

PROTECTION OF THE  
ELDERLY IN THE  
REPUBLIC OF  
MOLDOVA

Ministry of Labour and Social Protection

# IDENTIFICATION OF POSSIBLE GAPS IN THE PROTECTION OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS OF OLDER PERSONS AND HOW BEST TO ADDRESS THEM

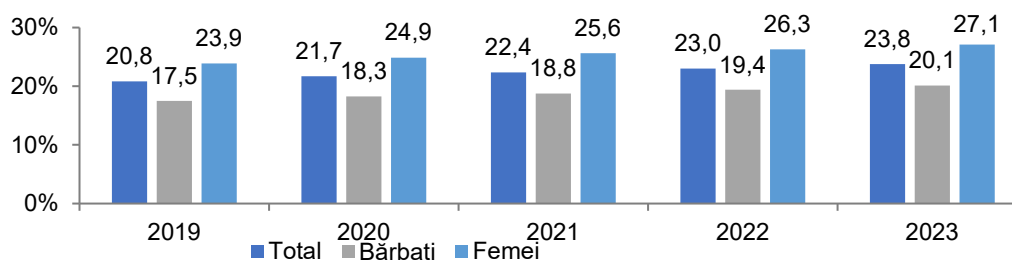
## STATISTICS ON THE ELDERLY POPULATION IN THE REPUBLIC OF MOLDOVA

(data according to [www.statistica.md](http://www.statistica.md))

**Figure 1. Elderly population by age group on 1 January**

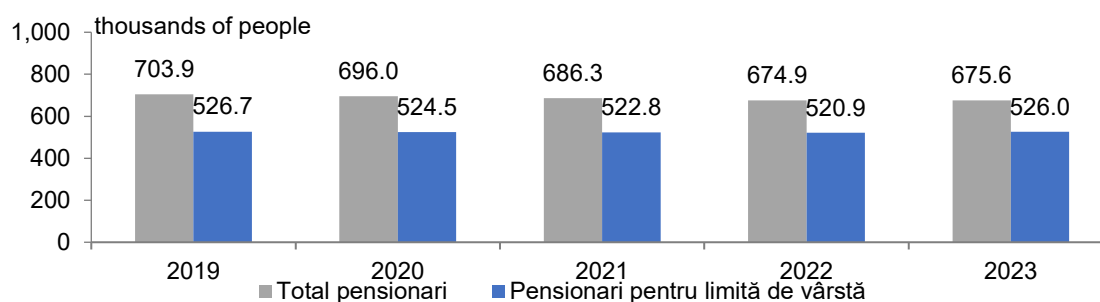
|             | 2019   | 2023   |
|-------------|--------|--------|
| 60-64 years | 33.9 % | 32.6 % |
| 65-69 years | 29.6 % | 27.2 % |
| 70-74 years | 13.6 % | 22.1 % |
| 75-79 years | 11.6 % | 8.0 %  |
| 80-84 years | 7.3 %  | 6.6 %  |
| 85 and over | 4.0 %  | 3.5 %  |

**Figure 2. Ageing coefficient of population by sex on 1 January**



|              | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 | 2023 |
|--------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| <b>Total</b> | 20,8 | 21,7 | 22,4 | 23,0 | 23,8 |
| <b>Men</b>   | 17,5 | 18,3 | 18,8 | 19,4 | 20,1 |
| <b>Women</b> | 23,9 | 24,9 | 25,6 | 26,3 | 27,1 |

**Figure 3. Number of pensioners on 1 January**



|                    | 2019  | 2020  | 2021  | 2022  | 2023  |
|--------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| Total pensioners   | 703,9 | 696,0 | 686,3 | 674,9 | 675,6 |
| Old age pensioners | 526,7 | 524,5 | 522,8 | 520,9 | 526,0 |

