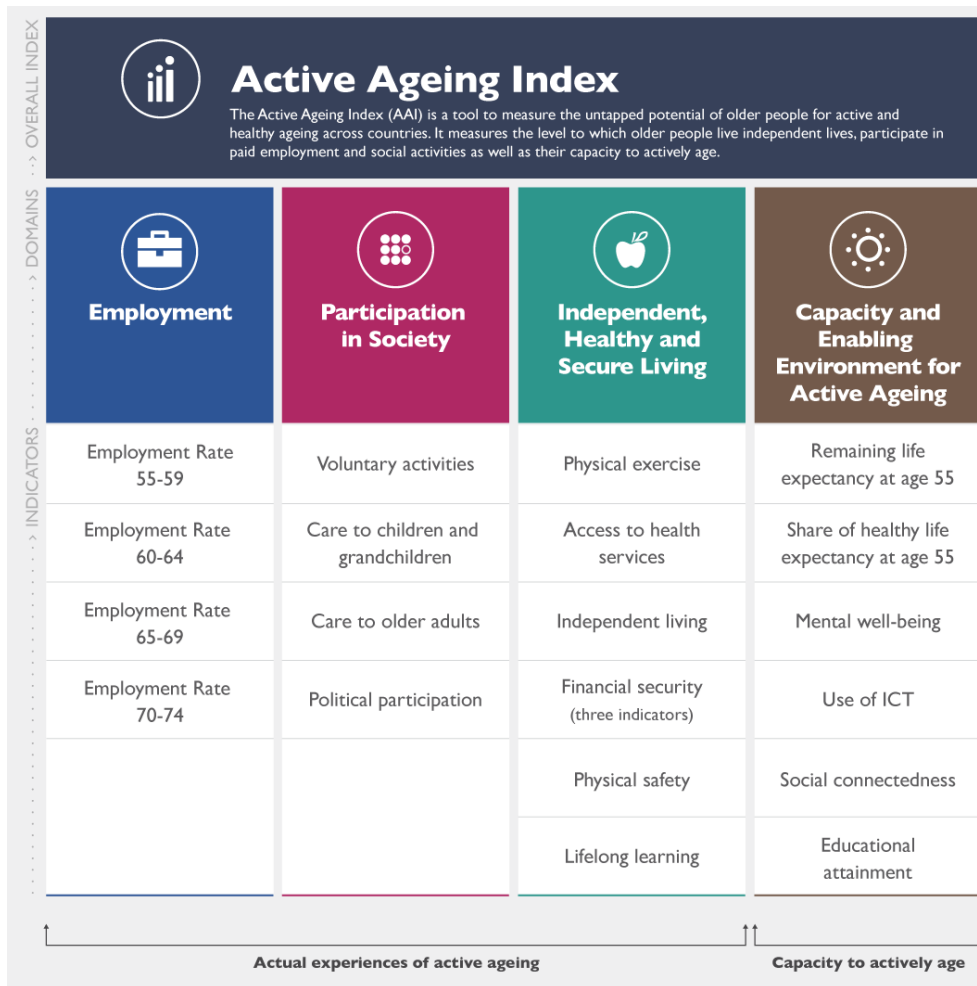
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Active Ageing Index includes four domains and 22 indicators



The index depicts the current situation and highlights the areas where future gains can be made. For example, a country might have high results in one domain, e.g. employment, with relatively low results in another one, e.g. independent living, thus signalling that it needs particular attention.

Originally calculated for the European Union (EU) countries at national level, AAI offers a flexible framework which can be and is applied in different contexts: in non-EU countries and at subnational levels. A vibrant research community supports the AAI methodology and its applications.

For more information on the index please visit

<http://www1.unece.org/stat/platform/display/AAI/Active+Ageing+Index+Home>

About the project: the AAI project is run jointly by the Population Unit of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and European Commission's Directorate General for Employment,





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Social Affairs and Inclusion (DG EMPL). The index was developed and first presented in 2012. The project benefits from the advice of the informal Expert Group on AAI which brings together researchers, statisticians, government and civil society representatives. The project is currently under its third phase, which will continue through April 2019.

Austria

Toolkit for community-based home care for staff and volunteers

The trend towards an ageing population is likely to pose social and economic challenges to individuals, communities and public authorities as the need for health- and care services will increase.

In order to address this issue and support the development of high-quality home care services and improve the quality of life of people in need of care and assistance, an international working group with representatives from the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies and a variety of National Societies compiled a set of minimum standards for home helpers and home care volunteers in community-based home care services.

