

Report on the Fulfilment of the Regional Implementation Strategy of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in the Czech Republic

2012 - 2017

Contents

PART I	1
Summary	1
General information	2
1. Situation of Ageing at the National Level	3
2. Method	4
PART II	6
1. National Measures and the MIPAA/RIS Implementation Process	6
Objective 1: Longer employment is supported and the ability to work is maintained.....	6
Objective 2: Participation, non-discrimination and social inclusion of older people is supported.	7
Objective 3: Dignity, health and independence in old age are promoted and protected	9
Objective 4: Intergenerational solidarity is maintained and strengthened	12
2. Conclusions and future priorities	13
Annexes	14

PART I

Summary

This report was prepared in cooperation and on the basis of the documents of the relevant ministries of the Czech Republic, regional governments, Czech Statistical Office, Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs, Government Council for Older persons and Population Ageing and experts who work in the area of upcoming demographic changes. The report was also prepared by non-profit organisations, which offered the experience of their projects and their direct work with older persons, either in the form of personal meetings or by submitting annual reports or reports on their activities. We also heard the opinions and experience of older persons themselves through research projects, representatives of older person organizations and clubs, meetings of Government Council for Older persons and Population Ageing and professional conferences.

The commitments of MIPAA/RIS were met during 2012-2016 through the National Action Plan ("NAP") promoting positive ageing for the period 2013-2017, whose valid period is almost identical to the MIPAA/RIS evaluation period. Evaluation of the NAP implementation is conducted regularly every year in June, through the evaluation report, in which all the stakeholders of the Czech Republic are involved. Due to the NAP effective implementation, this plan was updated on 31/12/2014. Supplementing the eighth General Chapter of the existing seven-specific was the most prominent feature of this update. This chapter focuses exclusively on meeting the NAP as a whole, and on its basis, contact points for ageing have been created at the ministries,

measurable indicators for NAP individual measures have been formed, claims to financial resources have been applied, etc.

NAP evaluation reports are very complex documents informing about individual steps, which have been taken for older persons in various areas of life by different actors. Only the sum of these incremental steps shall enable us to see an overall shift in the ageing problems. Regarding the Czech Republic, for the period 2012-2016, we can see the following three significant global shifts:

- development of ageing policy in the Czech Republic, establishing this topic into wider layers of the public, establishing the Department of Ageing Policy within the structure of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, introduction of subsidies for pro-older person and older person organizations and subsidies for regional autonomies.
- shift in the rights of older persons – the so-called consumer ombudsman has been introduced, strengthening a legal protection of victims – older persons has been proposed, free vaccination against pneumococcal infections for older persons has been introduced
- increase in pensions, modification of pension adjustment rules, cheaper medicines, increasing the availability of social and health care

In the future, the preparation of the national document to promote active ageing as the main document guaranteeing the fulfilment of the MIPAA/RIS obligations, needs to be further improved in terms of responsibility for its implementation, its efficient funding negotiated in advance and also in terms of raising awareness and offering this topic of the political discourse.

In the future, it is also necessary to improve the dissemination of ageing policy at regional and local governments of the Czech Republic, which are closer to older persons, among others, to acquaint them with the international context and create there awareness on the connection of local strategies with a national strategy and subsequently with MIPAA/RIS. And for that reason, from 2017 to 2020, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs shall administer the project from the European Social Fund, whose aim shall be the implementation of ageing policy at the regional level.

Last but not least, we would like to link older persons and family issues more conceptually, also in terms of “the extended family” – community. A prepared document of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs – Family Policy Concept is the beginning of these efforts, which targets not only on families with small children, but on the support of family care in general and support of care for older persons. The main objective of these efforts is to enable older persons to live longer in their own environment and help to improve intergenerational relationships both inside and outside families.

General information

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The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Department of Ageing Policy, is a national contact point for the issue of ageing.

In the Czech Republic, the document “National Action Plan Supporting Positive Ageing for the period 2013-2017” is valid and approved by the government, which is stated in the annex.

1. Situation of Ageing at the National Level

Demographic development

According to available data, in the Czech Republic, there were a total of 1,636,933 people over 65 as of 01/01/2011, as of 31/12/2015, their number increased to 1,932,412.¹ In five years, thus the number of these people increased by nearly 300,000 and according to the predictions this trend shall further continue – the proportion of older persons in the Czech Republic shall grow. Currently, they represent nearly 16%, in 20 years it could be nearly a quarter and in 30 years a third of the society. Most persons in the older person age can be expected closely before 2060, when it may exceed 3 million people.²

With a rising proportion of older persons in the Czech population the average age is also growing, which reached 41.3 years in 2013.³ As of 31/12/2015, the average age rose to 41.9 years⁴. Growth in the average age is expected to continue, in 2050 it is estimated to be already 48.8 years.⁵

Life expectancy at birth in 2008 was 74 years in men, 80 years in women. In 2015, it shall increase to 75.8 years in men, 81.4 years in women.