Figure 4. Minimum existence for elderly persons vs old-age pension

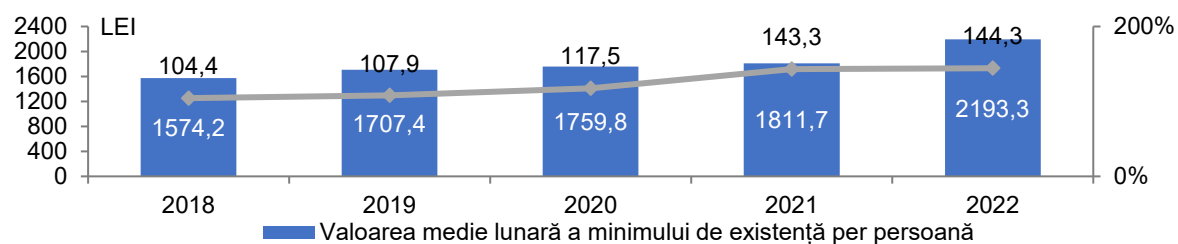
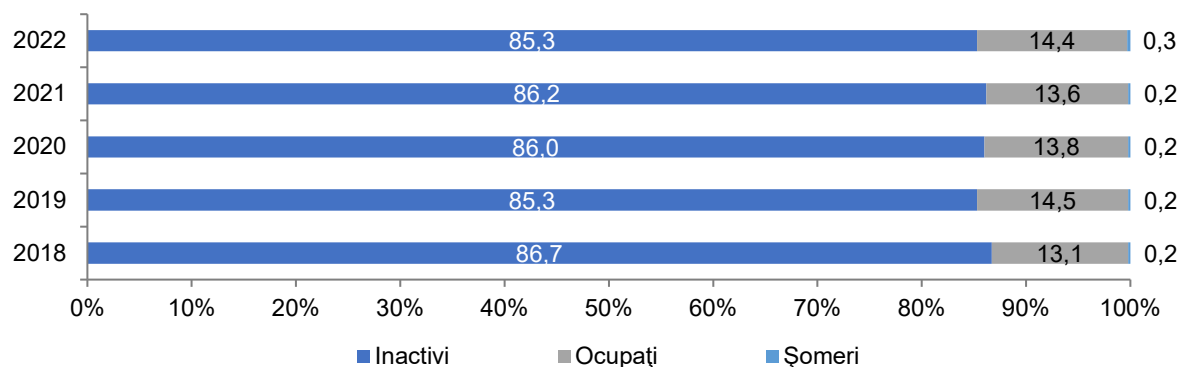


Figure 5. Persons aged 60 and over after participation in economic activity



|            | 2018 | 2019 | 2020 | 2021 | 2022 |
|------------|------|------|------|------|------|
| Inactive   | 86,7 | 85,3 | 86,0 | 86,2 | 85,3 |
| Occupy     | 13,1 | 14,5 | 13,8 | 13,6 | 14,4 |
| Unemployed | 0,2  | 0,2  | 0,2  | 0,2  | 0,3  |

Figure 6. Disposable income structure of elderly households, 2022

|   | Households made up of only elderly people |                |                | Households with elderly and other persons |                |                |
|---|---|----------------|----------------|---|----------------|----------------|
|   | Total                                     | Urban          | Rural          | Total                                     | Urban          | Rural          |
| <b>Total disposable income (monthly averages per person), RON</b> | <b>4.066,6</b>                            | <b>4.991,3</b> | <b>3.665,8</b> | <b>4.007,7</b>                            | <b>4.724,6</b> | <b>3.623,5</b> |
| <i>including in% per training source:</i>                         |   |                |                |   |                |                |
| Income from employment  | 14,2                                      | 20,9           | 10,3           | 45,3                                      | 50,2           | 41,9           |
| Income from individual agricultural activity                      | 8,1                                       | 1,0            | 12,3           | 10,9                                      | 0,8            | 18,1           |
| Income from individual non-agricultural activity                  | 1,0                                       | 1,4            | 0,8            | 5,7                                       | 5,1            | 6,1            |
| Social benefits   | 70,4                                      | 70,8           | 70,1           | 28,7                                      | 32,2           | 26,2           |
| Other revenues  | 6,3                                       | 5,9            | 6,5            | 9,4                                       | 11,7           | 7,7            |
| <i>including transfers from outside the country</i>               | 4,4                                       | 3,4            | 5,0            | 7,9                                       | 9,7            | 6,6            |

## ANSWERS TO THE QUESTIONNAIRE

### A) EQUALITY AND NON-DISCRIMINATION

In 2024, according to the Final Observations of the UN Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (2020), the Republic of Moldova will present the 7th Periodic Report on the implementation of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW).

[https://old.msmps.gov.md/sites/default/files/document/attachments/cedaw\\_text\\_20rom.pdf](https://old.msmps.gov.md/sites/default/files/document/attachments/cedaw_text_20rom.pdf)

1. Arbitrary dismissal of persons holding old-age pensioner status. In a range of decisions finding discrimination on the grounds of old-age pensioner status, the Council recommended that Parliament and the Government initiate the process of amending/complementing the art. 86 par. (2) letter (y1) of the Labor Code, so as to make it explicit that the employer may resort to the application of these provisions if the measure can be objectively and reasonably justified in accordance with the aim pursued, and the measures taken must be necessary and appropriate.
2. Limiting women's opportunities for leadership positions, by advancing the requirement of not having reached retirement age, because women reach the age of entitlement to an old-age pension earlier than men (men retire at an older age). The Council recommended the Government to initiate the legislative process to amend the provisions of item 9 subitem 10 of the Regulation on the appointment of the heads of public medical institutions based on competition and the standard management contract of the institution approved by GD no. 1016/2016 so as to ensure equal treatment of women and men in the process of filling the positions concerned.

