

Report on the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) and its Regional Implementation Strategy (RIS) in the Czech Republic

2018–2022

Contents

PART I	2
Introduction.....	2
General information	3
1. Situation of Ageing at the National Level	3
2. Method	5
PART II: 20 years of MIPAA/RIS	6
1. National Measures and the Process of Implementation of the MIPAA/RIS and the Lisbon Ministerial Declaration (2017).....	6
Objective 1: Recognition of the potential of older persons (commitment 1,2,8,9,10).....	6
Objective 2: Support for longer employment and ability to work (commitment 3,4,5,6,8,10).....	8
Objective 3: Ensuring ageing in dignity (commitment 7,8,9,10)	11
PART III: Healthy and active ageing in a sustainable world.....	14
1. Participation of the Ageing Policy in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and its sustainable development goals	14
2. Lessons learned from managing the consequences and impacts of crisis situations on older persons: the COVID-19 pandemic	15
3. Activities in the preparation and implementation of the Decade of Healthy Ageing 2021–2030	19
Conclusions and future priorities	20
Annexes	22

PART I

Introduction

This report was prepared in cooperation of and on the basis of documents from the relevant ministries of the Czech Republic, regional self-governments, the Czech Statistical Office, the Government Council for Older Persons and Population Ageing and experts dealing with old age, older persons and the impact of the ongoing demographic change on our society. Non-governmental non-profit organisations also participated in the preparation of the report, sharing experiences from implemented projects and their work with older persons. The opinions and experiences of older persons themselves were mediated through representatives of older persons organisations, during conferences and the “Older Persons Days” and also thanks to the regional coordinators of the Implementation of the Ageing Policy at the Regional Level project.

During 2018–2022, MIPAA/RIS commitments were fulfilled mainly through the **project** of the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs called **Implementation of the Ageing Policy at Regional Level (2017–2022)**, which is financed from the European Social Fund (ESF). As part of the project, a regional coordinator was established in each region of the Czech Republic with the aim to institutionally anchor the policy of preparation for ageing in the regions of the Czech Republic. Regional coordinators provide basic counselling to the target group of older persons. Other activities of the project are focused on interdisciplinary cooperation, which takes place on the regional platforms, where information is exchanged between the national level and the self-governments. As part of the awareness and educational activities, round table discussions are organised for the public on topics related to the ageing policy and older persons.

One of the outputs of the project is the strategic material following up on the *National Action Plan for Positive Ageing for the Period 2013–2017*. The preparation of this document was widely discussed across ministries, with the Government Council for Older Persons and Population Ageing, the public (5 conventions took place during 2017) and other stakeholders. The document has been modified several times over the years. Current version: After incorporating all the comments and reaching a consensus across the political spectrum, the **Strategic Framework for Preparing for an Ageing Society 2021–2025** was submitted to the Government of the Czech Republic for approval for the second time in March 2020. This document had not been approved yet as of 31 May 2021. The document also contains the 10 Areas to Prepare the Society for Ageing. It is a summary of areas that need to be addressed in connection with the phenomenon of society ageing in the Czech Republic and which are also based on the principles of MIPAA/RIS and the Lisbon Ministerial Declaration (2017). These areas include: ensuring fair pensions, more accessible and high-quality social and health services, more accessible and obstacle-free housing for older persons, support for the sandwich generation and informal family carers, preparation of the State for an ageing society, family and interpersonal support, safe living for older persons, fight against discrimination, violence and scammers focused on older persons, increasing consumer protection, promoting lifelong learning, employment of 55+ and active ageing, ensuring obstacle-free public space, raising awareness about the issue of ageing and its promotion in media. After the approval of this document by the Government of the Czech Republic, a follow-up action plan with specific measures will be prepared within 12 months. The area of support for older persons is further enshrined, for example, in the **Concept of Family Policy (2017)**, which targets not only families with young children, but also the support of family care in general, i.e. the 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. The document also pays extra attention to the support of informal carers.

Within the Implementation of the Ageing Policy at the Regional Level project, expert analyses were also prepared, which are listed below. At the same time, there was international cooperation for the exchange of good practice and an international conference was organised every year on the International Day for Older Persons (2017 Ageing and Public Space, 2018 Financial Impacts of Population Ageing and Sustainability, 2019 Older Persons and Human Rights, 2021 Implementation of the Ageing Policy in Regions).

In the Czech Republic, the 2018–2022 period saw significant shifts in the field of ageing:

- The realisation of the Implementation of the Ageing Policy at the Regional Level project,
- The development of ageing policy in the regions of the Czech Republic and the establishment of this topic among the general public,
- The establishment of the Fair Pensions Committee in 2019,
- Growth of old-age pensions and adjustment of indexation rules for pensions,
- Organisation of international conference on the International Day for Older Persons (1 October) in the years 2017–2019,
- Establishment of the Working Group for the Protection of Rights of Older Persons at the Government Council for Human Rights in 2020.

In the future, it is necessary to focus on the following:

- Approval of strategic documents in the field of ageing,
- Preparation of a pension reform responding to the ageing population and ensuring the long-term financial sustainability of the pension system while ensuring an adequate level of pensions,
- Provision of affordable housing for older persons,
- Promotion of healthy ageing and development of geriatric care,
- The systemic setting of financing of social services,
- Support to informal carers,
- Improvement of support for older persons on the labour market and increasing their mobility,
- Strengthening the protection of rights of older persons, the fight against ageism.

General information

Name of the country: Czech Republic

Prepared by: Barbora Plíšková, Ministerial Council, Department of Ageing and Social Inclusion, barbora.pliskova@mpsv.cz

and Emílie Jašová, Ph.D., Ministerial Council, Department of Ageing and Social Inclusion, emilie.jasova@mpsv.cz

for the Department of Social Services and Social Work, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic; Podskalská 19, 128 00 Praha 2.

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of the Czech Republic, Department of Ageing and Social Inclusion, is the national focal point for the issue of ageing.

Strategic document: **Strategic Framework for Preparing for an Ageing Society 2021–2025**, submitted for approval to the government in March 2020, not yet approved as of 31 May 2021.

1. Situation of Ageing at the National Level

Demographic development

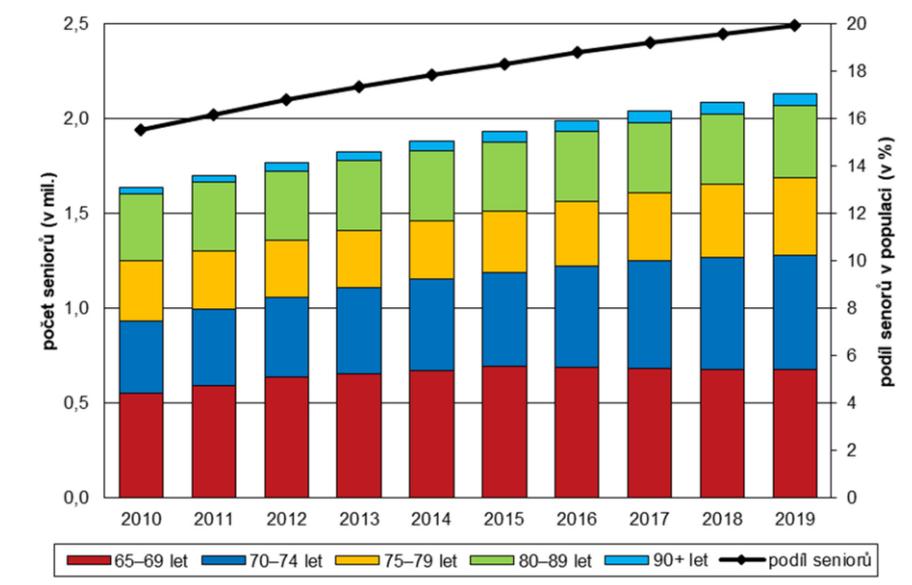
Based on the available data, there were 1,635,826 persons older than 65 years in the Czech Republic as of 31 December 2010; their number increased to 2,131,630 as of 31 December 2019.^[1] In nine years, the number of these persons increased by almost 500,000 and this trend is expected to continue – the share of older persons in the Czech population will grow. They now represent less than 20% (in 2010 it was 15.5%); in 20 years it could be almost a quarter (24.5%) and in 30 years almost a third of the society (28.5%). The highest number of older persons can be expected just before 2060, when it can exceed 3,200,000.^[2] As the share of older persons in the Czech population increases, so does the average age, which was 40.8 years in 2010. As of 31 December 2019, the

^[1] CZSO 2020. 4. POPULATION | CZSO (czso.cz).

^[2] CZSO 2018. Population projection of the Czech Republic – 2018–2100 | CZSO (czso.cz).

average age increased to 42.5 years^[3]. Life expectancy at birth in 2010 was more than 74 years for men and almost 81 years for women. In 2019, it increased to 76.33 years for men and to 82.1 years for women^[4].

