
CONFERENCE ABSTRACT

Life-course approach and healthy ageing – how improve that in Croatia?

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An introduction (comprising background and problem statement)

Today, most people are living longer and a significant proportion of the world's population are older people. B In 2017, there are an estimated 962 million people aged 60 or over in the world, comprising 13 per cent of the global population. According to the mid-year population estimate (Central Bureau of Statistics, July 2018), there were 4,124,531 inhabitants in Croatia in 2017. The structure of the population shows that the Croatian population is in a trend of progressive aging. Number of persons over 65 reached 19.9% (in the 2011 Census the share of persons over 65 was 17.7%). According to the Central Bureau of Statistics, life expectancy for both sexes is 77.9 years in 2017, for women 80.9 years and for men 74.9 years.

Description of policy context and objective

This demographic change has strong implications for sustainable development, so perspective of ageing must be implement in all policies. As people grow older, their health outcomes, needs and what they value can change. Life expectancy has increased for both women and men in the EU member States, although this increase in longevity is not always accompanied by good health. A person's health and well-being are shaped by many different individual, social and environmental factors throughout life. Risk exposures in early life can affect health, wellbeing and socioeconomic participation decades later. The UN's Sustainable Development Goal 3 (SDG 3) for 2030 is to "ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all at all ages". (<https://www.who.int/life-course/en/>). One of the method for that is following a life course approach concept. The life-course approach aims are increasing the effectiveness of interventions throughout a person's life. It focuses on a healthy start to life and targets the needs of people at critical periods throughout their lifetime, paying particular attention to the fact that heart and blood vessel diseases and malignancies remain a leading burden. These disease groups are registering a global decline in morbidity and mortality across the EU. Croatia does not yet have a national strategy for these leading public health problems, but their adoption is in process. The adoption of an action plan to improve the aspect of healthy aging in the Republic of Croatia should also be considered in the next period.

Targeted population:

Older population

Conclusions (comprising key findings, discussion and lessons learned):

The Croatian population is in a trend of progressive aging, while the life expectancies and years of living in good health are below the level of developed EU countries. The leading burden in Croatia is cardiovascular and malignant diseases, so we have to adopt strategies for these areas in the coming period. Also we need appropriate action plan for healthy ageing. The precondition for their adoption and implementation is intersectoral and interdisciplinary cooperation, because the solution to these challenges lies not only in the health sector. Croatia will present and discuss this topic as a priority with Member States during the EU Presidency.