### B) VIOLENCE, NEGLECT AND ABUSE

In 2021, the Republic of Moldova ratified the Council of Europe Convention on preventing and combating violence against women and domestic violence (Istanbul Convention). On November 14, 2023, the Council of Europe's Group of Experts on Action Against Violence Against Women and Domestic Violence (GREVIO) published its first evaluation report of the Republic of Moldova. The report contains GREVIO's recommendations to ensure a more effective implementation of the Istanbul Convention. <https://rm.coe.int/grevio-s-baseline-evaluation-report-on-legislative-and-other-measures-/1680ad46a1>

### C) LONG-TERM CARE AND PALLIATIVE CARE AND D) AUTONOMY AND INDEPENDENCE

Implementation of housing adaptation programs for vulnerable elderly people and people with reduced mobility, developing the day-care centers for older people.

At the same time, care services for social integration for persons and persons with disabilities, who are at risk depending on the environment in which they live, lack of support on the part of family members or the presence of chronic diseases that make the person incapable of serving themselves, and other associated risks - fall within the category of highly specialized services and constitute a set of socio-medical measures with a view to overcoming situations of hardship, maintaining their state of health.

The MLSP is the founder of 2 foster centres for people and people with disabilities (somatic profile):

- a) Foster centre for people and people with disabilities, mun. Chisinau;
- b) Care Centre for Disabled Persons (Adult), Com. Cocieri, Re Dubăsari.

Target institutions provide services to beneficiaries according to specific needs and individual specificities. The range of services provided by these entities is part of the provision of vital needs (food, clothing, footwear, medical care), as well as occupational therapy services, cultural activities, kinetotherapy, etc.

The capacity of these two institutions is 460 seats.

They shall be financed from the State budget account, special means and funds made up of the amounts provided by sponsors, non-governmental and religious organisations, natural and legal persons and the share of the income of persons placed in this type of service. The contribution of beneficiaries is a mandatory condition governed by legislation:

- ✓ recipients of social security pensions - 75 % of the pension determined;

- ✓ beneficiaries who have not participated as taxpayers in the social security fund - maintenance is free of charge.

The maintenance of beneficiaries in institutions is carried out in accordance with Government Decision No 506/2006 approving the natural rules for the maintenance of persons accommodated in social institutions and Government Decision No 520/2006 approving the rules on cash expenditure for the maintenance of persons accommodated in social institutions, as amended.

In the course of 2022, 281 persons were provided to the centres, including 114 women and 167 men.

Also, look at the letter l) regarding **Home social care service and Food service in welfare canteens**

#### **E) PROTECTION ET SÉCURITÉ SOCIALES (Y COMPRIS PROTECTION SOCIALE MINIMALE)**

The *purpose of social* security is to guarantee a decent standard of living by providing adequate social security benefits (including pensions) in the event of an insured risk.

In the public system, social security benefits are replacement income for total or partial loss of income due to insured risks (age, disability, accidents at work, illness, maternity, adoption, etc.). The size of the benefit granted is subject to the length of the contribution period and the amount of salary, from which social security contributions have been paid.

The *pension* is a corresponding cash right for the insured person, which is in line with the obligations relating to the payment of state social security contributions.

Under the current retirement scheme, the following pension categories are granted:

- retirement pension,
- disability pension,
- survivor's pension,
- special pension;
- early retirement pension for long career.

The retirement age for men is currently 63 years and the full contributory period for men - 34 years. Since 1 July 2023, the pensionable age for women is 60 years 6 months and the full contribution period for women is 33 years 6 months.

In order to preserve the purchasing power of the pension; they shall be indexed annually on 1 April. The indexation coefficient is the rate of inflation at the end of the previous year, as expressed by the increase in consumer prices in December of that year compared with the same month of the previous year.

At the same time, on 1 April, pensions (established under Law No 156/1998) are increased annually in a fixed amount. The fixed amount shall be determined by multiplying the average pension amount by 50 % of the increase in gross domestic product in the previous year, expressed in comparable prices.

In the situation of 01.10.2023, there are 675671 pension beneficiaries in the register of the National Social Insurance Agency, of which:

- 529486 recipients of old-age pensions;
- 99313 recipients of disability pension;
- 11321 recipients of survivors' pensions.