Table 1 Characteristics of the age composition of the population, medium alternative⁶

Population in thousands aged:	2011	2021	2031	2041	2051
0-14 years	1,522	1,613	1,332	1,231	1,262
15-64 years	7,328	6,710	6,525	5,990	5,342
65+	1,637	2,205	2,516	2,876	3,174

Social and economic development

In the first quarter of 2012, a total of 2,179,100 persons over 60 of the total of 2,451,400 were economically inactive (88.9%). A total of 8,700 persons were unemployed in this age category and a total of 272,200 were employed, which means that about 11.1% of persons over 60 years worked or wanted to work.⁷

Due to the ageing of the population, in the first quarter of 2016, the absolute number of people over 60 increased by more than a third (by 106,900),⁸ so it reached 2,657,900 persons. Out of them, 2,267,200 persons were economically inactive, i.e. their share dropped to 85.3%. 11,600 persons in this age category were unemployed, 379,100, were employed, which represents an increase of their share to 14.7%. Persons aged 60+ accounted for a total of 62.8% of all economically inactive inhabitants in the CR aged 15 and over⁹.

In the first quarter of 2016, a total of 332,300 persons were employed for shorter working hours, out of them 94,500 (28.4% were over 60)¹⁰. Of all employed persons over 60, almost a quarter used working for shorter working hours. In 2012, this percentage was similar.

The average old-age pension in 2012 amounted to CZK 10,740, in 2016 it is CZK 11,400.¹¹ The increase amounts to CZK 660.

¹ CSO 2011. <https://www.czso.cz/documents/10180/20555889/400312001.pdf/dea31e20-09a1-4b6e-8c54-7ceec6587fdf?version=1.0>

CSO 2015. <https://www.czso.cz/documents/10180/32853339/1300641607.pdf/3f4610ee-1bb0-49ea-8a04-7d62276e517e?version=1.1>

² CSO 2013. <https://www.czso.cz/csu/czso/projekce-obyvatelstva-ceske-republiky-do-roku-2100-n-fu4s64b8h4>

³ CSO 2013.

<https://www.czso.cz/documents/10180/20567167/40201302.pdf/8748c8fb-f724-481c-ae68-67070256f5ef?version=1.0>

⁴ CSO 2015.

<https://www.czso.cz/documents/10180/32853339/1300641607.pdf/3f4610ee-1bb0-49ea-8a04-7d62276e517e?version=1.1>

⁵ See note 3.

⁶ See note 2.

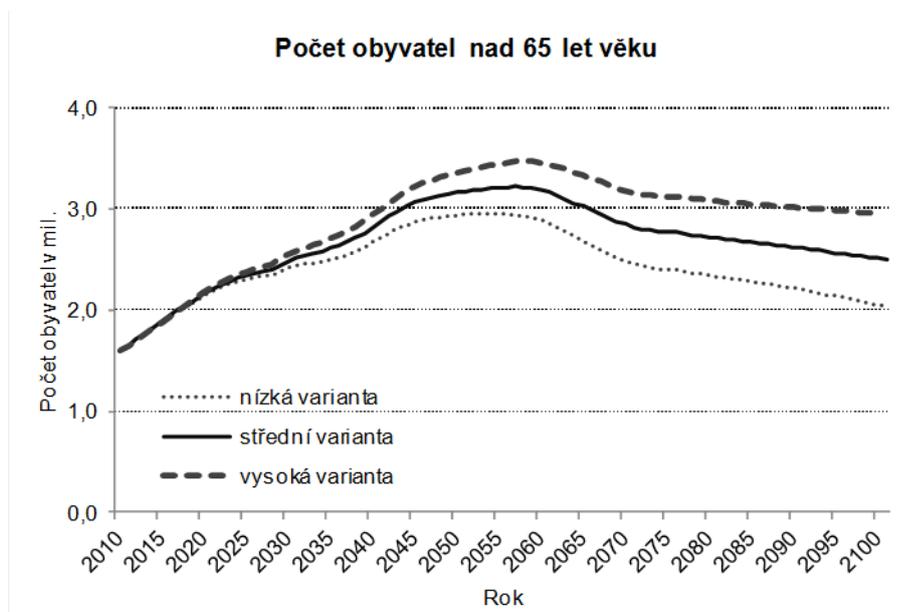
⁷ CSO 2012. <https://www.czso.cz/documents/10180/20552553/310112q103.pdf/83bfe977-2092-466e-b440-e112aac6455d?version=1.0>

⁸ CSO 2016. <https://www.czso.cz/documents/10180/34624843/25012816q103.pdf/e2d53c28-7c15-4fd4-b8f7-a140ce3f8474?version=1.0>

⁹ Those are 3.6 million.

¹⁰ Source see Note 8.

From people receiving the pension, 6-7% are below the poverty line, which represents about 150,000 people. It is mainly influenced by the fact whether the person lives alone, if it is the woman or man (women are at risk twice as much), age (persons under 65 years of age are in half the risk of poverty than persons over 65), education and health (poor health increases the risk twice as much).¹²



Počet obyvatel nad 65 let věku	Number of inhabitants over 65 years of age
Počet obyvatel v mil.	Number of inhabitants in million
nízká varianta	low alternative
střední varianta	medium alternative
vysoká varianta	high alternative

2. Method

The Ministry of Labour as a national contact point for ageing problems prepared this report, besides using its own materials on this topic, using the materials delivered by other contact points, depending on their area of responsibility. These are usually relevant ministries, but also regional government and local governments of larger cities. These local governments deliver their materials on a voluntary basis. So it is with the addressed leading non-profit organizations working in this field. Provided materials include information on taken measures related to older persons, performed events or projects, etc.

Data collection is another important method for the assessment of meeting MIPAA/RIS obligations. The Czech Statistical Office is the main source of quantitative statistical data used in this document. The Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs supplied not only quantitative but also qualitative data¹³. The Czech Social Security Administration is the third major source of data, which has, among others, the statistics about old-age pension. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs had part of the data prepared by private agencies. This included for example interviews conducted directly within a selected sample of older person households.