The Community-based home care toolkit comprises four volumes.

Volume 1: describes minimum standards for provision and organization of community-based home care of older people, those with disabilities and those living with chronic disease, many of whom may also be older people.

<https://www.redcross.org.rs/media/1892/organization-and-provision-of-community-based-home-care.pdf>

Volume 2: focuses on the knowledge and skills required by people working in the organization and provision of community-based home care. These include knowledge of the ageing process, good communication, handling conflict, mapping needs, organizing support, cooperating with others, recognition of possible violence or abuse and what to do if violence or abuse are suspected

<https://www.redcross.org.rs/media/1893/basic-skills-and-knowledge-in-community-based-home-care.pdf>

Volume 3 and 4: are training programmes for volunteers in home care and home helpers based on volume 1 and 2. The training for volunteers is designed to be facilitated by an experienced member of staff. The home helper training, which is much longer and more rigorous, is designed for facilitation by a professional trainer in the field of home care.

<https://www.redcross.org.rs/media/1894/training-programme-for-home-care-volunteers.pdf>



Training curriculum for home helpers

Based on Volumes 1 and 2
of the Community-based home care toolkit

www.ifrc.org
Saving lives, changing minds.

 International Federation
of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies



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<https://www.redcross.org.rs/media/1895/training-curriculum-for-home-helpers.pdf>

Among the professionals working on the minimum standards were also the professionals working on TASIOP project, from Austrian Red Cross, Red Cross of Serbia and Red Cross of Montenegro.

Activities of National Partners on the Project

Serbia

Training workshop: Evidence based advocacy

As stipulated in the TASIOP project plan, the members of HumanaS network have completed a training focusing on evidence based advocacy. The training was organised in the Belgrade Palace Hotel and facilitated by Ms. Snezana Stojanovic. This is in line with one of the project objectives: successful advocacy with decision makers alongside and on behalf of older persons, for changes that will enable them to better take part in public life and improve their social participation at all levels.

The focus during the training was on clarifying importance and techniques related to the concept of public advocacy and verifiable evidence as standard in the advocacy activities of the HumanaS member organisations. The participants discussed the concepts of identifying the problem as well as the decision makers to be targeted by the advocacy and a triangular analysis concept was explained, showing how it ensures the relevance of the advocacy topic as well as indicates the needed preliminary data collection activities.

The participants were then given time to work in groups and, based on the previously in this project done situation analysis, decide on the problems that may be selected as topics of advocacy campaign to follow



in the project. The topics discussed were assessed by their relevance to older people but also in relation to the known next steps in the Serbian EU accession process seeing as how these may serve as catalysts or obstacles for advocacy activities. Possible political solutions at different levels were discussed as was how the advocacy conducted by a network of civil society organisations can efficiently contribute to attaining these solutions. By the end of the training the network members agreed on the topic of the future advocacy campaign and on

the following steps in collecting preliminary data and establishing contacts as to proceed with the evidence collection that the advocacy campaign in the next two years will be based on.

Council for Intergenerational Solidarity

The government of Serbia established a Council for Intergenerational Solidarity in January 2017 to promote the year of intergenerational solidarity. The HumanaS network member, the Red Cross of Serbia



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and the friend of the network, Volunteering Service Zvezdara have been accepted as its members and during 2017 they will through their inputs support the Council to think beyond the basic level and tackle the issues important for ageing society in Serbia: transfer of knowledge (interactive and computer technologies knowledge for older people, digital inclusion but also mentoring of students especially during entry exams for high schools and universities) as well as labour market (flexible employment/ retirement solutions). Inspired by study visit to Slovenia, HumanaS network members have suggested to the Minister of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs establishing of intergenerational centres in Serbia in 2017.

Population strategy, initial meeting

Serbian Minister Prof Dr Slavica Djukic Dejanovic organised a meeting for civil society partners on 17 November to enhance the joint efforts on design of the National Population Strategy. The meeting was attended by two HumanaS network member-organisations: The Red Cross of Serbia and Amity. Meetings like these contribute to the improvement of position of older people and their inclusion of public policies.

Gender analysis in Serbia



On 21 December 2016 in the Belgrade EU Info Centre a presentation of Gender Analysis of Serbia was held. This analysis is meant to be an instrument to build a society of equals. Speakers at the presentation were: Nicolas Bizel from the European Union Delegation in Belgrade, Branka Draskovic, Advisor in the Coordination Body for gender equality of the Government of Serbia and Dr Mirjana Dokmanovic, expert for gender equality. The event was moderated by Marina Rakic of the EU Info Centre.