Number and share of older persons in the population of the Czech Republic as of 31 December.¹



* počet seniorů (v mil.) – number of older persons (millions)

* podíl seniorů v populaci (v %) – share of older persons (%)

Social, economic and political development

In the fourth quarter of 2016, out of a total of 2,695,200 persons over the age of 60, 2,274,500 were economically inactive (84.4 %). In this age group, there were 8,800 unemployed and 411,900 employed persons, which means that approximately 15.6 % of persons over the age of 60 worked or wanted to work.^[1]

Due to the ageing of the population, the absolute number of persons over the age of 60 increased by 100,200^[2] in the fourth quarter of 2020, reaching 2,795,400. Of these, 2,327,000 were economically inactive, so their share fell to 83.2 %. There were 4,400 unemployed and 464,000 employed persons in this age category, which represents an increase in their share to 16.8 %. Persons aged 60+ made up a total of 64.5 % of the total economically inactive population of the Czech Republic aged 15 and over^[3].

In the fourth quarter of 2020, a total of 351,100 people was employed for shorter working hours, of whom 103,600 (29.5 %) were over 60 years of age^[4]. Of all working persons over the age of 60, less than a quarter (22.3 %) worked for shorter working hours. In 2016, these percentages were 28.8% and 24.9% respectively.

The average old-age pension in 2016 amounted to CZK 11,460; in 2021 it was CZK 15,351.^[5]

^[3] CZSO 2020. Demographic Yearbook of the Regions – 2010 to 2019 | CZSO (czso.cz).

^[4] CZSO 2020. Demographic Yearbook of the Regions – 2010 to 2019 | CZSO (czso.cz).

¹ CZSO. Data on older persons in 2020 | CZSO (czso.cz).

^[1] CZSO 2017. Employment and unemployment according to Labour Force Survey results – quarterly data – Q4 2016 | CZSO (czso.cz).

^[2] CZSO 2021. Employment and unemployment according to Labour Force Survey results – quarterly data – Q4 2020 | CZSO (czso.cz).

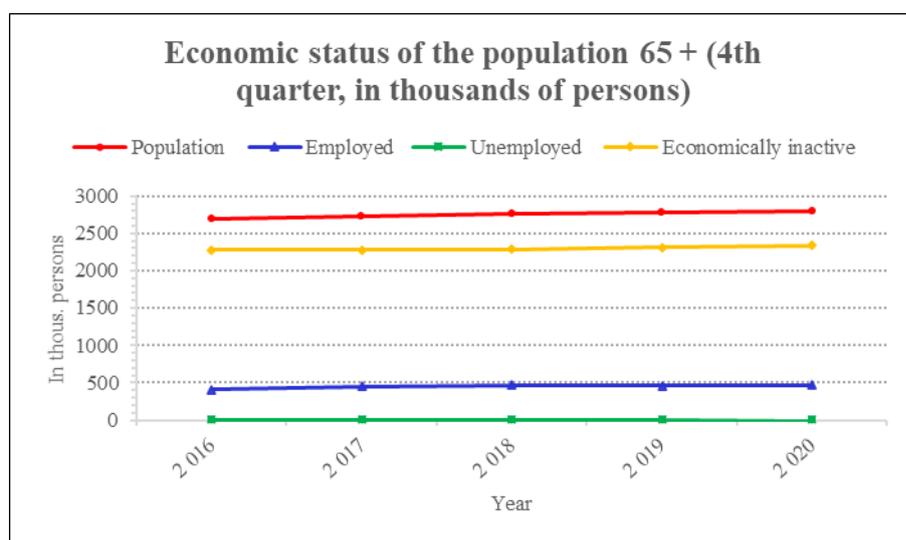
^[3] There are about 3.6 million of such persons.

^[4] CZSO 2021. Employment and unemployment according to Labour Force Survey results – quarterly data – Q4 2020 | CZSO (czso.cz).

^[5] CSSA 2021. a9b4355f-343f-7f3c-eaef-485a15ec2098 (cssz.cz).

Of those receiving an old-age pension, 8.1 % were below the poverty line in 2016, compared to 14.9 % in 2020. The main influencing factors are if the person lives alone, if it is a woman or a man (women are twice as likely to be at risk), the person's age (persons under 65 have twice the risk of poverty than those over 65), the legal form of their housing (rental housing increases this risk threefold).^[6] One of the reasons for this development is the higher year-on-year growth in income from primary employment (8.4 %) and from primary activity in business (8.2 %) than in income from pensions (7.7 %). There is an even bigger difference when comparing income after deducting housing costs in relation to the living minimum. The year-on-year increase in income from dependent activities was 12.7 % and in income from business it was even 45.2 %, while income from pension decreased by 15.5 %. The size of the municipality also plays a role; for example, the income from the pension of a household without a working member in a municipality with 50,000–99,999 inhabitants increased by 11.6 %, while the same income in a municipality with 5,000–9,999 inhabitants increased only by 5.0 %.

Economic status of persons 65 + (4th quarter)



Measures to adjust social and economic policies in connection with the COVID-19 epidemic

- Adequate financial evaluation of social workers and health professionals,
- Maximum support for ensuring the life of older persons in the home environment – increasing the number of workers in field social services and support for informal carers,
- Gradual deinstitutionalisation of social services,
- Creation of a legislative framework of rights of older persons in the Czech Republic,
- Simplification of the administration of non-insurance social benefits and the provision of the COVID-19 emergency immediate assistance benefit.

2. Method

The Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs (MoLSA), as the national focal point for the issue of ageing, prepared the material on the basis of documents provided by individual ministries responsible for the relevant measures. The documents were also provided by regional self-governments and self-governments of larger cities. These self-governments provide their materials on a voluntary basis. The same is true of the leading non-profit organisations working in this field. The provided materials consist of information on implemented measures related to older persons, on implemented 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. Analyses carried out within the Implementation of the Ageing Policy at the Regional Level project provided both qualitative and

^[6] CZSO 2021. Household income and living conditions – 2020 | CZSO (czso.cz)

quantitative data. The Czech Social Security Administration, which, among other things, has statistics on old-age pensions, is the second important source of data related to this issue.

In terms of fulfilling the MIPAA/RIS obligations, the MoLSA procured, among other things, the following surveys:

- Social, economic and demographic analysis of the regions of the Czech Republic,
- Mapping the segment of services for older persons' households Supporting material for the design of solutions for systemic measures in the field of healthy ageing,
- Comparative analysis of public policies of selected EU countries in the field of preparation for ageing (comparison of the social security system, insurance and non-insurance social benefits, sickness and pension insurance and pension system setting, mapping of intergenerational and community centres in the Czech Republic),
- Comparative analysis of the approach of public administration in selected EU countries to the participation of older persons in public decision-making,
- Ageism and violence against older persons,
- Attitudes and preferences of older persons,
- Mapping of intergenerational and community centres in selected EU Member States and the Czech Republic,
- Mapping the segment of services for older persons' households,
- Analysis of older persons' abuse in the Czech Republic (2021–2023).

PART II: 20 years of MIPAA/RIS

1. National Measures and the Process of Implementation of the MIPAA/RIS and the Lisbon Ministerial Declaration (2017)

Objective 1: Recognition of the potential of older persons (commitment 1,2,8,9,10)

Subsidy programme for older persons and related support non-profit organisations (commitment 1)

In the area of older persons policy, the MoLSA has been announcing an annual subsidy program “Support for publicly useful activities of older persons and related support organisations” since 2012, with the aim of supporting such organisations focused on activities benefiting older persons. The aid scheme also supports projects that help raise public awareness of the potential and benefits of older workers for society. In connection with the COVID-19 pandemic, projects aimed at lonely older persons are particularly supported in 2021.

Award of the Government Council for Older Persons and Population Ageing (commitment 1)

In the years 2018–2020, the Award of the Government Council for Older Persons and Population Ageing (hereinafter the Council) was awarded. The Council was established by a resolution of the Government of the Czech Republic in 2006 and it is a permanent advisory body to the government on issues related to older persons and population ageing. The award was given in four categories: an individual professional, a team of professionals and a non-professional individual, who are significantly and in the long term involved in the field of support for older persons (60+). The fourth category is the Special Award of the Council Chairperson, the Minister of Labour and Social Affairs.

International Conference on Older Persons and Human Rights 2019 (commitment 2,8)

The conference was organised as part of the Implementation of the Ageing Policy at the Regional Level project and it was open to the general public. The two panels of the conference focused on the social rights of older persons (availability of housing, the right to age in the home environment, obstacles in the public space, availability of social services) and the protection of rights of older persons, older persons abuse and executions of older persons.