¹¹ CSSA 2016.

http://www.cssz.cz/NR/rdonlyres/6ADB75F1-A150-4F43-BF56-1B97B30B76BE/0/prumerna_vyse_solo_duchodu_v_cr_v_casove_rade_1q_2016.pdf

¹² Research Institute for Social and Labour Affairs (RISLA) Income poverty and material deprivation of seniors: subjective and objective views Available from http://praha.vupsv.cz/Fulltext/vz_389.pdf

¹³ The public research institution, whose founder is the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs.

In terms of the fulfilment of the MIPAA/RIS commitments, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs ensured, among others, the following research projects:

Older persons – a social group endangered by executions, 2016

It was examined whether older persons are really a group endangered by executions. The statistics on old-age pensions executions of all older persons in the Czech Republic were the basic data for this survey. The research findings indicate that the executions of older persons are growing faster than demographic ageing and the increase in the absolute number of older persons. Other important findings include also the fact that executions appear most in so-called “young older persons”, who have probably already transferred their debts from their economically active life.

Selected aspects of care for older persons in terms of social inclusion, 2015

The economic situation of households, social environment, health situation of respondents, used and preferred social services and risk events contributing to social exclusion were inquired. People from 55 to 84 years old in municipalities up to 5,000 inhabitants were the target group, a total of 651 cases was analysed. Data from this survey are used, along with others, for setting older person policies, especially in rural areas. The survey shows that older persons wish most to spend their retirement period in good health (85%). Local or time availability of health services is therefore a key factor for them. Regarding housing, in the first place, older persons prefer to stay in their own household as long as possible with the support of the family (82%) or with the support of field social services (66%). Apart from the deterioration of their health, older persons are afraid of rising prices, especially housing costs.

Analysis of housing affordability and analysis of the current housing situation of older persons, 2016

Changes in affordability of housing and the housing situation of the older person population between 2005 and 2014 were inquired. 4,000 households were analysed (representing 41% of households in the Czech Republic). In 2014, older persons lived mainly in the ownership type of housing (80%), which is associated with lower costs than rental housing. This partially prevents them from the rise in housing costs. Outcomes of the survey, besides others, also demonstrate a low mobility in housing of older persons¹⁴. The survey also showed that older persons are the group endangered by the increased cost of living, however, in the monitored period, the growth in housing costs¹⁵ affected in a similar way both older persons and non-older person households. In 2014, 14% of older person households had the costs higher than 40% of disposable income (in 2005, it was 7% of households) and 17% of older person households had the housing costs between 30 and 40% of disposable income (in 2005, it was 13% of households). Within the reporting period, the number of households in which costs exceed 30% of income thus increased by more than 50%. In 2014, 27% of older person households considered housing costs a heavy burden. In terms of the ability to pay housing costs, the average older person household does not report major problems. The situation is different in the households in which the older person lives alone. The household of a older person – individual is burdened more by housing costs and the situation in which the cost of housing of the household exceeds the limit of 40% of disposable income occurs more often there. In the monitored period, the number of such households in the Czech Republic more than doubled. These are mainly women, who demonstrate the inequality in remunerating when compared to men¹⁶. That is transformed from a period of economic activity into lower income of female older persons¹⁷. Women also have higher life expectancy, so the partner households of older persons become households of individuals – older persons, who are endangered by poverty most. More detailed information is stated in the annex.

Survey of the quality of older person life, 2016

The main objective is to obtain comprehensive information from all areas of the life of older persons. Data are collected in the form of a questionnaire survey at 3,000 respondents and in the form of structured interviews. The results at the time of submission of this report are being prepared.

¹⁴ The length of living in one place is in seniors on average more than 30 years.

¹⁵ Housing costs rose faster than disposable income.

¹⁶ The gender pay gap in the Czech Republic currently amounts to 22%.

¹⁷ The gender pension gap in the Czech Republic currently amounts to 19%.

PART II

1. National Measures and the MIPAA/RIS Implementation Process

Objective 1: Longer employment is supported and the ability to work is maintained.

Regional individual projects of the Labour Office – promotion of employment of older persons (commitment 5)

The Employment Office implements the so-called regional individual projects (RIP) financed by the European Social Fund. It emphasises the problems of a particular region and various target groups, which enables selecting a suitable variety of tools and measures of active employment policy in the individual projects. These are different types of motivational activities, consultancy for finding a job on the labour market, retraining, mediation of employment, etc. The RIPs are focused among others on the target group of persons over 50. In the current programming period, CZK 1, 592 billion is allocated for these projects.

Socially useful jobs for older persons (commitment 5)

Older people are one of the groups of job seekers that are provided with special care during mediation of employment – the Employment Office of the Czech Republic focuses specific tools and measures of the active employment policy on job seekers over 50. A contribution for a reserved socially purposeful job, which the employer fills under the agreement with the Labour Office can be an example. In the case of employment of a person over 55, this contribution may be granted for 6 months up to 1 year and up to CZK 24 thousands per month. At the time of preparing this report, the amendment to Act No. 435/2004 Coll., on Employment, as amended, is in the legislative process, which extends the provision of the wage contribution under the instrument “a socially useful job” twice as much, i.e. up to 24 months. In certain cases, this extension may contribute to longer-lasting employment of job-seekers, especially if these are persons with accumulated handicaps hindering them to enter the labour market. The extension of the period of granting unemployment benefits for people over 50, from five to six months, is also part of this amendment.