The analysis was done by Dr Mirjana Dokmanovic and it provides information and data necessary for better planning of activities and public policies aiming to achieve gender equality at all levels. It is a fact that women with 51.3% in the population present “the biggest minority” or “silent majority” and gender inequality can still be found in all segments and sectors of the society. Thus it is necessary to continue working on achieving gender equality and this work includes both strengthening and sensitising women themselves. It is important to note that this gender analysis recognises older women as persons exposed to multiple discrimination and the publication “Introduction to ageing and human rights of older people: Pilot research study on financial elder abuse” funded by the Delegation of European Union (November 2013 – November 2014) made a significant contribution to understanding the position of older women in the gender analysis of Serbia. Natasa Todorovic of the Red Cross of Serbia attended the presentation.

Older people in rural areas: presenting the research results in Serbia

Red Cross of Serbia and the Commissioner for Protection of Equality had a press conference on 26 December to present the results of a research study “Older People in Rural Areas”. The research was conducted in 2016 with the support of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) office in Belgrade.



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The press conference featured the following speakers: Prof Dr Dragan Radovanovic, President of the Red Cross of Serbia, Marija Rakovic (UNFPA), Brankica Jankovic, Commissioner for Protection of Equality, Gradimir Zajic, sociologist and Natasa Todorovic, Red Cross of Serbia.

The research was looking to explore the following topics: the quality of living of older people in rural areas; accessibility of services in rural areas, especially healthcare and social welfare as well as other public services such as transportation; the needs of older people in rural areas; creating optimum recommendations to improve the quality of living for older people in rural areas while providing examples of good practice and ensuring that older people have a voice that is heard.

The first activity was organising five focus group interviews with 56 older persons from 5 Serbian municipalities. Their replies have served as basis to design a research questionnaire. The research was then performed between August and November 2016 in different Serbian regions using a representative random sample of 685 persons over the age of 65 living in rural areas (in both developed and underdeveloped areas). The questionnaire has 7 thematic areas with 70 questions in total. In the northern part of Serbia (Belgrade, Vojvodina province) the research involved 189 older people from rural areas while in the southern part (Sumadija, Eastern Serbia, Southern Serbia, Western Serbia) it involved 496 older persons from rural areas. The average interview time was 46 minutes and the most frequent time was 30 minutes.



The sample featured 56% of women. Average age of the interviewee was 74.6 with 10% over the age of 85. 41% of the interviewees have not completed primary school and 59% describe themselves as farmers and housewives.

The research provided insight in the challenges older people, their families and communities face in rural areas with lower population density. These challenges

include: lowered access to healthcare and social welfare services; low motivation of professional care providers to work in rural areas; decreasing networks of informal care as a result of migration to urban areas; insufficient knowledge of available services and granted rights; low recognition of mental conditions (depression, dementia); unprofitability of providing transport services in areas with lower population density; limited access to means of transport adapted to the needs of older people; social isolation; lack of and low access to social and cultural activities and opportunities for learning; lack of housing solutions and equipment supporting independent living.



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For older people in rural areas the risk of social inclusion is higher than risk of losing functional capacity to take care of oneself. Majority of older people in rural areas (51%) do not participate in community activities – and only 45% can do it without difficulties. This is important to have in mind in context of advocacy activities related to social inclusion and the need to find ways to activate and include older people in rural areas.

The data collected through the research and the identified challenges will yield meaningful recommendations to improve the quality of life and preserve dignity of older people living in rural areas.

Albania

Sharing the Slovenia experience in Tirana



As reported in the last issue of the newsletter, the study visit to Slovenia included participation of two distinguished members of the Union of Albanian Pensioners: Faik Xhani, president of the Union and Flora Agolli. To share the experience collected during that visit, the Union of Albanian Pensioners organized a meeting in November at the Social Center for Older People in Tirana. Approximately 150 older people participated in this event, mostly members of the Union.