At 01.10.2023, the average pension size is MDL 3671,05; as follows:

- old-age pension - MDL 3680;
- disability pension - MDL 2446,30;
- survivors' pension - MDL 2984,05.

Looking at the number of beneficiaries and the average pension size, we would point out that situation 01.10.2023 is registered as follows:

- in mun. Chisinau - 162351 pension beneficiaries,
- in mun. Balti - 26429 pension beneficiaries with an average pension size of MDL 4 267,33.
- in mun. Edineț - 17547 beneficiaries with an average pension size of MDL 3049,41.
- in Orhei -22359 beneficiaries with an average pension size of MDL 3179,77.

1. Adults with severe disabilities whose disability occurred after the age of 18 are not entitled to care, attendance and supervision allowance under the Law no. 499/1999. In this respect, the Council underlined that every person with severe disabilities who justifies the need for care, attendance and supervision of another person must be eligible for the forms of social assistance available and be able to opt for one of them, and that entitlement to the care allowance must not be conditional on the time of occurrence of the disability. Carers are also in the same situation, and the Council noted that persons who care for, accompany and supervise an adult with severe disabilities are not entitled to care, accompaniment and supervision allowance, as the legislation only recognises this right for persons who care for a child with severe 2 disabilities aged up to 18 years at home. This legislative gap disproportionately affects older people as they are more likely to contract a disability, or are involved in caring for a family member with a severe disability.

#### **F) EDUCATION, TRAINING, LIFELONG LEARNING AND CAPACITY-BUILDING**

The monitoring and evaluation of the first Programme on Ageing for the years 2014-2021 was through annual reports reported from the national implementing partners. Five-Year periodic reports have also been prepared for UNECE in line with the guidelines issued by the UNECE.

I wish to express my delivery about new tools developed with the support of UNECE to promote mainstreaming ageing - Facilitator's Guide for work at the national level and online course, which is used in our activities.

During the years 2022-2023, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection in partnership with the UNICE, the UNFPA organised training courses on mainstreaming ageing for 200 policy makers from the central and local public administration. They have indicated how to identify inequalities in relation to the older persons by compensating data, identifying the causes at the level of authorities, older persons, and other actors, evaluated some policy documents through the PRISM of indicators reflected the integration of the principle of Aging. Good practices for mainstreaming ageing at international level were presented by Ms Lisa Warth, Head of the Population Division, UNECE. He also participated at the debated on Active ageing and intergenerational support. The event was part of the series of debtors organised under the Demographic Resilience Programme.

The University for the Third Age is in the process of piloting, what is required is to ensure the financial coverage from the state budget of this type of educational service for the elderly, in the situation where the elderly do not have the possibility to pay for these services.

#### **G) RIGHT TO WORK AND ACCESS TO THE LABOUR MARKET**

To support older jobseekers, National Agency for Employment (NAE) works with them. Thus, in 9 months of the current year, the share of registered job seekers of NAE was 23.5 %.

In addition, the share of people aged 55-63 who obtained the status of unemployed at NAE was 20.6 %.

The NAE also has a measure dedicated to this group of people, with the aim of facilitating their employment in the course of work, namely the granting of subsidies to employers for 6 months employing 50 + people to cover part of their salary.

The average amount of the subsidy amounted to approximately MDL 4500 and in 9 months of 2023, 278 subsidies were granted.

1. Instigating actions fuelled by the person's age-related capabilities, which led to a change of job. The Council found that the complainant did not want the guarding of an institution to be provided by the petitioner because he/she was too old and would not cope, and requested that he/she be replaced by another younger guard. The Council intervened with the National Office of Social Insurance with a request to initiate disciplinary proceedings against the complainant who had admitted discriminatory behaviour in his/her work.
2. The posting of vacancy notices indicating conditions and criteria which exclude or unduly favour older persons, whereas the setting of minimum and maximum age limits for employment in certain positions must be justified by the nature of the specific position, whereas age in itself is not a professional requirement.
3. Another problem raised by the Council in 2015 concerns the economic access to rehabilitation/recovery treatment for persons with disabilities and persons who have

reached retirement age and are in receipt of a pension and are employed. In this respect, points 30-32 of Government Decision no. 372/2010 maintain the discriminatory treatment of the cost of the rehabilitation/recovery ticket for persons with severe and acute disabilities in employment, who currently pay 30% of the cost of the ticket, as well as older and moderately disabled persons in employment, who pay 70% of the cost, compared to non-disabled persons in employment, who pay only 20%. The Council recommended amending Government Decision no. 372/2010 in order to adjust the provisions on the supply of balneological treatment tickets equally to all, i.e. charging 20% of the cost of the tickets to persons in employment, including persons with disabilities.