Generation exchange of work experience (commitment 5)

In the operational programme “Human Resources and Employment” (OP HRE), three regional individual projects (RIP) were implemented “Generation Tandem – the promotion of generation alteration” in three different regions of the Czech Republic, aimed at ensuring the generation alteration and promoting intergeneration solidarity in the labour market through maintaining the employment of workers in pre-retirement age and strengthening the balance between qualification supply and demand in the labour market in people entering newly the labour market. The projects supported the transfer of work experience on people entering the labour market without previous experience. Concurrently, the projects encouraged longer employment of older people in pre-retirement age, whose productivity or activity may reduce within their working activity. The budget of the project in the Olomouc Region amounted to CZK 19,500,000.00; in Karlovy Vary Region CZK 12,238,000.00 and in the Central Bohemia Region CZK 30,021,050.00.

Age Management promotion (commitment 1, 2, 5)

Within the OP HRE Project “Implementation of Age Management in the Czech Republic”, an analysis was conducted and the activities implemented, which acquainted Czech employers with Age Management tools. Within the project, measuring the ability to work using the Work Ability Index tool was carried out at several employers from both the public and private sector. At the same time, through this project, the educational activity Age Management and promotion of ability to work was developed and tested as a pilot project. Within this activity, the training of managers of the Employment Office for work with older job seekers was carried out.

Retraining of older persons (commitment 1, 2, 5)

The OP HRE projects create conditions for retraining of older people, focusing on the acquisition of competences needed in the labour market. In 2015, a total of 24.9% of unemployed persons over 50 participated in retraining.

Newly set mechanism for increasing state pensions (commitment 3)

In the period of 2011-2016, the adjustment of pensions was exclusively determined by statistical indices based on Act No. 155/1995 Coll., on Pension Insurance. It did not allow the government to respond to a very low adjustment given by the index¹⁸. The amendment of Act No. 155/1995 Coll., on Pension Insurance, effective from 1 October 2016, introduces a new adjustment mechanism, whereby pensions shall be increased based on the government regulation. Thus, the government will be able to decide on a increase higher than the increase arising from the law, up to a limit of 2.7% of the average old-age pension.

Pensioners can again apply the discount to the taxpayer (commitment 1, 2, 5)

Based on the decision of the Constitutional Court dated 30 July 2014 pursuant to Act No. 586/1992 Coll., on Income Tax, working pensioners or pensioners running their business can again apply the discount to the taxpayer from the tax period for 2014.

Miners can retire earlier (commitment 1, 5)

The amendment to Act No. 582/1991 Coll., on Organization and Implementation of Social Security, as amended, takes into account the social and health impacts of demanding work of miners and also responds to a possible decline of mining in deep mines. The law allows everybody who has worked a certain number of shifts in underground mines to retire seven years earlier. A previously valid government regulation allowed due retiring only to miners who began to make their living by mining before 1993, the limitation is repealed by this amendment. The amendment of the Act is effective from 1 October 2016.

Introduction of the long-term nursing allowance (commitment 3, 9)

In the Czech Republic, nearly a third of people over 50 care for a close person.¹⁹ In the case of a sudden deterioration of the health condition of the person being cared for, a sudden need of increased care and employment is difficult to combine for informal family carers. Therefore, in 2016, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in 2016 sent to the legislative process a proposal of a long-term nursing allowance, which should help to improve the situation of informal carers, if there is a need to care for a close person, orient oneself in a new situation of the nursing commitment and, concurrently, contribute to improving the quality of life of persons dependent on care. The caring person should receive financial compensation of lost earnings in the amount of 60% of the daily assessment base for the period of three months. During this period, the carers should be also guaranteed the preservation of their job. Long-term nursing allowance should come into force in January 2018.

Objective 2: Participation, non-discrimination and social inclusion of older people is supported.

Research on the situation of older persons in small municipalities of the Czech Republic (commitment 1, 2)

Within the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic project "Selected aspects of care for older persons in terms of social inclusion", in 2015, the empiric research was carried out by the Research Institute for Labour and Social Affairs, whose aim was to obtain and evaluate information received from older persons living in municipalities with fewer than 5,000 inhabitants. The results of this survey shall be taken into account during

¹⁸ For example, in January 2016, the calculated amount of adjustment of the old-age pension was 40 crowns.

¹⁹ The SHARE survey in 2015, involving a representative sample of the population 50+, a total of 35% of respondents observed that they took care of someone outside their household in the past 12 months. SHARE is an international panel database of micro data on health, socio-economic status and social and family networks of people over 50. In the sixth wave (2014-2015) 6,000 respondents were interviewed.

the preparation of the new National Action Plan for the period of 2018-2022. More information about this research is already mentioned in the chapter "Method".

Strengthening the rights of older persons who become victims of crime (1, 2, 8)

In 2016, the government bill amending Act No. 45/2013 Coll., on Crime Victims, is at the end of the legislative process, whose main aim is, besides others, to enhance the protection of older people in the society. In practice, the amendment grants older persons who belong to the so-called particularly vulnerable crime victims groups certain special rights (e.g. the right for free professional assistance under specified conditions, right to prevent contact of the victim with the perpetrator, especially with regard to immediate visual contact, the right to carry out the interrogation by a trained person of the same or opposite sex according to the choice of the victim and some others) that should minimise the risk of secondary victimisation.