Director of the center, Mrs. Alma Lleshi, a very active contributor of MOSHA network, supported the activity with venue and refreshments. Among the invitees were also deputy Mayor of Tirana Mrs. Brunilda Paskali and three administrators of Mini Municipalities 8, 9 and 11 in Tirana. Mr. Xhani and Mrs. Agolli, presented the Slovenia experience to the attentive and curious audience. During the discussion proposals were made that some of the activities and structures observed during the visit in Slovenia should serve as a model to be followed in Tirana. Representatives of Tirana City expressed the support for older people and promised to influence prioritizing the topics related to third age in the policymaking agenda of the Municipality. The officials in the meeting promised to increase the number of activities dedicated to older people in Tirana for the year 2017. As it is confirmed already by the director of Social center for Older People, Ms. Alma Lleshi, the number of activities for this year was increased to 40.



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TASIOP project coordinator's monitoring visit

As part of the duties of the Taking Action on Social Inclusion of Older People project coordinator, the Red



Cross of Serbia is tasked with visiting all the project partners and observe project implementation in all five countries in the region. Additionally, if any problems arise during implementation the Red Cross of Serbia is obliged to assist the partner in solving these problems, through offering examples of good practice from other project countries and the like. The third monitoring visit was organised on 8 and 9 January 2017 with the project coordinators Natasa Todorovic and Milutin Vracevic visiting Tirana, Albania. Albanian Association of Geriatriy and Gerontology (AAGG), the coordinator of the project in Albania, was hosting the visit.

The meetings during the visit took place at the premises of MOSHA network. This network has been founded more than a decade ago, it is being coordinated by AAGG and its members are civil society organisations focusing on ageing and working with older people. The primary goal of the network is advocating for improved quality of life of older people, protection of older people's human rights, including ageing and older people in all relevant public policies as well as creating positive image of older people. A special segment of their advocacy activities is about facilitating older people's access to different public services.



The meetings were headed by AAGG representatives (Alban Yili, Gentiana Qirjako) and featured also representatives of Albanian Association for Integration of Older People (Vice-President Liri Tahula), Albanian Association of Demographers (their president Ilia Telo and their member Kico Zoso) as well as the General Union of Pensioners (both their president Faik Xhani and the president of the Tirana office Enver Hasa as well as two members of their leading committee: Flora Agolli and Velo Cfarku). The coordinators discussed the project with the partners about the implementation so far, about the activities and plans for the coming year, as well as the finances on the project.

During the meetings the MOSHA members described their intense involvement with the production of the five year report related to the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, their assistance to the Ministry on data collection and presentation of examples of good practice. This is the



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first time the civil sector was involved in preparation of this report and it turned out to be a successful model of cooperation.

Also, in the TASIOP project so far, the Albanian partners have had intense advocacy activities related to decreasing the costs of public transportation services for persons over the age of 65 as well as to including the persons over the same age in the national programme of annual free of charge health check-ups. This latter activity will significantly contribute to improving older people's health status which will in turn be beneficial to them being more socially active and included at different levels. Within the scope of these activities the advocating partners have met even the Albanian prime minister and discussed the problems older people face with him.

The general impression is that MOSHA network is a rather specific entity, being comprised mostly of organisations of active older people. This gives their activities the quality of authenticity – their representatives know what older people need and their efforts to protect older people's human rights are fuelled by real knowledge of needs and capacities of this population group. Additionally this network has strong academic and research background which increases its advocacy capacities.

Bosnia and Herzegovina

Advocacy workshop for members of “For Ageing with Dignity” network

Members of the national network of civil society organisations For Ageing with Dignity, coordinated by Osmijeh NGO have successfully organised a two day workshop in Sarajevo. Conducted on 27 and 28 December with 20 participants, the workshop covered the basics of public advocacy, the techniques and



good practices as well as the specifics of advocating with and on behalf of older people. The workshop participants discussed the possible topics of the research that will follow as the next activity in the TASIOP project and the results of which will be the basis for the advocacy activities in the later stages of the project. Plans for the next year have been discussed and agreed on. This workshop also involved a one day network meeting where two new organisations joined the network.

Seminar on improving the situation of older persons in Bosnia and Herzegovina, organized by the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) in collaboration with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the UN Secretariat (UNDESA), 2 November 2016, Sarajevo.

The aim of the seminar was to inform participants of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA), which represents a broad framework for policy to improve the position of older people in society and their contribution to economic and social development processes.