Working Group for the Protection of Rights of Older Persons (Commitment 2)

The working group was established by the resolution of the Committee for the Fundamental Rights and Prevention of Discrimination of 12 November 2019 to address the priority of the Government Council for Human Rights “Discrimination on the basis of age and protection of rights of older persons”. Within the working group, the following topics were identified for consideration in 2020: home caregivers, home care, education of older persons, availability of alternatives to online communication, changing perceptions of ageing and older persons in society. The working group also responded to the challenges associated with the COVID-19 epidemic and issued a document containing ten recommendations that should determine the approach to older persons in the future.

Older Persons Days (Commitment 2)

In 2017 and 2019–2021, the Older Persons Days (Summer with Seniors) were organised in the regions of the Czech Republic within the Implementation of the Ageing Policy at the Regional Level project, which aimed to provide information to older persons in the following areas: safety, consumer protection, intergenerational cooperation, financial support from public resources, etc. The MoLSA cooperated with the Police of the Czech Republic, the Labour Office of the Czech Republic, the Czech Social Security Administration, the Czech Trade Inspection and local older persons associations on the implementation.

Recommendation to establish a committee for the family and the older persons at the regional and municipal authorities (commitment 9)

The MoLSA, in cooperation with the Ministry of the Interior, prepared a “Methodological Recommendation for the Establishment of a Committee for the Family and the Older Persons at the Regional and Municipal Authorities”, which became effective on 1 February 2021. The recommendation contains a definition of the legal basis of these optional committees and commissions, an overview of their main tasks and information on the funding of the committee.

Collection of Good Practice in Regions (commitment 10)

An overview of organisations, activities and policies supporting healthy and active ageing, intergenerational cooperation, informal care, employment and housing of older persons was published in 2021 as part of the Implementation of the Ageing Policy in the Regions of the Czech Republic project. The aim of the Collection is to raise awareness of activities supporting older persons in the region.

How has the perception of ageing changed in the Czech Republic over the last 20 years

Over the last 20 years, old age and ageing have become publicly a discussed topic in the Czech Republic; conferences, webinars, round tables and other such events are organised with a focus on this topic. Older persons are increasingly active in social activities such as older persons associations, volunteering or leisure activities. Furthermore, they are much more involved in intergenerational cooperation projects (projects such as grandmothers reading in nursery schools or cohabitation of older persons and students). The number of primary and nursery school that are actively involved in intergenerational projects is growing. We are seeing a significant increase and prosperity of non-profit organisations whose projects are aimed at older persons, such as the Elpida, Život 90 (Life 90) or Cesta domů (Way home) organisations, whose offer of services for older persons has greatly expanded over the last 20 years and adapted to match the growing requirements of their clients. Since 2003, the Czech Republic has had strategic materials focused on the ageing policy and older persons, which aim to improve the situation of older persons in society and include educational activities related to ageing in the society.

Objective 2: Support for longer employment and ability to work (commitment 3,4,5,6,8,10)

Increase in the number of courses and course participants of Universities of the Third Age (commitment 6)

The number of courses and their participants is steadily growing. 47 thousand participants in 2017; 57 thousand participants in 2019; and 63 thousand participants in 2021 – based on the data of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports.

Regional individual projects of the Labour Office of the Czech Republic – support for the employment of older persons (commitment 5,6)

The Labour Office of the Czech Republic (LO CR) implements regional individual projects (RIP) financed from the European Social Fund. It emphasises the issues 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, counselling aimed at employability on the labour market, retraining, employment intermediation, etc. The RIPs focus, among others, on the target group of persons over 50. Currently, the regional branches of the LO CR implement 8 projects aimed at persons over 50 with total budgets in the amount of CZK 610,027,989. Experience from the RIPs is applied throughout the Czech Republic through the national individual project (NIP) “Support for flexible forms of employment (FLEXI)”.

National project of the Labour Office of the Czech Republic “Support for flexible forms of employment (FLEXI)” (commitment 5)

The project implementation period is 1 January 2021 – 30 June 2023. The project focuses on persons whose employability is diminished for various reasons (health, family, etc.) and it offers flexible forms of employment. An employer who concludes a written agreement with its employees in accordance with Section 317a of the Labour Code may be provided with a financial contribution by the LO CR on the basis of a shared job agreement concluded between the employer and the LO CR. The contribution is provided for a maximum period of 6 months, in the form of a refund of the wage costs incurred. There may be several shared jobs defined by the employer. One of the supported target groups are persons over 60 years of age.

Act No 191/2018 Sb. (commitment 3)

Two significant measures to support pensioners were approved, namely an increase in the basic rate of the pension from 9 % to 10 % of the average wage, an increase of the pension by CZK 1,000 per month for all pensioners who reach the age of 85. In addition, with effect from 1 September 2018, persons participating in pension insurance through replacement periods of insurance for the care of a dependent person for whom a household condition is not required include not only close persons but also social care workers in accordance with Section 83(1) Act No 108/2006, on social services.

Increase in pensions in 2020 (commitment 3)

Old-age, disability, widow's, widower's and orphan's pensions granted before 1 January 2020 have been increased from the first payment of the pension due after 31 December 2019 (basic assessment increased by CZK 220 to CZK 3,490 and percentage assessment increased by 5.2%). The average old-age pension in the Czech Republic was CZK 15,000 in 2020 (it was CZK 12,500 in 2018).

One-off pension allowance in 2020 (commitment 3)

In accordance with Act No 469/2020, on the one-off contribution to pensioners, as amended, a one-off contribution of CZK 5,000 was paid to all pensioners in December 2020. Every pensioner (i.e. a recipient of an old-age pension, early retirement pension, disability pension in all degrees, widow's, widower's and orphan's pension) who was entitled to a pension insurance pension for at least a part of November 2020 was entitled to the contribution if the application for this pension was filed before 1 December 2020.

Fair Pensions Committee (commitment 3)

From 2019 to 2021, the Fair Pensions Committee worked to prepare a comprehensive pension reform in response to the ageing of society. 3 pieces of draft legislation were prepared: 1. adjustment of principles and parameters to make the pension system understandable, fair and sustainable, 2. upbringing benefit, 3. earlier retirement for demanding professions. The first proposal is focused on changing the current pension system; it proposes for income to be included in the calculation by a linear percentage and for the old-age pension to increase to 28% of the average wage. It also proposes to reduce the minimum insurance period to 25 years. (proposed to come into force from 1 January 2023) The second proposal focuses on the upbringing benefit, which should increase the merit-based portion of pension; for each brought up child, CZK 500 would be granted to the pension per month (proposed to come into force from 1 January 2024). The last proposal for earlier retirement of workers in demanding professions, where every ten years worked in such profession would reduce their entitlement to retirement by one year, financed by the employer for each employee within the payment of 5 % of insurance premiums per employee (proposed to come into force from 1 January 2025).

Generation tandem – support of generational exchange in the Central Bohemian Region II (commitment 5)

The project is being implemented within a RIP of the LO CR from 1 January 2016 to 30 June 2022 and aims to promote generational exchange and intergenerational solidarity on the labour market by keeping workers of pre-retirement age in employment and strengthening the match between skills supply and demand on the labour market for graduates. The project supports the transfer of work experience to people entering the labour market without previous work experience and longer employability of older persons in pre-retirement age.

Support for the employment of persons 50+ within the Operational Programme Employment

Within the aid from the ESF, the Operational Programme Employment is used to implement, in addition to the support implemented at the LO CR, projects of non-profit, educational and consulting organisations, which are aimed at increasing employment of persons over 50 or 55 (from the ranks of job seekers and inactive persons). These projects independently complement the activities of the LO CR. 32 competitive local projects with a volume of CZK 162 million were implemented (or still are being implemented) within the OPE in the field of employment (projects are implemented in the years 2018–2022) to directly support older persons, who can also face other disabilities or obstacles besides their age.

Call 79 Age Management – A Smart Change in Management, an Opportunity for Growth

As part of Investment Priority 1.3 Helping Workers, Enterprises and Entrepreneurs to Adapt to Changes of the Operational Programme Employment, Call No 079 “Age Management – A Smart Change in Management, an Opportunity for Growth” was announced in October 2017 with a financial allocation of CZK 300,000,000 aimed at supporting the implementation of age management and related systemic work with human resources as one of the important factors in the competitiveness of enterprises on the market in the context of the demographic development in the Czech Republic and the related extension of working life. The call aims to increase the professional level of knowledge, skills and competencies of workers and the compliance of the qualification level of the workforce with the requirements of the labour market, as well as to increase the adaptability of older workers.