Promotion of cultural programmes for older persons (commitment 2, 6)

The support of older persons has been part of the announced conditions of grant proceedings of the Ministry of Culture to encourage amateur art activities since 2003. In 2015, 8 projects aimed directly at older persons in the amount of CZK 280,000 were thus promoted. Every year, the Ministry of Culture awards the Prize of the Ministry of Culture for lifetime, significant and long-time contribution in the field of non-professional art.

Within the grant proceedings for the Promotion of Regional Cultural Traditions, the subsidies are provided, among others, for the projects focusing on the important anniversaries of the birth of living personalities – older persons. In 2015, such projects were supported with the amount of CZK 1,675,000.

Grant proceedings for the promotion of cultural activities of disabled people and older persons supported cultural events in which disabled people and older persons presented their artistic activities for themselves and for the public. Long-term, systematic work in facilities, in which disabled people or older persons are placed permanently, or they attend them for a daily stay, also the activities that offer valuable use of leisure time of older persons, are a source of their personal fulfilment and social contacts, contribute to the prevention of social exclusion and isolation of older persons and are the opportunity to strengthen intergeneration contacts and solidarity, were and are supported. In 2015, the state subsidy in the total amount of CZK 5,291,000 was granted in the stated programme to support the implementation of 71 projects, of which 35 projects in the total supported amount of CZK 2,277,000 was aimed either directly at older persons or older persons accounted for a considerable part of their participants.

In all cultural institutions, discounts to handicapped person (HP) card holders and older persons are provided.

Determination of the maximum retirement age (commitment 1, 2, 4)

Since the third quarter of 2016, a bill amending Act No. 155/1995 Coll., the Pension Insurance is in the legislative process. The aim of the proposed regulation is to terminate the increase in the pension age without a final limit, which is currently specified by law, upon reaching the retirement age of 65 years or 67 years. Changes in the retirement age beyond this limit should already be prepared on the basis of the results of the reports on demographic development and development of the pension system within the regular intervals prepared by the CSO and the MoLSA.

Information system for monitoring social phenomena (commitment 4, 2)

In 2015, within the OP HRE project "Support of processes in social services", the Information system for monitoring social phenomena was created. The Information System has been launched and made available to selected employees of public administration and local government. Thereby the access of regional and local governments to relevant data was supported, which shall enable more efficient solutions of these phenomena and setting of prevention.

Objective 3: Dignity, health and independence in old age are promoted and protected

(Commitment 7 Regional Implementation Strategy)

Promotion of crime prevention and protection of the older person – consumer

In 2015, under the grant programme of the Ministry of Interior “Crime Prevention”, a number of projects focused on increasing safety and improving the quality of older person life was supported. The projects aimed directly at older persons in the total amount of CZK 547,000 were supported. The projects focused on older persons’ financial literacy, prevention of frauds committed on the Internet with the emphasis on older persons, prevention of unfair trade practices. The projects also supported training events and practical training focused on personal protection of older persons.

Publicising the issues of unfair trade practices on older persons

Through the network of CINESTAR multiplexes, preventive visuals of the Hradec Králové Region were disseminated. Funds of the Ministry of Interior supported the implementation of the project You will not Get us – Bastards. It is an innovative theatre performance that should teach older persons to reject assertive and initiative sellers through the interactive approach. Within cooperation of the Police with Dechovka Rádio various educational programmes were implemented. Cooperation with Dechovka Radio is for the Police of the Czech Republic important and, concurrently, unique as the high radio rating enables getting information and preventive recommendations to the large number of households of the oldest citizens.

The system of the defender of consumer rights has been introduced.

Since May 2013, the Ministry of Trade and Industry, implements a system of the so-called consumer ombudsman, which is the system, which with the help of the contact points on the trade offices and their cooperation with non-governmental organisations allows deceived and abused consumers, in particular, older persons, to enforce their consumer rights in efficient, quick way and free of charge. The defender of consumer rights has been introduced in particular in connection with promotion actions, at which, in many cases, goods or services were offered using the so-called unfair practices. In the period from January to December 2015, a total of 1,613 cases was registered by contact places, of which 967 cases were closed by providing advice or information, 510 cases by contacting a seller and 67 cases using by filing a motion.

Training of older persons in terms of consumer defence

The preventive actions of non-governmental organisations in the form of seminars and discussions focused, among others, on older persons also played an important role. In 2015, the seminars and talks for older persons were implemented for example by the Consumers Defence Association – Association (24 seminars, in which 1,397 older persons were trained) and the Consumer Protection Association in Moravia and Silesia (15 talks, which were attended by 546 older persons).

Inspections of promotional events and consumer loans

The Czech Trade Inspection (hereinafter “CTI”) focused long-term its attention on protecting older persons, especially in promotional events and consumer loans. In 2015, the CTI conducted 420 inspections of promotional events, of which 339, i.e. 80.71%, were with the findings. In 2015, the CTI imposed a total of 258 legitimate fines in the total amount of CZK 29.56 million for ascertained defects during promotional events. In the area of consumer loans, where just older persons represent one of the endangered groups, in 2015, 258 inspections were carried out, of which 105 (40.7%) were with the findings. A total of 176 legitimate fines in the total amount of CZK 5.54 million were imposed for the ascertained defects.

