

14th session of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing

Guiding questions on the normative content related to social inclusion

Concerning older persons' inclusion in the digital sphere, the programme "Digital training for older people and persons with disabilities" has been approved for funding from the Recovery and Resilience Facility. The action is part of the policies for active ageing, promoting social inclusion of the elderly and enhancing their participation in the digital transition society, which has been accelerated by the recent COVID-19 pandemic. The programme is expected to contribute to preventing the consequences of social exclusion, facilitating information, including on health issues, promoting communication as a necessary condition for mental health, and facilitating dealing with everyday life activities, including access to healthcare services.

Gender mainstreaming aspect: Women are at slight higher risk to face poverty as well as material and social deprivation. The gender gap is intensified for aged women (65+) reaching in 2022, 4 percentage points as regards risk of poverty and 7,4 percentage points as regards material and social deprivation. The gender gap in both cases is more than twice as large in this particular age group compared to the gap in the population as a whole. This data highlights the need to integrate a gender perspective in policies aimed at strengthening social cohesion - inclusion.

As a best practice example, Greece is promoting an initiative focused on economically empowering older women and narrowing the gender pension gap. Acknowledging their distinct challenges, such as higher unemployment rates, overrepresentation in lower-paid occupations, and part-time jobs, the "Pegasus Project" has examined the issue of the gender pension gap and formulated policy proposals that have been integrated into the current Gender Equality Action Plan.

As for ensuring that older persons can live independently and be included in the community:

In accordance with the provisions of the Law no. 3463/2006 the responsibilities of municipalities include the implementation of policies or participation in actions aimed at the support and social care of the older persons. Municipalities address this responsibility, among others, with the establishment and function of:

a.) Open care and day care centers - DCCE Structures -Day Care Centers for the Elderly

The Day Care Centers for the Elderly (DCCE Structures) are day accommodation structures for older persons who are either unable to take care of themselves due to mobility difficulties or whose family environment that cares for them, works or deals with serious social and economic or health problems and is unable to respond to the needed undertaken care. They are specially designed areas, open on a daily basis and able to accommodate elderly people for a short period of the day, providing them with care services (daily hygiene and nursing), entertainment and creative activities.

The purpose of DCCEs is to improve the quality of life of the elderly, to ensure their stay in their familiar physical and social environment avoiding their institutional care and consequently their social exclusion, as well as to maintain a normal social and work life of the members of the family and relatives who are involved in the care of these individuals.

Today, 76 DCCE Structures are functional in the municipalities across the country.

b.) Community Centres

Older persons can also contact the Community Centers, which are the Points of Reference for Social Planning in the municipalities, in order to participate in social programmes and enjoy social services.

The Community Centers operate on the basis of a 2019 Joint Ministerial Decision on "Definition of the operating specifications of the Community Centers" aiming at supporting the Local Authorities of first degree in the implementation of social protection policies and in the development of a local point of reference for the reception, service and interconnection of citizens with all the social programmes and services. Their financing comes either from the Central Autonomous Fund or from European funds.