Socially useful jobs for older persons (commitment 4)

Older persons are one of the groups of job seekers receiving increased care in employment facilitation. The LO CR focuses on specific tools and active employment policy measures on job seekers over 50 years of age. One of the examples is the contribution for a reserved socially useful job, which the employer fills on the basis of an agreement with the LO CR. The contribution can be provided for a maximum of 24 months. The contribution can be provided up to the amount of wage costs incurred (max. CZK 24 thousand). In 2020, the share of 55+ persons out of the total number of persons supported by the socially beneficial jobs instrument was 23.6%.

Shared job (commitment 5)

With effect from 1 January 2021, a new institute of shared employment is introduced into the Labour Code. One job position can be shared by two or more employees with shorter working hours and the same type of work, which will significantly support the availability of flexible forms of employment in the Czech Republic. Shared jobs are also intended to promote the employability of persons who work shorter working hours, in particular carers or persons dependent on the care of another person, or persons with disabilities.

Project 22 % for Equality (commitment 8)

The MoLSA is implementing a system project called “22 % for Equality”, which is aimed at solving the gender pay gap in the Czech Republic. Its activities include qualitative and quantitative studies focused on the gender pay gap, public opinion research, the creation of the “Methodology for Equal Pay for Women and Men”, testing of the Logib tool, education and raising awareness, etc.

Strategy for Gender Equality 2021–2030 (commitment 8)

The strategy also takes into account the situation of disadvantaged older persons in the Czech Republic. The main gender inequalities in old age include discrimination on the labour market, gender-based differences in old-age pensions (older women are more at risk of poverty than men), and health (men have poorer health in old age). It also addresses the issues of violence and movement in the public space. The Strategy is followed by two-year action plans, which set out specific tasks based on the mentioned measures.

International Conference on the Financial Impact of Population Ageing and Sustainability (2018) (commitment 3.4)

This conference for the general public was organised as part of the Implementation of the Ageing Policy at the Regional Level project and it focused on the following topics: expenditures on the pension system, health and social services with regard to the expected demographic development, long-term care and support for informal carers.

Friendly Society – Employment 55+ competition (commitment 5)

The competition aims to support the employment of older persons and develop their potential for the future. The competition has been running since 2019 and it is organised by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs as part of the Implementation of the Ageing Policy at the Regional Level project and in cooperation with the South Bohemian Pact for Employment.

Project to support the cultural participation of older persons (commitment 6)

The Support for Intergenerational Dialogue and Cultural Participation of Older Persons as Tools for Exchanging and Sharing Cultural Values at the Local and Regional Level project was implemented in the period 2018–2020 by the National Information and Consulting Centre for Culture (NIPOS) in cooperation with the Charles University. The aim was to understand how the mechanisms of intergenerational dialogue associated with learning and cultural transmission work. Then, a comprehensive methodology was provided to the public administration to support the intergenerational exchange and sharing of cultural values through dialogue in the field of culture at the local and regional level, so that public policies in this area can make a significant contribution to intergenerational coexistence.

The employment rate of persons aged 65+ has an upward trend in the Czech Republic

Employment rate of persons in %

age	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	1st quarter 2021
15+	56,4	57,6	58,5	59,2	59,2	58,3	57,8
15-64 total	70,2	72,0	73,6	74,8	75,1	74,4	74,0
55-64 total	55,5	58,5	62,1	65,1	66,7	68,2	69,0
55-64 women	45,9	49,3	53,0	56,6	58,9	61,3	62,7
55-64 men	65,5	68,2	71,7	74,0	74,7	75,2	75,4
65+ total	5,6	6,3	6,3	7,1	7,2	6,9	6,5
65+ women	4,1	4,6	4,5	4,4	4,7	5,0	4,7
65+ men	7,8	8,7	8,7	9,8	9,9	9,5	9,3

Unemployment rate in %

age	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	1st quarter 2021
15+	5,0	4,0	2,9	2,2	2,0	2,6	3,3
15-64 total	5,1	4,0	2,9	2,3	2,1	2,6	3,4
55-64 total	4,4	3,8	2,4	2,0	2,0	2,0	2,7
55-64 women	4,9	3,8	2,9	2,3	2,0	2,4	3,4
55-64 men	4,0	3,8	2,0	1,7	1,9	1,7	2,1
65+ total	1,2	1,1	1,2	1,5	.	.	.
65+ women	1,1	.	0,7
65+ men	1,1	0,8	0,9	0,9	0,5	.	.

Objective 3: Ensuring ageing in dignity (commitment 7,8,9,10)

Social Housing Concept

On 12 October 2015, the Concept of Social Housing of the Czech Republic 2015–2025 was approved, which, among other things, supports increasing the availability of housing for older persons without adequate housing and at risk of losing their housing. In 2019, the Concept of Social Housing underwent fundamental modifications and, as a result of significant changes in the area of housing policy, it was correspondingly renamed the Concept of Affordable Housing of the Czech Republic 2020–2025. In 2020, it was submitted to the government for approval. The Ministry of Regional Development, together with other authorities in the field, is currently preparing a law on housing affordability.

International Conference on Ageing and Public Space 2017 (commitment 7)

The conference was organised within the Implementation of the Ageing Policy at the Regional Level project and focused on the main challenges related to the public space in connection with population ageing.

Reimbursement of the medication co-payments for older persons

According to the legal regulation in 2018, the health insurance pays CZK 1,000 for medicinal products or drugs for insured persons who are older than 65 (including the calendar year in which they reached the age of 65) and CZK 500 for insured persons over 70 years of age (including the calendar year in which they reached the age of 70). If the total amount paid for regulatory fees, medicines co-payment, etc., exceeds the set limit in a calendar year, the health insurance company is obliged to reimburse the insured the amount by which this limit is exceeded.

Introduction of long-term attendance allowance (commitment 9)

The purpose of this benefit is to enable the family to take care of a family member who, as a result of an unexpected deterioration in health, needs full-time care for more than 30 days. In the event of the need for permanent care for a family member, the provision of this benefit and leave at work (up to 90 days) allows you

to ensure further care for such a person. In accordance with Act No 310/2017, amending Act No 187/2006, on sickness insurance, as amended, and other related acts, with effect from 1 June 2018, the caring person may be a family member who does not live with the cared-for in the household; living in the same household is required only for other natural persons (e.g. partner, unmarried companion). The basic conditions for entitlement include a serious deterioration in the health of the person being cared for, which required at least 7 days of hospitalisation, and a doctor's statement that the need for full-time care is expected for at least another 30 days after discharge from hospital. The cared-for person must give written consent to the attendance by a specific person. The benefit is 60% of the reduced daily assessment basis.

Theatre lectures for older persons on traffic safety (commitment 7)

An educational non-profit project called Senior without Accidents took place in 2018 and 2019 in order to increase the safety of older persons in traffic. The aim of the project was to reduce the accident rate of older persons, to inform about the specifics of the behaviour of older persons in traffic and to recommend measures that should contribute to increasing their safety not only on the roads. Older persons were introduced to the potential of modern motor vehicle assistance systems, reminded of the rules of road traffic and the side effects of medicines and health restrictions resulting from the age of the road user.

Increase in the care allowance (commitment 9)

In 2019, as part of the support of informal carers, the care allowance was increased for persons in 3rd and 4th degree of dependence who are not assisted by a residential social service provider or a children's home or a special hospice-type inpatient medical facility. The care allowance provided to persons in the 4th degree of dependence who do not use residential social services amounts to CZK 19,200; the care allowance provided to persons in the 3rd degree of dependence who do not use residential social services is CZK 13,900 in the case of persons under 18 years of age, and CZK 12,800 in the case of persons over 18 years of age.

I.C.E. Card for Older Persons (commitment 7)

In 2019, the I.C.E. Card for older persons was created, which helps older persons in cases of emergency. The document contains important medical data, which help paramedics, firefighters and the police in situations of hazard to health and life. The older persons shall keep the I.C.E. card in a visible place in their household. All regions of the Czech Republic participated in the project and the distribution of this card. In 2021, a smaller version of this card was created, which the older persons can always carry with them, for example in their wallets.

Homes for peaceful and active ageing in the countryside (KLAS) (commitment 7)

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 for older persons in the countryside. The principle of KLAS homes is based on the French MARPA concept. The aim of the project is to enable older persons in the countryside to age with dignity and quality in a familiar and close rural environment and ensure the appropriate quality and availability of health and social services. Construction: KLAS home in Chrášťany (2014), Temelín (2017); a home is currently being prepared in Albrechtice nad Vltavou.

Subsidy programme Prevention of Socially Pathological Phenomena

The subsidy programme was announced for 2020 by the Ministry of the Interior with a focus on the prevention and elimination of domestic violence through work with violent persons and persons with anger issues. Projects for the protection of the rights of older persons and the prevention and solution of older persons abuse were supported within the programme.