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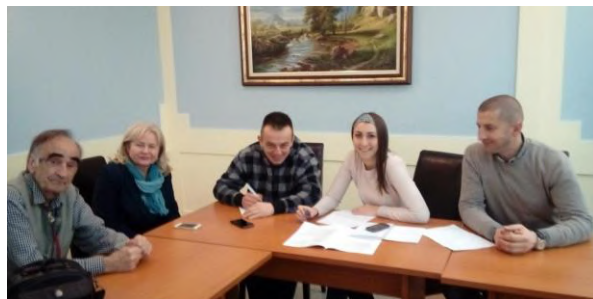


The participants were addressed by an international expert on aging Dr Alexander Sidorenko, with the aim of drawing attention to the importance of taking into account the demographic change into development policies and strategies in Bosnia and Herzegovina, especially from the standpoint of making social policies for older people.

Assistant Director of the Institute of Public Health of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina Dr Aida Ramic presented a report on the impact of the Centres for healthy aging on older people.

The seminar was opened with an exhibition of photographs, showing the living conditions of older people in Bosnia and Herzegovina.

The seminar brought together representatives of the Ministry for Human Rights and Refugees of Bosnia and Herzegovina, the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy of the Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina, Ministry of Health and Social Protection of Republika Srpska, the entity statistical institutes and the Agency for Statistics of Bosnia and Herzegovina, as well as representatives of the Council of Ministers and the Entity governments and institutions and international organizations and non-governmental organizations.



Representatives from Osmijeh NGO, the organisation who participated in the development of MIPAA and who has been advocating for its implementation in Bosnia and Herzegovina since 2002, have also participated in the Seminar and contributed by sharing their longstanding insight into the situation of older people in Bosnia and Herzegovina. Concerns about insufficient commitment by the relevant stakeholders and right bearers to respond to the needs of older people and ageing of the population in

general were raised by Osmijeh. The Seminar was an opportunity to present the TASIOP project and to further develop the network of relevant stakeholders who needs to be addressed or more actively involved in the efforts of the Network "For Ageing with Dignity".

Macedonia

Announcement of a Home care project implemented by Humanost NGO

Starting from April 2017 Humanost NGO will be delivering home care services to approximately 120 older people living in the Skopje municipality Centar.

The project will last for six months and three times per week each beneficiary will be receiving two hours of professional care from a certified caregiver. The team delivering the services will be comprised of 15 professional caregivers, one social worker and a coordinator.



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This activity is financially supported by the Centar municipal budget and is an example of the work done on establishing public-civil partnership in Macedonia.

Over the past period Macedonian Red Cross and Humanost NGO have established good cooperation with government institutions at national level. Both organisations are members of several national level bodies on a broad range of topics, from health to emergencies and this contributes to them being involved in the planning and development of national documents in the areas of health and social care.



In framework of the TASIOP project, implementation of its activities is supported by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. Their representatives participated in the meetings of the InkluzivaM network, actively contributing to the discussions and providing inputs for the planning. Other public and international institutions and organisations such as the Skopje Town Council, national Institute for Public Health, national Institute for Social

Affairs and UNFPA have also supported the work of the network through presence at meetings and providing inputs to planning.

The Institute for Social Affairs in particular is a public institution with which Macedonian Red Cross and Humanost have had close cooperation in the implementation of activities in the social sphere over the years implementing different activities with various vulnerable population. This institution will remain one of the closest public partners for the duration of TASIOP project.

Montenegro

A new service in Montenegro: telephone support for older people

A new service was introduced in the Home care project of providing support to older people in their homes, that the Red Cross of Montenegro currently implements with the support of the Italian Red Cross. The service provides support via telephone to older people from rural areas in four municipalities in Montenegro: Plav, Cetinje, Berane and Niksic.

This kind of support is intended for beneficiaries above the age of 65, who live in single households, substandard living conditions and away from the cities and who live with different social and health problems. Support via telephone for these people is provided by trained Red Cross volunteers who are already active in the Home care programme. Regular contact with a beneficiary is now kept via weekly telephone calls (or, in many cases more frequently, depending on the beneficiary's needs). In addition to providing psychosocial support through conversation, volunteers assess current needs of the beneficiaries and decide on what, if any action is needed. The actions encompass providing basic and timely information on relevant institutions and organizations, or available support services and



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organization of visits to beneficiaries. Since these areas are difficult to reach, especially during winter months, Red Cross volunteers agree with the beneficiaries on the exact dates and times. The main objective of this type of support is to provide immediate, human and psychological support, as well as to let the older people know that they are not forgotten and that they can rely on the Red Cross volunteers being available for telephone conversations. Also, special arrangements are made to allow the beneficiaries to contact the volunteers in emergency situations such as instances of abuse or sudden illness.