**H) ACCESS TO JUSTICE**

**I) CONTRIBUTION OF OLDER PERSONS TO SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT**

**J) ECONOMIC SECURITY**

**K) RIGHT TO HEALTH AND ACCESS TO HEALTH SERVICES**

Rehabilitation services are not accessible to all older people, especially those from rural areas. The network of palliative services also does not meet all needs. During the COVID-19 period, the older persons had limited access to medical services.

On the side of social assistance policies, inform about Refurbishment/recovery ticketing and distribution service:

In accordance with Government Decision No 372/2010 approving the Regulation on how to record and distribute rehabilitation/recovery tickets granted to pensioners and beneficiaries of state social benefits, the right to ticket insurance is granted every 3 years to pensioners and recipients of State social benefits, in accordance with national legislation, who have reached 18 years of age, and to citizens of the Republic of Moldova or foreigners specified in Article 2 (1) of Law No 274/2011 on the integration of foreigners in the Republic of Moldova, who are in the record of territorial social assistance structures.

Thus, the rehabilitation/recovery tickets are distributed to 2 Recovery Centres, the founder of which MMPS is founded (the capacity of the centres is 260 beds):

- a) Elderly and disabled (adult) rehabilitation centre 'Sperance', or. Vadul lui Voda;
- b) The Victoria Rehabilitation Centre of the Republic of Moldova for invalids and pensioners, or. Sergheevca, Ukraine. Starting on 16.3.2020, the Victoria Centre for the Rehabilitation of invalids and pensioners is halted (COVID epidemiological situation - 19 and the war in Ukraine).

On the situation in 1.1.2023 rehabilitation/recovery tickets at the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Elderly and the (Adult) Disability (Adult), or Vadul lui Voda benefited 2910 people, 61 % of whom were women.

The price of a rehabilitation/recovery ticket for 2023 in the Centre for the Rehabilitation of the Elderly and Disability (Adult) "Sperance", or Vadul lui Voda is MDL 14 203,70 (for 21 calendar days).

1. Based on the study on the access of older persons to health and social protection services, the Council established that older persons have difficulties in accessing health and social services due to: insufficient human resources for the provision of quality health and social care; the location of health centres mainly in urban areas; the need to bear the full cost of services and medicines not covered by the health insurance policy and informal payments, etc. The Council recommended: ensuring that the package of health services covered by the health insurance policy for older persons ensures the accessibility of a range of health services appropriate to the needs of older persons; reviewing the arrangements for the deployment of doctors in the territory, including material incentives for the employment of specialists in rural areas.
2. The Council has established that the way in which the population's access to specialised outpatient and high-performance medical services is organised is to the disadvantage of insured persons. The disadvantage relates to the long waiting time for medical services. This seemingly neutral situation disproportionately affects disabled and older persons who, due to inaccessibility problems and low pensions, cannot afford to have such investigations in other places, including paying for them. The Council found that this situation was due to the following causes: failure to plan efficiently the volume of medical

care and services; insufficient contracting for high-performance services; lack of specialists; failure to conclude bilateral contracts for the provision of medical services, where the provider does not have the necessary capacity to perform certain specialised outpatient medical services, with other medical institutions; organisation of appointments depending on the status of the insured or uninsured. The Council recommended: (1) that the MLSP, together with the CNAM, identify the needs of the population in health services, in order to effectively plan the volume of health care and health services; (2) that the CNAM plan the volume of health care of high-performance services, according to the needs of the population in the territory, prior to contracting health care under the compulsory health care insurance.

## L) SOCIAL INCLUSION

### Home social care service

The home social care service operates in accordance with Government Decision No 1034/2014 approving the framework regulation of the home social care service and the minimum quality standards.

The purpose of the service is the qualitative provision of social care services at home to persons in rural areas and persons with disabilities, in accordance with the eligibility criteria and to contribute to improving the quality of life of beneficiaries.

#### The objectives of the Service are to:

- ensuring the provision of quality home care services to facilitate the social integration of beneficiaries, in line with special needs and individual development specificities, as well as to work on their own efforts;
- preventing institutionalization by keeping people in the family and community environment;
- encouraging beneficiaries to live independently, wherever possible, in the family and community;
- raising public awareness of the problems faced by people with disabilities;
- mobilising the community to address needs with the involvement of volunteers;

The Service provides advice and support for procuring food, household goods and medicines from the financial means of the beneficiary; for the preparation of food, delivery of hot plums (where applicable); for the payment, from the financial means of the beneficiaries, of municipal services; for home and household care; for the handover and lifting of household objects and clothes to/from washing, chemical cleaning, repair; to achieve personal hygiene; to organise the process of adapting the home to the needs of the person; to train the beneficiary in social and cultural activities; for the maintenance of correspondence with relatives and friends; for the organisation of the process of procuring and transporting fuel from the beneficiary's financial means to the home, where appropriate, heating of stoves.