Emergency Care Plan

In 2021, the Czech Republic became the third country in Europe to put into operation the Emergency Care Plan; it was launched as part of the Care at Home project of the Diaconia of the Evangelical Church of the Czech

Brethren. The system ensures the transfer of care to a substitute lay carer in cases of sudden hospitalisation or quarantine of the main carer. The carer fills in a form with all the information regarding the medication, diet and habits of the person he or she is caring for. At the same time, the document lists contacts for 2 substitute persons who will take care of the person in question in the event of the carer's illness. The Emergency Care Plan system is supported by a free telephone line. After filling in the form, the carer is registered in the list of carers, receives a carer's card and a sticker for his or her health insurance card.

Development of free legal aid for older persons (commitment 7)

The number of legal counselling services for older persons is growing. They are most often run by non-profit organisations such as Iuridicum Remedium, Život 90 or some municipalities or cities. In 2020, the position of an ombudsman for older persons was also extended to the Zlín Region.

Methodology for the Creation of Ageing Strategies in Municipalities (commitment 10)

The guide was created in cooperation between the Implementation of the Ageing Policy at the Regional Level project and Tomas Bata University in Zlín and published in 2021; it is intended to serve as a tool for systematising and conceptualising the established procedures or for creating separate concepts. The guide is based on the issue of strategic planning in relation to ageing policy at the municipal level and presents new approaches to the collection of primary data in the World Café and Appreciative Inquiry form. The guide is based on examples of good practice in the field of corporate social responsibility (CSR) and the possibility of involving students in projects and processes of strategic document creation, based on experience from the university environment.

Municipality – A Friend for Family and Older Persons (commitment 9)

Since 2018, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs has annually announced a competition focused on two subsidy areas – subsidy area 1 “Family-Friendly municipality” and subsidy area 2 “Senior-Friendly Municipality”. The competition's subsidy area 2 “Senior-Friendly Municipality” is organised by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs in cooperation with the Government Council for Older Persons and Population Ageing and the Association of Local Governments of the Czech Republic. The main objective of this aid scheme is to support older persons and intergenerational coexistence at the local level. This support means in particular the implementation of activities and the introduction of measures at the level of municipalities leading to the support of older persons who live in these municipalities and strengthening the intergenerational cohesion. In 2020, a total of 11 municipalities were awarded in subsidy area 2. In 2020, a total of over CZK 15.5 million was distributed among the winners in both subsidy areas.

Subsidy programme to support the family (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). In 2020, the total allocation of the said aid scheme was CZK 120 million; for 2021, the allocation was increased to CZK 140 million.

Preparation for Ageing manual (commitment 9)

As part of the Securing for Old Age project (2017-2021), implemented by the CESES team of Charles University and guaranteed by the MoLSA, the Preparation for Ageing manual was created, which inspires and encourages all generations of our society to think about ageing and how to prepare for it. It also aims to break down the prejudices associated with ageing and to strengthen intergenerational solidarity.

National Action Plan for Alzheimer's Disease and Related Illnesses 2020–2030 (commitment 7)

The aim of this strategic document is to improve the prevention and treatment of dementia and to increase awareness about and empathy with people living with dementia and those who care for their loved ones. The plan builds on the work from the period 2016–2019, which resulted mainly in the definition of problematic areas of education and care in the field of dementia.

The project of the Police of the Czech Republic Seniors United

After completing all modules of the project, older persons become the “Prevention Couriers”. Thanks to their ability to defend themselves effectively and the acquired knowledge, they can have an educational effect on their surroundings, among other things thanks to the following preventive information materials: the “(Un) safe age” brochure – recommendations for older persons; the “Do not open to everyone” sticker – to stick on front doors; the “(Un)safe age” DVD – 8 stories about risk situations for seniors; reflective stickers – to stick on bikes, top layers of clothing, bags, car doors, etc. The subsequent survey serves the Police of the Czech Republic to obtain information to correctly focus their preventive activities, map the risk factors and set relevant measures.

Senior Academy for Safe Ageing

These are special study programmes for lifelong learning. Projects are implemented by individual municipalities or regions in cooperation with the Municipal Police and are supported through annual subsidy programmes for crime prevention of the Ministry of the Interior, in which municipalities and regions are applicants. The programmes support preventive activities in areas such as: older persons as particularly vulnerable victims, fraud on older persons, older persons in the online environment, protection of property and funds, etc.

Barrier-Free Residential Buildings programme

The programme is designed to ensure accessible buildings for older persons and persons with disabilities. Under the programme, it is possible to obtain subsidies in the maximum amount of 50 % of eligible expenses for the constructions of a barrier-free access to the building and elevator, and/ or installation of a new elevator in buildings where it had never been installed before. The recipients of the subsidy are the owners or co-owners of apartment buildings.

Quality standards of social services and amendment to the Act on Social Services (commitment 7)

Quality standards of social services are a legal regulation binding from 1 January 2007. In accordance with point 2 “Protection of the rights of persons”: the provider should have internal rules to prevent situations in which fundamental human rights and freedoms of persons could be violated. Further in accordance with point 7 “Complaints about the quality or manner of provision of a social service”: the provider should have clear internal rules for filling and handling complaints about the quality or manner of provision of social services and it shall inform people about the possibility to file a complaint, its form, relevant contact persons, who will handle the complaint and how and about the possibility to appoint a representative for filing and handling complaints. The protection of the rights and dignity of clients is emphasised in the currently prepared amendment to the Act on Social Services. At the same time, a new complaint mechanism is proposed, where the provider is obliged to handle the client’s complaint within 30 days. Shall the client’s dissatisfaction persist, the client may lodge a complaint with the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, which will investigate the matter.

PART III: Healthy and active ageing in a sustainable world

1. Participation of the Ageing Policy in the implementation of the 2030

Agenda and its sustainable development goals

1.1. Has your country already submitted the High-Level Political Forum (HLPF) Voluntary National Review(s) (VNR) on the implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals? Briefly state whether and how the ageing of the population and the older persons has been addressed in your country’s VNR.

The Ministry of the Environment submitted the HLPF VNR on the Implementation of the Sustainable Development Goals on behalf of the Czech Republic in June 2021. Population ageing is mentioned in the VNR in the SDG 3 assessment in connection with disease prevention and the long-term effects of the pandemic. The issues of older persons were addressed in the chapter “Leaving no one behind” in the context of discrimination in general and unequal old-age pensions. In the Czech Republic, older women have on average 18 % lower

pensions than older men, which is why single older women living alone are more often exposed to poverty and social exclusion than men.

1.2. In national policy planning, are there any links between ageing issues and the 2030 Agenda?

At the national level, the 2030 Agenda has a direct link to the Strategic Framework Czech Republic 2030, which deals with ageing issues mainly in the People and Society chapter, specifically targeting, for example, care services for the elderly or the risk of poverty. The National Action Plan for Mental Health 2020–2030 is also directly linked to this issue; in the spirit of SDG 3, it seeks to create a functional system of primary prevention and early intervention in the field of mental health covering the entire life cycle from birth to old age. A number of SDGs with an emphasis on the ageing population are followed upon by the Strategic Framework for the Development of Health Care in the Czech Republic until 2030. The Strategic Framework for Preparing for an Ageing Society (2020–2025) submitted to the Government of the Czech Republic does not have a direct link to the 2030 Agenda; however, it does not conflict with its objectives and indirectly reflects ten RIS commitments for the ECE region.

1.3. Given the information on the implementation of MIPAA/RIS, what are the most important sustainable development goals that could be supported by current policy measures (specify which measures)? Have they been or will be included in your country's VNR? Describe 1-3 examples of good practice