Advocacy, project writing and resource mobilisation training in Montenegro

The Red Cross of Montenegro used the last working days of 2016 to organise two training sessions for its staff and volunteers active in its projects focusing on older people. Involving 12 municipal Red Cross branches and more than 30 staff and volunteers the training was predominantly meant to be a capacity building exercise to enhance sustainability of the long running Red Cross of Montenegro Home Care project for older people currently supported by Italian Red Cross.

Over two days per session the attending staff and volunteers learned about the project proposal design and writing techniques starting with situation analysis and data collection in local communities and continuing into elements of the project cycle, the presentation of the proposed action as well as the necessary knowledge of the donor environment and correct ways of following the calls for proposals and applying to them.

Additionally, in an effort to expand the palette of activities at local level and feature advocacy complementary to service delivery, a session was devoted to advocacy, examples of good practice and the ways the Red Cross works with and on behalf of older people to protect and enhance their rights. The final training segments went into more detail about the existing sources of funding and the ways to access them, involving skills and successful resource mobilisation techniques.



The training was designed in such a way that the participants had ample time to discuss their own experiences, analyse past mistakes and compare experiences. Most of the participants, it turned out, face very similar obstacles in relation to advocating with and on behalf of older people, differing only in scale.

Similar training for three additional branches of the Red Cross of Montenegro was organised at the end of January 2017.



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Monitoring visit to Montenegro

In its role of the coordinator of the Taking Action on Social Inclusion of Older People project, the Red Cross of Serbia is tasked with visiting all leading partner organisations on the project in the region and monitor the implementation of activities but also offer assistance and support if there are challenges. The second in the series of these visits was organised last week, on 16 November when the representatives of the coordination team visited the Red Cross of Montenegro and Dignitas network. The meeting was organised in the Red Cross premises and alongside Dignitas network members also present were representatives of the Institute for Social and Child Protection and the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection. On behalf of the coordination team, Natasa Todorovic and Dr Milutin Vracevic of the Red Cross of Serbia participated in the meeting whereas the Red Cross of Montenegro was represented by Jelena Sofranac and Igor Jokanovic, the project coordinating team in Montenegro.

Ivana Boskovic of the Ministry of Labour and Social Protection presented the activities and services for older people provided by the Ministry as well as its plans for the near future. At the moment there are 109 gerontomaids in Montenegro working with approximately 1000 older beneficiaries, two retirement homes as well as a day care centre for older people in Niksic. There are plans to develop two more retirement homes in Pljevlja and Niksic. Aware of the need for intergenerational solidarity, the Ministry also developed a digital inclusion programme.



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The Red Cross of Montenegro also has a digital inclusion programme, focused on rural areas of the municipality of Mojkovac. This project helped older people remaining in their rural homes learn how to use Skype to get in touch with their family members as well as helped family members provide some remote assistance and support to them.

Dragana Djurovic from the Institute for Social and Child protection spoke about licensing gerontomaid services and training that is planned to be provided by her institute. Branko Milosevic from the Association of Pensioners stressed that healthy, active ageing is one of the essential priorities of his Association and that only joint work can yield results in combating stigma, prejudice and stereotypes about older people. Montenegro has 115,000 pensioners, 85,000 of them over the age of 65 and one of the objectives of the Association is to preserve their physical and psychological health as well as to support the most vulnerable ones through subventions and benefits. Representative of Nase doba NGO, Vesna Laktus also spoke of digital inclusion of older people as an important asset in their future access to and exercise of their rights.

Although Dignitas network was only recently formed, there is cohesion in its thinking and a sense of ownership, as well as motivation to work together in addressing the identified problems of older Montenegrins.





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The main message from the meeting is that networks need to expand and enlist new members that can bring fresh perspectives to existing problems as well as that it is very useful to have representatives of relevant ministries present.

Announcements:

As the Government of Serbia on 14 February announced the year 2017 as the year of intergenerational solidarity, the Red Cross of Serbia is announcing a series of intergenerational debates in the regional centres across the country. This will be opportunity for members of different generations to publicly discuss social cohesion and ways to achieve it through mutual effort.

This publication has been produced with the assistance of the European Union through the CIVIL SOCIETY FACILITY AND MEDIA PROGRAMME 2014-2015. The contents of this publication are the sole responsibility of the Taking Action on Social Inclusion of Older People project partners and can in no way be taken to reflect the views of the European Union.



Црвен крст на Република Македонија
Kryqi i kuq i Republikës së Maqedonisë
Macedonian Red Cross



Crveni krst Crne Gore