According to the information provided by the local social assistance bodies in the situation in 1.1.2023, some **1878** units of social workers were activated, including **1791** units of female social workers.

At the same time, **14973 beneficiaries** benefited from home social care services, of which were free of **charge** - **14763** and **pay-as-you-210**.

Dynamics of the Service beneficiaries in situation 01.01.2023:

| No of persons benefiting from free | of which:    |                           |       |       |
|------------------------------------|--------------|---------------------------|-------|-------|
|                                    | young people | persons with disabilities | rural | urban |
|                                    |              |                           |       |       |



|   |              |       |                           |       |       |
|---|--------------|-------|---------------------------|-------|-------|
| home social care services   | 11773        |       | 2990                      | 10877 | 3886  |
|   | women        | 11928 |                           |       |       |
| 14763   | barbers      | 2835  |                           |       |       |
| No of beneficiaries of Household Social Care Services against Payment | of which:    |       |                           |       |       |
|   | young people |       | persons with disabilities | rural | urban |
|   | 187          |       | 25                        | 174   | 36    |
| 210   | Women        | 167   |                           |       |       |
|   | Men          | 43    |                           |       |       |

The specialized social services are the services that involve the training of several specialists and aim to maintain, rehabilitate and develop the individual capacities of the beneficiaries to overcome a difficult situation in which they or their family find themselves.

According to the data provided by the territorial social assistance structures, in 2021, 100 social centers were activated in the republic (including 5 for homeless people) which provided social services for 6339 adults/monthly.

We mention that the specialized social services provided in day care centers and placement centers for the elderly operate under Government Decision no. 569 of July 29, 2013 regarding the approval of the Framework Regulation on the organization and operation of the Day Center for the elderly and the minimum quality standards and Government Decision no. 323 of May 30, 2013 regarding the approval of the Framework Regulation on the organization and operation of the Placement Center for the elderly and the Minimum Quality Standards.

**Day care centers** - their purpose is to provide specialized services in order to ensure the activities of care, rehabilitation and social (re)integration of the beneficiaries, based on the assessment of needs, during the day.

Counseling and psychological support services, laundry services, personal hygiene services, food services, various occupational therapies, interest-based clubs, massage services, physical therapy, curative gymnastics and various socialization activities are provided within the day centers.

At the moment, 18 centers operate in the republic, the services of which benefit 1121 people monthly, of which 748 are women.

#### **Food service in welfare canteens**

Social assistance canteens are legal persons providing free services to vulnerable social persons and operating in accordance with Law No 81/2003 on welfare canteens.

Social aid canteens are set up by the local public administration authorities and their organisation and operation are carried out in accordance with the standard rules on the functioning of social aid canteens, approved by Government Decision No 1246/2003.

In localities where there are no social aid canteens or where they do not cover existing needs, local public administration authorities, together with local social welfare structures, may procure food services from catering establishments, state-owned enterprises, commercial companies and public institutions with their own canteens.

Recipients of social assistance canteens receive people who have reached retirement (no residence, no legal supporters, no income or low income), people with disabilities and children who have reached the age of 18 (from large, single-parent and other vulnerable families).

According to data submitted by STAS, in 2022, around 50 welfare canteens were activated in the republic, including 17 in urban areas and 33 in rural areas. Some 18074 people benefited from food services. Of which, financed from the account:

- local funds for social support for the population - 31;
- sponsors, NGOs, philanthropic, religious, other legal and natural persons - 4;
- blending - 15.

Information on the number of beneficiaries in situation 01.01.2023:

|   |           |                                  |          |
|---|-----------|----------------------------------|----------|
| <b>18074</b> - persons who have benefited from the Service in the social aid canteen, of whom |           |                                  |          |
| <b>Older people</b>   | of which: | <b>Persons with disabilities</b> | of which |

|       |       |      |      |       |      |
|-------|-------|------|------|-------|------|
| 13706 | women | men  | 4035 | women | men  |
|       | 10057 | 3649 |      | 2458  | 1577 |

#### M) ACCESSIBILITY, INFRASTRUCTURE AND HABITAT (TRANSPORT, HOUSING AND ACCESS)

Concerning the practical implementation of the protection of the human rights of older persons, deriving from the normative framework, please be informed that:

a) In terms of ensuring the right of access to public water supply and sewerage services for the elderly:

- Law No 303 of 13.12.2013 on public water supply and sewerage service, as amended and supplemented, guarantees the right of access to public water supply and sewerage service to all persons without discrimination, including the elderly. Thus, according to Article 2, para. (1) letter f) of the above-mentioned Law, all persons have guaranteed non-discriminatory access to the public water supply and sewerage service under contractual conditions and in accordance with the legislative and other normative acts.