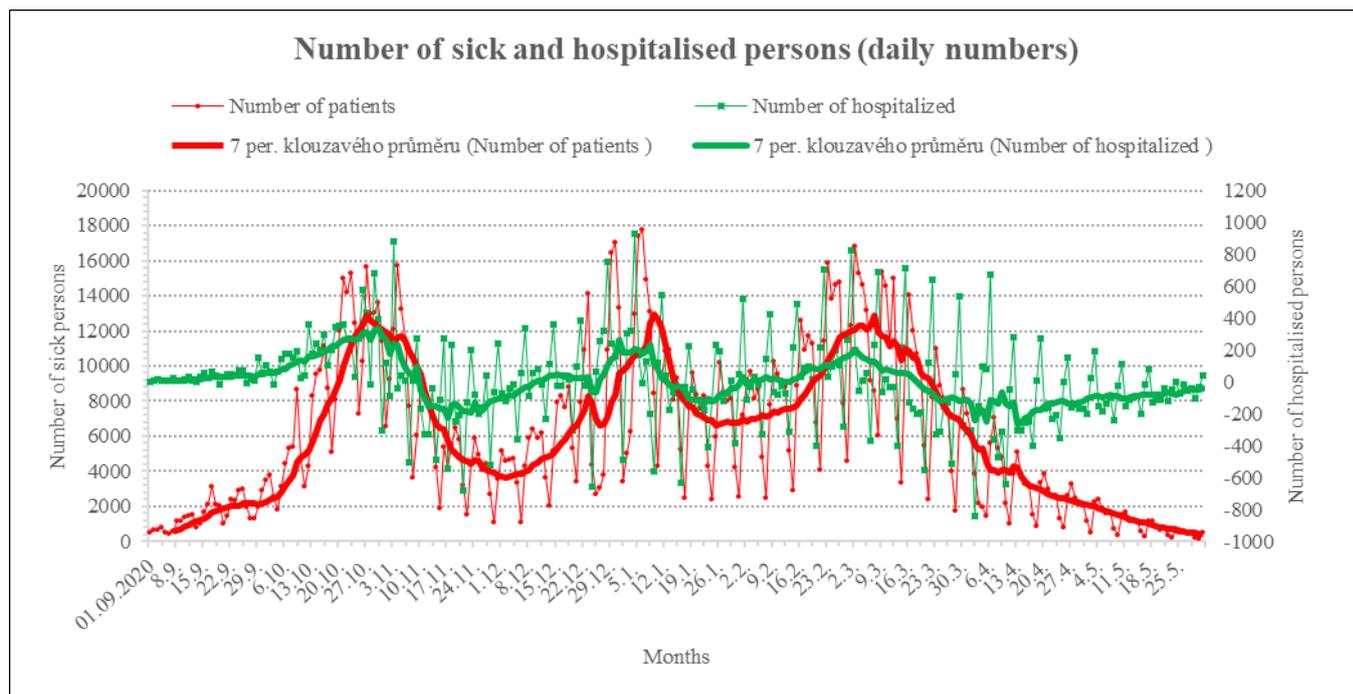
With regard to MIPAA/RIS, we generally consider the following to be the most important objectives: SDG 1, SDG 3, SDG 10. If we focus on specific sub-objectives that currently have existing or planned good practice policy measures in the Czech Republic, we should mention the sub-objective 5.4, which is included in the VNR of the Czech Republic. Although this sub-objective relates to gender equality, we also see a positive impact on older persons, for whom home care is irreplaceable. A person who already cares for a certain number of older persons at home often cannot afford a full-time job. The newly introduced institute of shared work will make it easier for persons in these situations to make decisions and it will enable them to find balance between caring for older persons and at least partially remaining in employment. At the same time, the shared job is also suitable for older persons, as an opportunity to stay in employment even in retirement age.

2. Lessons learned from managing the consequences and impacts of crisis situations on older persons: the COVID-19 pandemic

2.1. How have older people been affected by Covid-19 in your country? In 2020, was the proportion of hospitalisations and mortality of older persons higher than in the general population and in relation to previous long-term observations?

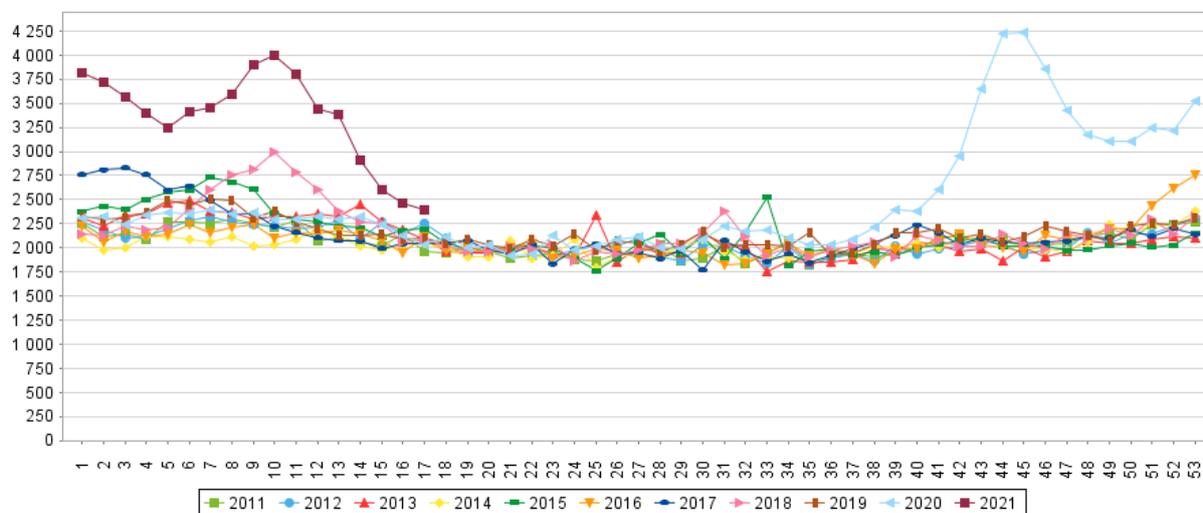
According to data from the Ministry of Health of the Czech Republic (MoH) and the Institute of Health Information and Statistics of the Czech Republic (IHIS)^[1], the first two cases of infection were registered on 3 March 2020. The first wave peaked on 26 March 2020. The second wave in the Czech Republic peaked on 27 October 2020 with 15,664 of new daily cases. The peak of the third wave was recorded on 6 January 2021, when the daily new cases reached 17,754. The fourth wave hit the Czech Republic on 12 March 2021, when the number of new daily cases reached 14,962 citizens of the Czech Republic. As of 31 May 2021, a total of 1,661,780 people had been infected in the Czech Republic, of **which 260,475 were persons aged 65 and older**. A total of 30,044 people died with COVID-19, **of which 26,929 were 65+**.

^[1] <https://onemocneni-aktualne.mzcr.cz/covid-19>



According to available data from the Czech Statistical Office, 129,100 inhabitants of the Czech Republic died in 2020, which is almost 17,000 more than in 2019. The highest number of deaths was recorded in November, and the increase in deaths was most pronounced in the 75–84 age group.

Number of deaths in the Czech Republic by weeks in 2011–2021



Older persons were most affected in residential social services facilities. The numbers of daily new cases among employees and users infected with Covid-19 in social services facilities was recorded in the ISIN system (Infectious Disease Reporting Information System). According to data from this system, as of 31 May 2021, 22,696 clients were infected, of which about 80% were persons over 65 years of age. As of 31 May 2021, a total of 3,409 people died in social services facilities in connection with the COVID-19 disease.

All information concerning the COVID-19 epidemic, as well as psychological support for callers, were provided at the national phone line 1212. Older persons also had the opportunity to call special lines for older persons, which were most often founded by non-profit organisations and whose activities were strengthened during the epidemic. In April 2020, the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs sent an information leaflet to older persons with basic information on the measures taken and references for further help.

On 28 December 2020, vaccination efforts started across the country; the first group of vaccinated persons were persons aged 80+ and paramedical personnel. In March 2021, other groups started receiving COVID-19 vaccination – 70+ persons the chronically ill persons. As of 31 May 2021, 5,308,733 persons were vaccinated in the Czech Republic with at least one dose, of which 1,631,367 persons were persons 65+ (out of a total of 2.4 million). The MoH has launched an information campaign on vaccination. Part of this campaign was aimed mainly at older persons. In the campaign, experts answered questions related to vaccination and it was disseminated through the media, interest groups, companies, regional self-governments, etc.

2.2. What has been done to ensure that difficult healthcare decisions for older persons are guided by a commitment to dignity and the right to health? Please consider the recommendations of the Secretary-General's brief overview, if any, and briefly describe the main challenges and 3 to 5 best practices.

Since the beginning of the epidemic, older persons, as well as others, have been advised to follow the anti-epidemic measures taken (wearing face masks, washing hands and social distancing). The topic of providing the necessary health care to everyone without distinction was publicly discussed in the Czech Republic. Although the second, third and fourth waves of the epidemic saw great pressure on the sustainability of the provision of health care to all patients in the Czech Republic, the Czech system was able to provide care to all those in need without distinction. Representatives of older persons and non-profit organisations were involved in regular meetings of the MoLSA and the MoH.

The Working Group for the Protection of Rights of Older Persons of the Government Council for Human Rights adopted on 25 November 2020 an Opinion on Triage, in which it warned against proposals that assume that the age or other personal characteristics of patients would play a role in deciding not to provide care or terminate acute care for some patients (e.g. artificial ventilation) as part of triage. It also published a document focused on older persons which draws attention to possible forms of age discrimination, the need for social integration of older persons, the provision of health and social care and the need to support intergenerational solidarity.

On 5 May 2020, the Government Council for Mental Health set up an inter-ministerial working group, which, based on mapping the situation, prepared comprehensive recommendations for measures to mitigate the impact of COVID-19 on mental health.