Creating more effective statistics in order to achieve greater security of older persons

Within the ESF project “With interdisciplinary education to increase safety of older persons” the Ministry of Interior has introduced changes in keeping records of the statistics of the Police of the Czech Republic. For the effective use of statistics data from different sources, in cooperation with the workers of the Police Presidium, we have managed to introduce a category of persons “65+” (until January 2015 there was only the category

“60 and over”) at the output reports of the crime statistics. Since January 2015, a category of persons “65+” has been introduced at statistics data of the anti-riot police concerning domestic violence²⁰. The category of persons over 65 is stated in the outputs by for example the Czech Statistical Office and the World Health Organization and thereby the data from the Czech Republic are compatible with European and world statistical outputs.

Training of older persons for emergency situations

In 2015, one of the goals of the Fire and Rescue Service (“FRS”) of the Czech Republic was the older persons’ preparation focused on the issue of protection for the human being under normal risks and emergency incidents. This preparation was implemented by all FRS regions. The preparation of older persons took place mainly in the form of lectures and talks through the “Older Persons College”, University of the Third Age or in cooperation with civic associations of older persons. At the same time, it proved successful to address the leadership of the municipality while addressing this specific group.

Free vaccinations for older persons against pneumococcal infections

Since October 2015, the vaccination and vaccine against pneumococcal infections has been paid for the insured persons over 65. By adopting this modification above, financial affordability of vaccination was disseminated when compared to the state when vaccination of adults against pneumococcal infections was covered only in persons placed in sanatoriums for permanently ill, older person houses, homes for disabled people and special regime homes and only in selected cases.

Reducing the value added tax on medicines

Reduction of the VAT on medicines based on the amendment to Act No. 235/2004 Coll., on the VAT (introduction of the third VAT rate), effective from the beginning of 2015, has brought the annual savings of more than CZK 390 million for citizens and CZK 2-3 billion for insurance companies according to the analysis of the State Institute for Drug Control.

Reducing the co-payment for medicines

The protective limit for co-payments for medicines for older persons amounts to CZK 2,500 per calendar year and significantly interferes into their income, which in 2016 amounts to an average of CZK 11,400 per month. A bill is now in the legislative process, which aims to reduce the participation of insured persons belonging to socially vulnerable groups of population benefits at medicines partly covered from the funds of public health insurance. The participation is proposed to be reduced, besides others, for persons from the age of 65 to CZK 1,000 per year, for persons over 70 years, including the calendar year in which they reached their 70th year of age, to CZK 500 per year. Thus negative impacts in income poverty of older persons shall significantly reduce and more resources shall be left for additional consumption of older persons.

Increasing the care allowance (also commitment 9)

On 1 August 2016, the non-insurance social benefit – care allowance increased, thanks to the approved amendment to Act No. 108/2006 Coll., on Social Services. The allowance increased at all levels of dependency by 10%, i.e. for people older than 18 to CZK 880 in degree I, to CZK 4,400 in degree II, to CZK 8,800 in degree III, and to CZK 13,200 in degree IV.

Talks for older persons on safety in traffic

In 2015, BESIP (the coordinating body for road safety) carried out the events focused on older persons in all regions of the Czech Republic. BESIP regional coordinators ensured talks for older persons in the Older person Clubs and Nursing Homes. Safety of older persons in traffic was the topic of these talks, especially the amendment to Act No. 361/2000 Coll., on Road Traffic, which besides others, imposes on road users to wear reflective accessories in reduced visibility. At all events, the brochures “Older persons in Transport” were

²⁰ In January 2015, only categories of persons “under 18 years” and “over 18 years” existed.

distributed to older persons and also reflective accessories (belts, bags, etc.) in the context of a running campaign (“We can see each other”)

Safety Programmes of the Ministry of Transport

Every year since 2012, the Ministry of Transport grants the contributions to fulfil the programmes aimed at increasing traffic safety and its accessibility to persons with limited mobility and orientation. In 2016, these contributions increased up to CZK 20 million per applicant.

Homes of peaceful and active old age for older persons living in rural areas

Using the experience of the French Mutual Agricultural Insurance Company and in cooperation with non-governmental organisations and the Ministry of Agriculture, the implementation of the KLAS projects commenced (peaceful and active old age) for rural older persons. The principle of KLAS homes is based on the French MARPA concept. The aim of the project is to enable rural older persons to live their old age with dignity and quality in their familiar and nearby rural environment and secure these older persons adequate quality and accessibility of health and social services. Implementation of construction: KLAS house in the village Chrástany in 2014 and the consultations are in progress regarding the second pilot project (KLAS homes in Temelín) – Expected implementation is planned for 2017.

Soft loans for the construction of rental housing for older persons

In 2015, the amendment of Government Regulation No. 284/2011 Coll. was prepared, on the Conditions for Providing and Using Financial Resources from the State Housing Development Fund in the Form of a Loan to Support the Construction of Rental Flats in the Czech Republic. The amendment updates the conditions for granting preferential loans for the construction of rental housing, among others, also for older persons.

Social Housing Concept

On 12 October 2015, the Concept of Social Housing in the Czech Republic from 2015 to 2025 was approved, which, among others, supports increasing the availability of housing for older persons without adequate housing and at risk of losing housing. The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, together with other ministries, prepares a law on social housing, in which older persons falling based on the income and assets test into the target group are defined as particularly vulnerable persons. These are persons that should receive special treatment under the act on social housing. It rests in the acceleration of the process of allocation of a social or affordable flat. These persons are also usually placed in social and affordable flats outside the system of social services. For the purposes of the prepared act on social housing, older persons and especially vulnerable persons mean persons receiving an old-age pension or persons meeting the requirement for reached age for the receipt of the old-age pension according to year of birth (also for persons who will reach the age for receiving the old-age pension, however they will not receive a claim for its receipt).