- The National Development Strategy "European Moldova 2030, under General Objective 2 "Improved living conditions" (share of population with access to water supply in the total population, %), foresees as an intermediate target of about 90.0% population access rate to water by 2025 and about 95.0% of the population access rate to water by 2030.

b) In terms of infrastructure accessibility:

- The draft Urban Planning and Construction Code, developed by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development, includes provisions regarding the State Policy in the field of infrastructure accessibility, to be achieved through development and approval of the needed normative framework, national accessibility programs, technical norms for the adaptation of infrastructure objectives, as well as control of their implementation.

- The State Policy in the field of accessibility to infrastructure foresees:

- ensuring accessibility to infrastructure objectives of disabled people and people with reduced mobility;

- design and construction of infrastructure objectives in compliance with the technical norms for adapting the infrastructure objectives;

- gradually ensuring accessibility to infrastructure objectives that are not accessible/are partially accessible.

Persons in decision-making positions, authorities, institutions and economic entities, regardless of the form of ownership, who do not comply with the infrastructure design and construction norms and do not ensure accessibility to the infrastructure, are hold responsible in accordance with the Contravention Code of the Republic of Moldova no. 218/2008.

c) In terms of practical implementation of the protection of the human rights of older persons in national regional and local development policies:

- The Government established the possibility of financing local development projects from the National Fund for Regional and Local Development by approving Government Decision no. 152/2022 on the approval of the Regulation on the management of the financial means of the National Fund for Regional and Local Development, which foresees:

- construction/reconstruction of care centers for the elderly and people with special needs;

- construction/reconstruction of centers/homes for the elderly.

These types of projects are eligible under measure 2.3. Construction, reconstruction of sports buildings, buildings intended for the provision of social services, including medical infrastructure.

The Ministry of Infrastructure and Regional Development is in the process of updating the framework of construction norms inherited from the Soviet times, to foresee actions for the protection of the human rights of older persons and people with reduced mobility.

After the implementation of the updated framework of construction norms, further actions will have a positive impact on strengthening measures to protect human rights.

Bearing in mind that urban planning documents are approved following case studies and public consultations, these actions shall strengthen the protection of human rights of older people.

#### N) PARTICIPATION IN THE PUBLIC LIFE AND IN DECISION-MAKING PROCESSES

Currently, the older population, aged 60 and over, constitutes 24 % of our country's population. By 2030, their number will constitute about 30 %.

Moldova is in the group of countries with a relative low life expectancy: 67.1 years for men 75.7 years for women (data from 2022) compared to EU average of 78 years for men and 83,4 years for women. The increase in longevity is slow, thus, population ageing in the country is due to migration and a reduction of fertility rate, beyond people living longer lives.

The MLSP collated with researchers at the National Institute for Economic Research in Moldova to calculate the Active Ageing Index/AAI. Some questions from the AAI were included in a special module of the Generations and Gender Survey/GGS, led in 2020 by the Ministry, UNFPA, and the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute.

Public policies developed at the central and local level have contributed to the improvement of the Active Aging Index, which has been increased by 5.6 % for 2020 compared to 2016. The AAI dropped 28.7 points in 2020, compared with 27.1 in 2016.

Participation in social life has been increased from 10.4 points in 2016 to 13 points in 2020. Older persons tend to participate more in individual activities related to family or friends. According to the GGS report, in 2021, key activities as caring for grandchildren and older adults engaged more women than men. Less participation in social, cultural, voluntary, and political activities have been noted, heal though the AAI indicators carried out in the Moldova MIPAA Report (2018-2021) indicated an increase in formal participation in decision-making and political activities, from 2 per cent in 2016 to 11 per cent in 2021.

The share of older people aged 55-74 years in the Republic of Moldova who uses the Internet at least once a day account for 53 %.

The MLSP is the key institution coordinating ageing policies and the implementation of the Road Map on implementing the Madrid International Plan of Action/MIPAA and its Regional Implementation Strategy/RIS. The Ministry has taken steps on mainstreaming ageing into intersectoral policies and government services, as it's more and more important that our national policies on health, employment, education, infrastructure, etc. reflect the needs of older people and provide a better quality of life and security for our senior citizens.