The MoLSA issued 20 recommended procedures for social service providers concerning the protection of clients and employees and for social workers, following up on the announced government measures. Recommended Procedure No 16/2020 contained recommendations for social workers of regional and municipal authorities in supporting informal carers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Providers of social services had the opportunity to use a form to report the lack of protective equipment to the MoLSA, which then ensured their distribution. A counselling line for social services was set up on 14 September 2020, where questions concerning the measures taken and recommended procedures were answered. The MoLSA established cooperation with the international medical and humanitarian organisation Médecins Sans Frontières, with the aim of supporting specific residential facilities for residential social services. The MoLSA also established cooperation with the Czech Institute for Biosynthesis, specifically with the Social Clinic project. Through a team of professional crisis interventionist and psychotherapists, they offered specific online assistance to all those caring for at-risk groups of persons during the pandemic or dealing with the economic and social consequences of the pandemic. Furthermore, the MoLSA, in cooperation with the Těchonín Army, created instructional videos for social service employees with practical information and illustrative examples concerning the operation of their facilities during the epidemic. There have often been situations where social workers and employees of residential social services voluntarily isolated themselves preventively with their clients for several weeks in order to avoid a possible risk of infection. In response to the extraordinary work commitment of social workers, an extraordinary subsidy scheme was announced to support the extraordinary financial evaluation of social workers at municipal and regional authorities in connection with the COVID-19 epidemic. The subsidy was provided to cover extraordinary bonus to wage for work in a difficult working environment, where the employee is exposed to the risk of infection due

to the necessary continuous direct personal contact with other individuals in the performance of the agreed type of work or operation in connection with the application of measures against the spread of COVID -19, or for extraordinary work in a difficult working environment.

2.3. What was done to strengthen social inclusion and solidarity during physical social distancing? Please consider the recommendations of the Secretary-General's brief overview, if any, and briefly describe the main challenges and 3 to 5 best practices.

From the beginning of the epidemic, the provision of services and help to everyone in need was of utmost importance. Care service, non-profit and volunteer organisations focused on delivering food, medicines or, for example, books for older persons. The MoLSA announced an extraordinary subsidy scheme for social service providers, which allowed for tablets to be purchased in order to maintain communication between clients and their loved ones. Furthermore, the MoLSA, together with well-known Czech personalities, created 9 short videos within the "Heart for Seniors" project with the aim of encouraging older persons in the difficult times of the epidemic and the related social isolation. Due to greater stress on mental health in connection with social isolation, information and crisis lines for older persons have been established or strengthened (e.g., Life 90, Elpida, Senior with Joy, Guardian Angel, line of the Prague City Authority, I need help – a friend on the phone), which mediate psychological help for older persons, coordinate the help of volunteers or practical help for older persons, such as the delivery of medicines, food or dog-walking. In March 2020, the ČT3 (Czech Television 3) channel intended primarily for older persons began broadcasting, and its programme is filled mainly with shows from the Czech Television archives. It will be broadcast at least until the end of 2021. There were also, for example, "concerts under the windows", where artists played for free under the windows of homes for the elderly.

In 2020, the Police of the Czech Republic implemented an information campaign "We are in this together", part of which was focused on older persons. As part of this campaign, advice was provided on how to respond to the actions of fraudsters who began taking advantage of the COVID-19 epidemic crisis and enriched themselves preying on lonely older persons under the pretext of offering health care, immune-boosting products and daily assistance such as shopping.

2.4. What was done to fully integrate the focus on older persons into the social, economic and humanitarian response to COVID-19? Please consider the recommendations of the Secretary-General's brief summary of principles, if relevant, and briefly describe the main challenges and 3 to 5 good practices.

As part of the regular meetings of the Government Council for Older Persons and Population Ageing, representatives of older persons organisations are also included in the discussions. Older persons were allowed to authorise a person to collect their pension at the post office. They were also sent face masks and respirators. In December 2020, older persons received a one-off contribution of CZK 5,000 with their pensions in connection with the increased costs of protective equipment during the epidemic; it was called the face mask allowance.

In 2020, the Government Council for Older Persons and Population Ageing awarded those who significantly helped older persons during the COVID-19 epidemic. Individuals, as well as the staff of a home for the elderly, were awarded for their support of the older persons and their commitment during the epidemic.

2.5. What was done to increase the participation of older persons, share best practices and use knowledge and data? Please consider the recommendations of the Secretary-General's brief overview, if any, and briefly describe the main challenges and 3 to 5 best practices.

During the epidemic, regular meetings of the Government Council for Older Persons and Population Ageing and the Working Group for the Protection of Rights of Older Persons took place to discuss current issues and

challenges related to the older persons and the COVID-19 epidemic. Current data on the ongoing COVID-19 epidemic and its impact on the elderly population were presented at the meetings. The International Conference on the Implementation of the Ageing Policy at the Regional Level, which will take place on 5 October 2021, will have a panel on the challenges highlighted by the COVID-19 epidemic in connection with the ageing population and older persons.

3. Activities in the preparation and implementation of the Decade of Healthy Ageing 2021–2030

The issue of healthy ageing is addressed in the above Strategic Framework to Prepare for Ageing Population 2020–2025, which is awaiting government approval, in particular in the chapters Health and Prevention of Services and Support and Care. It outlines priorities such as quality and affordable social and health services for older persons, affordable and obstacle-free housing, support for lifelong learning or support for informal carers. The individual measures will be elaborated in a follow-up action plan with regard to the objectives of the Decade of Healthy Ageing 2020–2030. This action plan will be prepared 12 months after the approval of this document. In 2017–2021, activities based on the objective of the Decade of Healthy Ageing 2020–2030 took place mainly through the Implementation of the Ageing Policy at the Regional Level project, through round tables (on the topic of healthy ageing and nutrition in old age), the Days for Older Persons and through projects of selected non-profit organisations whose activities are aimed at older persons. Finally, we can also mention the National Action Plan for Mental Health 2020–2030 and the National Action Plan for Alzheimer’s Disease 2020–2030, which focuses on the prevention and early intervention of mental illness in the elderly.

Conclusions and future priorities

The approval of strategic material based on the demographic trend of ageing of our society (Strategic Framework for Preparing for an Ageing Society 2021–2025) is currently of utmost priority. The mentioned material outlines 10 priority areas that need to be addressed in more depth in the Czech Republic in connection with ageing; these are the following priorities:

I. Fair pensions

In May 2021, the MoLSA submitted to the Government of the Czech Republic a pension reform proposal; the pension system should be fair, comprehensible and sustainable. The reform contains 3 partial proposals. The first is to adjust the principles and parameters so that the amount of the old-age pension is not negatively affected by periods when the person had no income, and that each person who met the conditions for entitlement has a decent pension. Mandatory insurance period would be reduced to 25 years. Furthermore, changes to the indexation rules and an increase in the assessment basis for social insurance for the self-employed are proposed. The second proposal is the possibility of earlier retirement for persons in demanding professions; 1 year for every 10 years worked. The last is the “upbringing benefits” proposal, where CZK 500/month would be added to the pension for each child brought up. The reform should eliminate the disadvantages of women in terms of pension – the gender pension gap and the provision of a sufficient amount of pension for dignified ageing for every older person and self-employed person. Therefore, approval of the pension reform is a priority.

II. More affordable and quality social and health services

Support quality, timely, locally and financially available social services that meet the needs and requirements of clients. Emphasis should be placed on the development of social services that will enable clients to live independently in their home environment for as long as possible. It is also necessary to ensure the continuous stability of the financing of social services and to expand the possibilities of multi-source financing. It is also necessary to create an affordable and financially sustainable system of interconnected social and health services, hospice care, palliative and psychiatric care. Ensure sufficient capacity of care services for persons with dementia. Social workers and social service workers should be properly rewarded.

III. Affordable and obstacle-free housing for older persons

Increase financial support for obstacle-free modifications of flats, houses. Promote community housing for older persons with the offer of educational and leisure activities.

IV. Support for the sandwich generation, informal and family carers

Include informal carers as a target group for social services, strengthen outreach and relief services and set up carer support centres. Promote the balance of personal life, professional life and caring for someone.

V. Preparing the State for the ageing society

Map the effects of the ageing of society on individual components of State administration and self-governments.

VI. Support for family and interpersonal relationships

Support counselling activities and primary prevention services for persons 50+, older persons and also for families that deal with issues related to caring for dependent older persons. Support for projects aimed at intergenerational cooperation.

VII. Safe life for older persons, fight against discrimination

Support crime prevention services aimed at the elderly population. Raise older persons' awareness of their rights and strengthen their resilience to unfair commercial practices, hoaxes and discrimination. The MoLSA is currently preparing an analysis together with the Technology Agency of the Czech Republic with the aim of determining the extent of neglect, abuse and ill-treatment of older persons. As part of the analysis, an awareness campaign targeted at older persons will take place and a prevention methodology for social

workers, carers and persons working with older persons will be published. The analysis should be finished in 2023.