Training for judges, judicial officers and prison staff on the issue of older persons

Through the Judicial Academy, the authority for training staff in judiciary, the seminars that are intended for judges, prosecutors, court officials have been held: 1) Self-reflection in the advanced age 2) A older person as a victim of crime, 3) Psychology of interrogation of adults. The Academy of the Prison Service (part of the Prison Service of the Czech Republic – PS CR) is involved in the training of prison staff on the issue of the rights of older persons as a group with special problems and needs provided that the given issue is incorporated into courses of basic training for all employees of the PS CR, also within the accredited courses for social workers of the organizational units of the PS CR and lifelong learning courses.

Calculator for calculating the old-age pension

In order to increase awareness of future pension entitlements, from 2015, a person in pre-retirement age may request the so-called Overviews of Periods of Social Insurance through the Czech Social Security Administration (CSSA), which enable the applicants to check their entitlement documents in the CSSA’s records, substantiation

of the missing periods, if any, and thus accelerating and smoother future procedure of the pension claim. At the same time, the CSSA published on its website a pension calculator, which enables clients to carry out an informative calculation of pensions, including predictions up to five years ahead.

Objective 4: Intergenerational solidarity is maintained and strengthened

State-funded organization of the Ministry of Culture promotes intergenerational meetings (commitment 1)

The state-funded organization under the supervision of the Department of Museums and Galleries is the area of inter-generational meeting and place of other activities associated with older persons: They employ older persons, who share their experience with younger colleagues and actively participate in professional outputs museums and their presentation, in the operation of museums and galleries as volunteers or within the society for friends of museums and galleries. They hold art workshops organized for parents and children and grandparents and grandchildren; e.g. in 2015, the lecturing departments of the Collection of Modern and Contemporary Art and Collection of the 19th century Art carried out in the Trade Fair Palace 90 Open Workshops for children from the age of 1.5 to the age of 5, which were attended by 2,328 visitors, of which 10% were grandparents with their grandchildren, i.e. 233 persons.

Promoting volunteering as lifelong learning (commitment 1, 6)

Government Resolution of the Czech Republic No. 768 dated 30 September 2015 approved by a legislative intention of the act on volunteering in order to formalise volunteering as one of the forms of lifelong learning.

In the Czech Republic, mostly non-profit organizations are engaged in the development of volunteering, which already have a sophisticated system of its coordination, supervision and training.

Prize of the Government Council for Older persons and Population Ageing (commitment 1)

In 2013 and 2016, the Prize of the Government Council for Older persons and ageing population was awarded. The Government Council for Older persons and Ageing (hereinafter only "the Council") was established by the resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic in 2006 and it is a permanent advisory body to the Government on matters relating to older persons and population ageing. The Council awarded the Prize in 2013 for four sectors of cultural and artistic creation of older persons, then in 2016 for the contribution to the quality of life of older persons and addressing the problems of ageing and old age, to active older persons – volunteers and older person clubs. In 2016, the prizes were awarded by the Prime Minister and the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs. Awarding Prizes and publicity is in accordance with the effort of the Council to create conditions for healthy, active and dignified ageing and old age in the Czech Republic and the active participation of older persons in economic and social development of the society.

A subsidy programme for older persons and pro-older person non-profit organizations has been established (commitment 1)

In the area of older person policy, a subsidy programme "Support of public purposeful activities of older person and pro-older person organizations" has been announced at the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs since 2012 with the aim to support older person and pro-older person organizations focused on activities for older persons. Within the subsidy project, the projects that help to raise public awareness of the potential and benefits of older workers for the company are supported. Since 2015, the subsidy programme has increased to CZK 12 million, a total of 47 projects of non-governmental organisations have been supported. In 2016, this subsidy programme increased to CZK 18 million and it was extended to regional and local governments of the Czech Republic, for which a total of CZK 20 million was allocated.

A subsidy program to support families has been established (commitment 9)

In the area of family policy, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs supports the subsidy programme "Family". The aim is to provide comprehensive assistance to the family as a whole (i.e. the extended family, including children and grandparents). For 2015, a total of 304 projects in the total amount of CZK 101.7 million was supported. In 2016, Preventive activities to support the family shall be promoted. The target group consists not

only of families with children, mothers/fathers on maternity/parental leave, pregnant women and their partners, but also the wider family (activities targeted also on older persons and their grandchildren, focus on intergenerational relations), the “sandwich generation” persons, families in crisis, promotion of gender equality and umbrella organizations that deal with the support of families and provide support to their member organizations.

The department of ageing policy has been established (commitment 1)

In May 2015, within the organizational structure of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, the Department of Ageing Policy was newly established and new staff was engaged so that the administration associated with population ageing could be addressed and enforced more effectively. Originally, this area was included under the social inclusion administration. Administration connected with demographic ageing of the population and everything what this phenomenon brings, including so-called active ageing, was newly incorporated under the area of family policy, which it closely relates to.

