

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

### **Guiding questions on the normative content related to social inclusion**

#### **Replies provided by:**

Active Ageing and Community Care – Ministry for Health and Active Ageing

#### **Definition**

#### **1. How are the key human rights related to older persons' social inclusion defined in the national and local legislation in your country? If definitions are not available, how should such rights be defined considering relevant existing national, regional and international legal frameworks? Scope of the right**

In Malta the definition for social inclusion is similar to the definition used by UNECE that is: Social inclusion is defined as the process of improving the terms of participation in society, particularly for people who are disadvantaged, through enhancing opportunities, access to resources, voice and respect for rights, including protecting against any form of discrimination.

#### **2. Please provide references to existing national legal standards relating to older persons social inclusion on normative elements such as:**

- a) the right of older persons to take part in cultural life;**
- b) older persons' inclusion in the digital sphere;**
- c) ensuring that older persons can live independently and be included in the community;**
- d) ensuring the social inclusion of older persons living in institutions;**
- e) older persons' inclusion in intergenerational policies and programmes;**
- f) Access to prompt remedies and redress when older persons' rights related to social inclusion are violated.**

The National Strategic Policy for Active Ageing 2023-2030 includes reference to all the above. [NSPActiveAgeing2023-30.pdf \(gov.mt\)](#). There are several projects and initiatives which target policy recommendation of this strategy, including but not limited to:

Several cultural opportunities including providing free tickets for cultural events in collaboration with Festivals Malta, free entrance to Heritage Malta sites for senior citizens for persons aged 60+, several cultural outings for members of Active Ageing centres and residents in Care homes.

The AACC collaborates with several entities to provide training in information technology to older adults. Such training opportunities are included in the programme for members of Active Ageing Centres and for residents in Care Homes to facilitate participation.

Several services are offered by the Active Ageing and Community Care to support older adults with limitations to enable them to continue living in their own home with the necessary support. Such

services include: Active Ageing Centres, Carer at Home Scheme, Community Geriatrician Service, Community Psychogeriatric Consultation, Psychotherapy Service, Continence Service, Dementia Activity Centres, Dementia Intervention Team, Domiciliary Dietitian Service, Domiciliary Nursing and Caring, Handyman Service, Home Help Service, Meals on Wheels Service, Night Shelter Service, Allied Health Therapy Service, Phlebotomy, Respite at Home, Silver-T Service, Social Work, Telecare+, Telecare on the Move. Domiciliary services are offered to persons who are housebound or who have difficulties to attend the outpatient clinics offered by primary health sector or other entities. These services are provided either free of charge or at a heavily subsidised price.

In October 2023 the Active Ageing and Community Care has launched a programme in collaboration with the Ministry for Education whereby different residential homes are being matched to primary schools. At times this collaboration included also matching to Active Ageing Centres to accommodate all schools. Throughout this collaboration the children and older persons have several sessions between them, usually around 5 sessions throughout the academic year, during which they engage in several games and activities to encourage them to get to know each other and share ideas.

The Older Persons Standards Authority (OPSA) oversees a range of services for older individuals, including residential care, geriatric facilities, community services, dementia care, and night shelters, regardless of their public, private, or church affiliation. OPSA's primary functions involves setting and maintaining regulatory standards to prioritize the well being, rights, and dignity of service users. This includes licensing service providers, conducting inspections, and monitoring the efficiency and person centeredness of care. OPSA intervenes promptly and fairly when necessary to ensure high-quality services.

### **State obligations**

#### **3. What are the measures that should be undertaken by the State to respect, protect and fulfil relevant human rights to ensure the social inclusion of older persons?**

Refer to National Strategic Policy – objective 1 social inclusion.

### **Special considerations**

#### **4. What special measures and specific considerations should be considered to respect, protect and fulfil relevant human rights to ensure the social inclusion of older persons?**

The state is to work more on mainstreaming ageing in all policy fields to ensure that older persons are targeted in all policies, including protecting their right to social inclusion.

### **Implementation**

#### **5. What are the best practices and main challenges faced by your country in the adoption and implementation of relevant human rights to ensure the social inclusion of older persons**

Acknowledging the fact that in certain situations the elderly start at a disadvantage is crucial when thinking about implementing new measures. Example: while embarking on projects like digital literacy is important not all elderly can afford to buy new equipment like laptops/computers ect. Banks nowadays rely mostly on digital connectivity thus excluding some of the elderly population

Best practice: currently we embarked on a project with other NGOs, FSWS, education, religious organisations and police to carry out community planning. This project is being carried out in a number of localities around Malta. The aim is to sensitize all members of the community re: minority groups and different groups that make up that community. Ultimately the main aim is to fight social exclusion thus in some communities they adopted the idea of walking buddies, call a friend system ect. Some examples of the best practices have been mentioned in the section 2.

Main challenge: social inclusion of older men, social inclusion of elderly who are foreigners especially from non EU countries. Clear policies on elderly people who misuse drugs and alcohol.