VIII. Lifelong learning, labour market and active ageing

Promote lifelong learning, expand the range of training courses for older persons tailored to their needs. Support the introduction and development of flexible forms of work. Employment support and employment of persons 55+. Make visible the advantages of older workers and their possible role as mentors.

IX. Obstacle-free public space

Ensure the accessibility of public transport and public buildings.

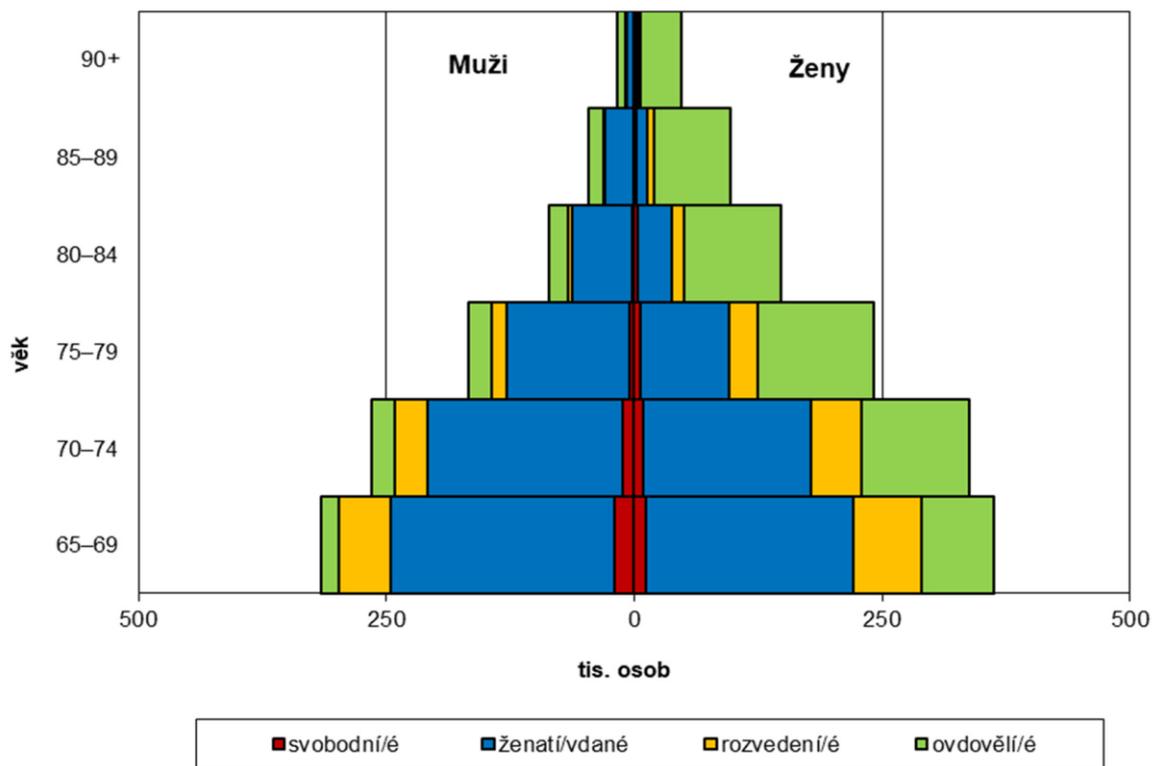
X. Awareness and media coverage of the topic of ageing

Implement awareness-raising and media campaigns highlighting the ageing of the population and its consequences. As part of the fight against ageism, include the topic of old age and the position of older persons in society in teaching materials in schools in order to promote intergenerational solidarity and conscious preparation for old age.

The above-mentioned priorities will continue to be discussed and implemented in cooperation with individual ministries, the Government of the Czech Republic, older persons organisation and non-profit organisations, as well as with the contribution and consultation of older persons themselves.

Annexes

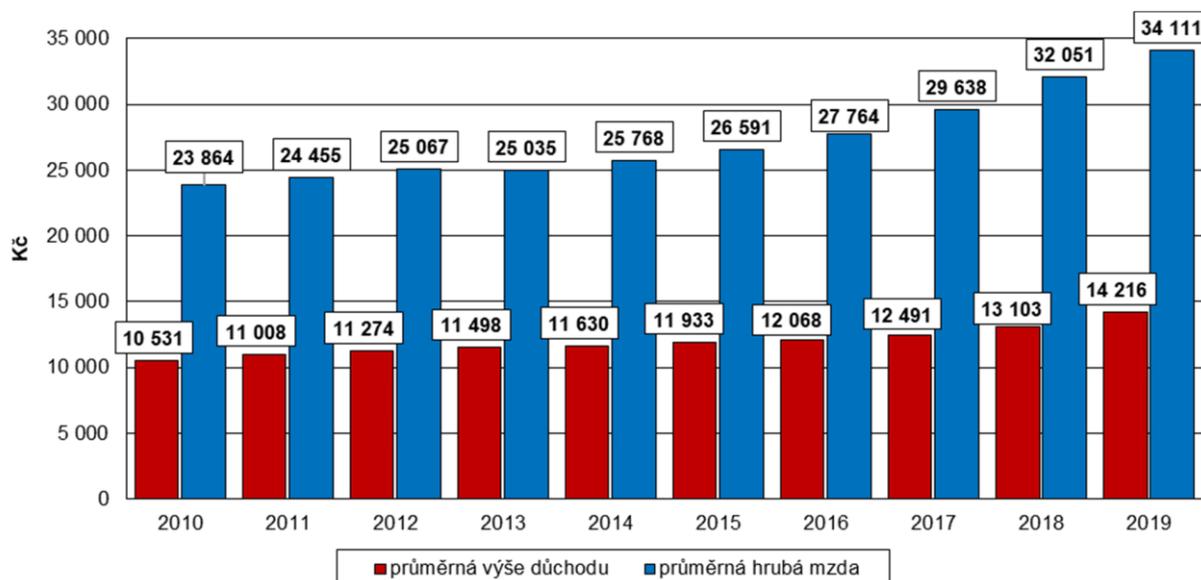
Older persons by sex, age and marital status, as of 31 December 2019



* Svobodní/é – Single, ženatí/vdané – Married, rozvedení/é – Divorced, ovdovělí/é – Widowed

Source: CZSO

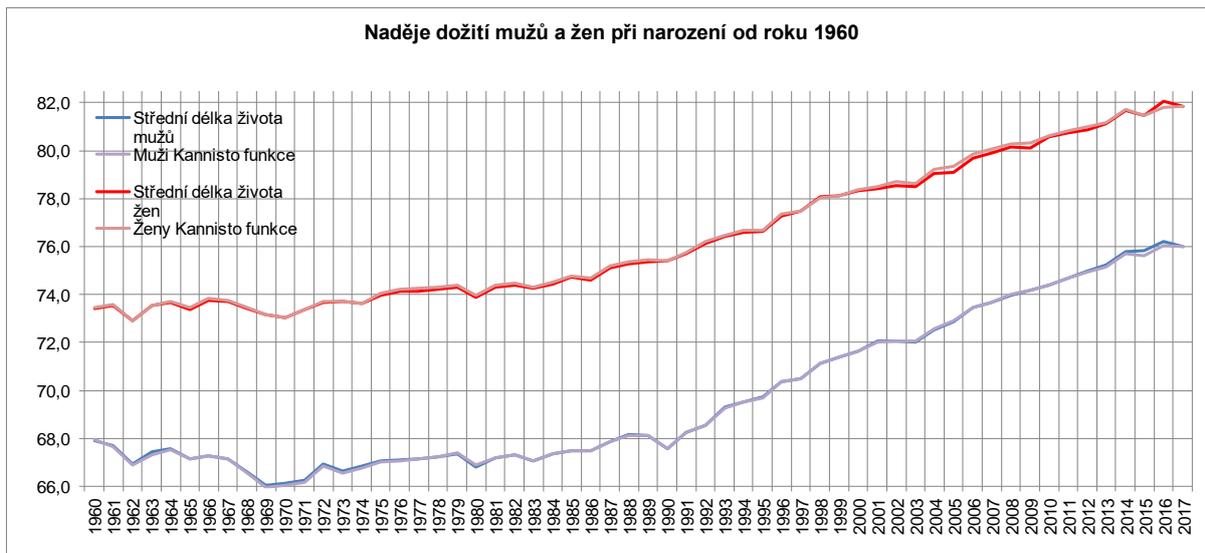
Average pension and average gross wage in the Czech Republic



* Průměrná výše důchodu - Average pension, Průměrná hrubá mzda – Average gross wage

Source: CZSO and CSSA

Life expectancy at birth for males and females since 1960



* Střední délka života mužů - Life expectancy for men, Střední délka života žen – Life expectancy for women

Source: CZSO