A range of international partners have been co-developed with the Ministry to implement the Action Plans on Ageing - UNECE, UNDESA, UNFPA, the Austrian and Czech Embassies.

The monitoring and evaluation of the **first Programme on Ageing for the years 2014-2021** was through annual reports reported from the national implementing partners. Five-Year periodic reports have also been prepared for UNECE in line with the guidelines issued by the UNECE.

During the years 2022-2023, Ministry of Labor and Social Protection in partnership with the UNICE, the UNFPA organised training courses on mainstreaming ageing for 200 policy makers from the central and local public administration. They have indicated how to identify inequalities in relation to the older persons by compensating data, identifying the causes at the level of authorities, older persons, and other actors, evaluated some policy documents through the PRISM of indicators reflected the integration of the principle of Aging. Good practices for mainstreaming ageing at international level were presented by Ms Lisa Warth, Head of the Population Division, UNECE. He also participated at the debated on Active ageing and intergenerational support. The event was part of the series of debtors organised under the Demographic Resilience Programme.

Our commitment to healthy and active ageing has been included into severe policy documents, such as:

- The national development strategy “European Moldova 2030”;
- The national regional development strategy of the Republic of Moldova 2022-2028;
- National health strategy 2022-2031;
- Development strategy "Education-2030, etc.

The establishment of consultation councils for the older population at the local and national level, which will ensure a better reflection of their needs in policies.

In 2021 the Ministry requested the support of the UNECE in conducting MIPAA/RIS, which have been integrated into the Programme on mainstreaming ageing.

The review was required to ensure fair ageing policies, based on the latest developments in the Republic of Moldova and findings of the GGS. Our approach was to have an documented intervention in order to respond to people's needs.

The conclusions and recommendations of the evaluation spent Ministry in developing a new Programme for promoting active and healthy Aging.

To create conditions and opportunities for active and healthy Aging, to fully respond to the needs of older people, the Ministry of Labor and Social Protection, together with the UNFPA, has

developed an ambitious Program to promote active and healthy Aging for the years 2023-2027, approved by the Government in June, this year. It has 43 actions and focus on mainstreaming the principle of active Aging in all sectoral policies. Successful implementation of the complex of actions will lower the older people to main full members of society as long as possible.

Central and local public authorities and public institutions will participate in the implementation of the Programme, in partnership with civil society and development partners.

After the implementation of the programme, the following key results will be achieved:

- Extension of the “Cultural Voucher” programme for 5,000 older people with low incomes;
- Community services and programmes for the mobilisation of the older people will be initiated in 50 locations;
- 3,000 older people will be provided with assistive devices and technical aids through the Republican Experimental Center for Prosthetics, Orthopedics and Rehabilitation;
- Basic social services for the older people will be created and expanded in 50 locations;
- Ports and culture programmes will be adjusted in order to be more friendly for older people;
- Digital skills of 5,000 older people will be developed;
- Light education opportunities will be expanded through the implementation of the “University for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Age” concept.

According to the Action Plan, we are currently Piloting long-life education programmes, such as “**University for the 3<sup>rd</sup> Age**”, in partnership with UNFPA and State University, in order to increase the access of older people to educational activities and services. Out of the 40 enrolled students aged 60 and above, 33 are from the Republic of Moldova, and 7 are refusals from Ukraine. In the next 7 months, they will address free courses on “Digital Skills Development” and “Well-being and being Intergenerational Communication”.

Also, we are working on developing a National Digital Platform to ensure equitable access to IT equipment for vulnerable people, building digital skills and giving them access to quality social services.

For the 6 years the Ministry has organised a Small Grants Program for non-profit organisations that is focused on developing services for older persons, healthy ageing, steering, enhancing the liveability of older persons, and civic activism. Out of 104 NGOs participating in the competition, small grants were awarded to 32 organisations involved in promoting active and healthy Aging. The Government allocated over 2 million lei for this programme.

Workshops for representatives of local public authorities on the expansion of services and programmes for the mobilisation of the older people were organised last month with the support of UNDESA, UNFPA and the Development Partnership Center. 10 Communities will be selected to bring about small projects in the field of active Aging, including renovating or strengthening the capacities of two day centres for the older people.

Also, in the context of the International Day of the Older people, The Ministry organised the National Award Competition for the older people “For an active life at any age” - 6 editions with 61 winners, distinguished by achievements in the fields of: science, pedagogy, journalism, culture, art, sport, etc. The winners received diplomas and cash prizes.