



BRIEF PEER REVIEW REPORT

Practices in Slovenia:

“Challenges and paths towards demographic changes”

Ljubljana, November 6th, 2012

INTRODUCTION AND PRESENTATIONS

After the closing conference of the “European Year of Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity 2012” on November 5th at Brdo, Slovenia, the third CE-Ageing Platform Peer Review titled “Slovenia – Challenges and paths towards Demographic Changes” took place in Ljubljana the day after, on November 6th in Ljubljana, Slovenia.

The main idea of Slovene Peer Review was to highlight the demographic situation in Slovenia, to present the most important legislative and reform proposals as well as present some good practices, performed by different stakeholders and related to active ageing.

At the beginning of our meeting, the chosen Ambassador of the European Year of Active Ageing and Solidarity between generations visited the group. Mr Peter Florjančič, the world known innovator, was kindly asked to present his life story and lessons for active life at 93. The total number of Peter Florjančič's innovations and inventions covers around 400, only a tenth of which have become commercially viable. Florjančič himself admits that the idea of each innovation, no matter how promising, is best abandoned if in one year the right market cannot be identified. The rich and exciting life and career of Peter Florjančič have been documented in a film made by the director, Karpo Godina, entitled *'The Story of Mr. P.F.'*; the film was shot in 2002 and is available on DVD. Furthermore, his life and work were also disclosed by writer Edo Marinček in his books *Skok v smetano (Jump in the Cream)* and *Ideja za milijon (Idea for a Million)*, which were written on the basis of a collection of material from Florjančič's talks and memories. Peter Florjančič remains in good and creative shape despite his 93 years; his spirit is vivid and penetrating, his health is good, with the exception of his eye sight that has almost failed him. Florjančič believes that the secret behind his long, lively and often adventurous life is his untamed and curious nature. To confirm his innovative nature, Mr. Florjančič at the end of his visit presented his recent innovation, namely the paper and wood bird house, which will short be produced by IKEA.

After a special Ambassador visit, the second presentation took place. Mrs Barica Razpotnik from the Statistical Office of Slovenia explained the Slovene demographic portrait. She highlighted the fast changing demographic structure of population in Slovenia with specifics and prospects till 2060. Life expectancy is increasing while fertility is low, increased number of older people will require new approaches in the society. From 1990 the share of people 65+ increased by 58% in Slovenia. It will be more and more important to include elderly population into society through formal and informal activities as longer working period, volunteering and understand that elderly can be also consumers and entrepreneurs, enable intergenerational transfer of knowledge and



skills. The further important issue will be closer monitoring of elderly living conditions to prevent social exclusion and higher risk of poverty, especially in single households as well as enable more formal/informal long-term care in the future. She stressed the ageing trend means also growing share of population 80 + (2060 the share in EU will be 12 %) and therefore more fragile and dependent population. At the end Mrs Razpotnik emphasized that population ageing is a major civil achievement we should be proud of and that elderly are no longer a marginal group, their role in the society is growing, also through informal activity.

The next presentation by Mrs Mateja Karničnik (Economic Institute Maribor, Human Resource Development Center) showed challenges of population ageing from the perspective of the labour market, educational field and cooperation with PES, employers and retired persons. She explained good practices the Institute developed recently. Among them the important event was organising the conference, named "Age Friendly Employer" in 2010, published articles and brochures as well as on-line course (dimensions of population ageing, age diverse workforce, work ability, understanding and managing different generations, active ageing). The Institute researched concepts and good practices of intergenerational cooperation in working environment „CONNECTING KNOWLEDGE“ (mentoring, mixed working teams, generational management, job rotation, talent management, flexicurity), organised seminars for employers and councillors at the employment service and introduced presentations for wider public international trade fair, fair for education and employment, festival for third life age, etc. Interesting workshops for managers were focused on Population and workforce ageing (demographic challenges, age diverse workforce, stereotypes and myths), Work ability (history of work ability research, work ability index, work ability house model) and age profiling (purpose of age profiling, business benefits, age profiling tools). Training employers included *Understanding and managing different generations* (characteristics of each generation and differences in workplace, complementarity of generations), *Age management* (attitudes towards older workers, recruitment, training and career development, flexible working practices, occupational health and well-being, intergenerational cooperation, exit from employment) and *Communication and motivation* (importance of communication skills, giving feedback, power burger (motivation), conflict resolution). The Institute organised also training programme „Active after 50“ which included orientation phase (self-realization, my position, plans for the future,) , modular phase (employment, communication, health, active life, lifelong learning) and Individual work (job searching skills, volunteering, computer basics). To support trainers, the programme Training programme „Never Too Old to Learn“ targeted trainers in adult education, blended learning and covered new approaches and innovative methods to promote activity of elderly and strengthened their professional competencies.