The construction of community housing for older persons (commitment 1 and 9)

In 2015, the Ministry for Regional Development for the first time implemented a subsidy title “Community Home for Older persons”, which is part of a sub-programme “Supported flats of the programme “Housing support”. In 2015, the construction of 333 rental flats in twenty-one community homes for older persons was supported with the amount of CZK 211,215 million.

2. Conclusions and future priorities

If we look back at the above outlined introduced measures or suggestions, if any, found in an advanced stage of the legislative process, we can see that in last two years a lot of significant and strong measures have been adopted. We would like to continue maintaining the pace of supporting older persons to be prepared sufficiently for the demographic changes, which we are feeling in Europe already at the present time. In this sense, our major goal is not only raising old-age pensions, making goods and services for older persons cheaper and other financial reliefs but also working on the following topics:

I. Strengthening the position of people in pre-retirement age on the labour market. In the future we would like to solve the problem of persistent age discrimination of people in pre-retirement age on the labour market, often associated with leaving the labour market. This theme also relates to the prevention of poverty, especially of older women living alone, whose economic situation is often the result of lifetime inequality and discrimination of women on the labour market, which leads to lower income and thus lower pensions.

II. Transfer of part of care for older persons from hospitals or social institutions in their own home environment or the environment of their families under the potential support of field and other social services. In this context also the area of health and social border and community services at the level of municipalities need to be developed. The suggestion that municipalities would have an obligation to take care of infirm older persons in their scope can be considered a great challenge. With respect to the demographic forecast, the number of older persons that are to some degree dependent on the care of another person shall grow. Therefore, also the pressure on social and health facilities shall increase. In this case, it is entirely appropriate to direct care for these older persons into home environment both for the relief of institutional capacities and due to saving of part of resources, because the institutional stay is in principle more expensive than staying home, though supported by measures from the state.

III. Changing society’s view of older persons and ageing. The signals need to be transmitted to the society that older persons are and can be useful for this society. In this sense, it is desirable to encourage more volunteer activities for older persons and their organization. A support of the system for passing experience from older people to younger, not only on the labour market, is also an important challenge. This point is essentially related to the development of key competencies of older persons, such as financial or technical skills, and other practically and civic-oriented skills in order to prepare older persons better for the orientation in a rapidly

changing world. To increase a chance to solve own problems by oneself, improve the quality of life or to find a job on the labour market again.

IV. To create and enact the Act on Preparation for Ageing, which would aim at mobilising the society to prepare actively for ageing, allow all older persons a greater degree of independence, acknowledge their rights and freedoms and to prepare all sectors of the state administration for the challenges associated with ageing. It should be a modification of a strategic character, on the basis of which all other laws are updated for the purposes of greater consideration of needs of older person population and future demographic changes. Therefore, we intend to propose a comprehensive strategy of preparation for ageing, which shall have the following objectives: to prepare an awareness campaign about all aspects of population ageing and mobilizing both the population and, in particular, state administration; introduce a definition of the older person; introduce a set of measures preparing the labour market, education system, health system, social services, public transport, urban planning and construction, etc. for the ageing of the society; initiate an intensive dialogue with representatives of employers and employees and engage the government in preparation for ageing; expand public TV and radio broadcasting focused on older person issues, especially with the informative and educational character (financial literacy, preventive health care, domestic violence, state social support, etc.); include in the Regulatory Impact Assessment (RIA) the obligation to indicate the impacts on the target group of older persons as a group of people with special needs; define specific areas of older person interest; in these areas, older persons shall have the right to be represented by their deputy; specifically, it will be consultative and representative bodies of the government (participation in committees, commissions and other bodies in the field related to housing, consumer protection, social services, transportation, safety, education and health, etc.), including the ability to participate in the meetings of committees of the Chamber Deputies of the Parliament of the Czech Republic (CDP CR) and the Senate of the Czech Republic.

V. Opening new topics. Focus not only on financial and material security of older persons, but also on the way they spend their leisure time, which activities they fill it with. Concentrate on the problem of loneliness. Create or support and subsidize programmes that allow older persons to think about their life and its meaning in the wider community and offer them opportunities to develop their talents, fulfil the spiritual needs.

In addition to these long-term themes that can be an inspiration also for the next five-year plan of promoting active ageing in the CR, our priority of a short-term character is to focus more on protecting older persons as consumers. We propose that the consumer protection would become a political priority and following the example of neighbouring countries, it would be viewed in the context of law enforcement and associated with functionality of the single market of the European Union. An increase of the rate of involvement of the local government in the preparation for ageing is another short-term objective. Improving the quality of life of older person population vary widely both at the regional and municipal level and depends on the political will of the elected representative body to deal with the matter. Therefore, we commence the project "Implementation of ageing policy at the regional level" mentioned above in the introduction and, therefore, we would like to support the establishment of Committees for Families and Older persons within municipalities and regions. This measure could lead without significant financial costs to enhancing political attention for all issues related to the quality of life of older persons as well as whole families at the level of local governments. Immediately, we would like to regularly continue this-year tradition, when an international conference on preparing for demographic changes was held in the Czech Republic, which included awarding Prizes of the Government Council for Older persons and Population Ageing. This event helped to highlight the theme of ageing among the general public.

From international organizations working in the field of ageing, we expect identifying major issues and challenges associated with ageing and discovering new issues and challenges. In general, the international organization should determine and direct a discourse of this topic.

Annexes

The National Action Plan promoting positive ageing for the period of 2013-2017 (the updated version as of 31/12/2014)