The next invited guest at the Peer Review was Director General of Directorate for Social Affairs at the Ministry of Labour, Family and Social Affairs, Mr Davor Dominkuš, who had a comprehensive presentation of major implemented and foreseen reforms. He stressed the three important acts that have to be implemented soon due to fast demographic changes; the Pension Reform, the Act in Long-term care and Health System Reform. During his presentation Mr Dominkuš presented some major figures on demographic changes and explained the major barriers Slovenia is facing with as regards the faster implementation of required legislative changes.

The last presentation was hold by Mr Anton Donko, the vice president of Slovene Federation of Pensioners. Mr Donko started the presentation with a wish not to push retired people into asylum as it is too expensive. Ageing namely means experiences, wisdom and earning. It is important to give older people the possibility to participate to keep them independent, healthy and productive, to



remove burden from the middle aged generation, to use their experiences and wisdom for faster development of the society and to use their volunteerism for better coverage to those in need. The presenter stresses that it is right time to implemented intergenerational solidarity both ways as the pensioners are not asking for help but they are asking for the opportunity to participate more productively and more effectively. The independent senior is cheaper for the society as he/she cares for her/his own health, offers her/his expertise , is active in the community, assistance and first aid to the offspring, are educator of grandchildren, perform self help activities of seniors in NGOs and are most active long term volunteers. He explained that Slovene Federation of Pensioners: the biggest NGO in Slovenia, covering 230.000 members, joining 67 % of older than 65 years. Seniors in Slovenia also work in humanitarian field via SFPA, Red Cross, Caritas and other NGOs. The interesting and successful project Elderly for elderly (from 2004 on) has been presented afterwards. In 12 years volunteers of SFPA involved in regular visits and assistance to those who need help have helped 126.500 seniors, older than 69 (65% of all target group in Slovenia) , visited them 303.000-times and offered assistance in 59.988 cases. In 2011, 3.462 volunteers spent 320.500 hours organizing visits and assistance and 2,323.000 hours visiting seniors. The number is significant for s country will only 2 million inhabitants.

The presentations were followed by discussions and a working session for developing the key learning's.

KEY LEARNINGS - INITIAL NOTES FROM 'CRITICAL FRIENDS'

As a first step the group brainstormed on the 'burning issues' which awoke during the presentations and discussions of the morning session. The following issues were listed:

- The interest and focus given to 'intergenerational solidarity' in Slovenia;
- The organised system of volunteering of people in the field of social services;
- The efforts made in regard to fostering intergenerational dialogue to better target the specific needs of the age groups;
- The Slovenian PES seems mainly to target individuals but not enterprises; (private) consultancy for enterprises would, hence, be needed;
- Consultancy and training for employees as well as HRD managers should be offered (e.g. the topic could be included in curricula next to lifelong career management in Slovenia);
- The high-level support, interest and awareness of politicians for Active Ageing;
- The 'holistic approach' taken by Slovenian government within the reforms developed by linking long-term care with pension, labour market and health policies;
- The idea of 'innovation clubs' for citizens (entrepreneurs);
- The life cycle approach taken; as well as
- Building on the awareness and interest by taking necessary further steps such as information campaigns;



The participants concluded by drawing key lessons learnt which include:

A potential is seen for Slovenia when making use of the current engagement and interest of politicians in active ageing and intergenerational solidarity in taking necessary further steps which should include:

- developing and offering measures, trainings and consultancy services for enterprises in regard to strategies and actions to be taken within enterprises for the challenges faced by demographic change (age management, diversity management and related HRD concepts; in cooperation with private counselling services);
- mainstreaming HRD initiatives taken by enterprises;
- including trainings for employees in curricula in regard to intergenerational dialogue, etc.; as well as
- implementing information campaigns and media work on raising awareness on the demographic change.

The participants also discussed the general (non-Slovenian-specific) necessity for a paradigm shift in regard to organising and valuing work and private life.

The Peer review was closed at 16.00 by expressing deep thanks to the Slovenian colleagues in giving insight into achievements and actions taken in Slovenia so far and their open reflection on the status quo.

CHAMBER OF LABOUR UPPER AUSTRIA (Lead Partner)
email: bogner.t@akooe.at
phone: +43 732 6906 2445, fax: +43 732 6906 62445

CENTRE FOR SOCIAL INNOVATION (Communication)
email: machacova@zsi.at
phone: +43 699 10932028, fax +43 1 4950442-40

www.CE-ageing.eu



This project is implemented through the CENTRAL EUROPE Programme co-financed by ERDF

www.central2013.eu