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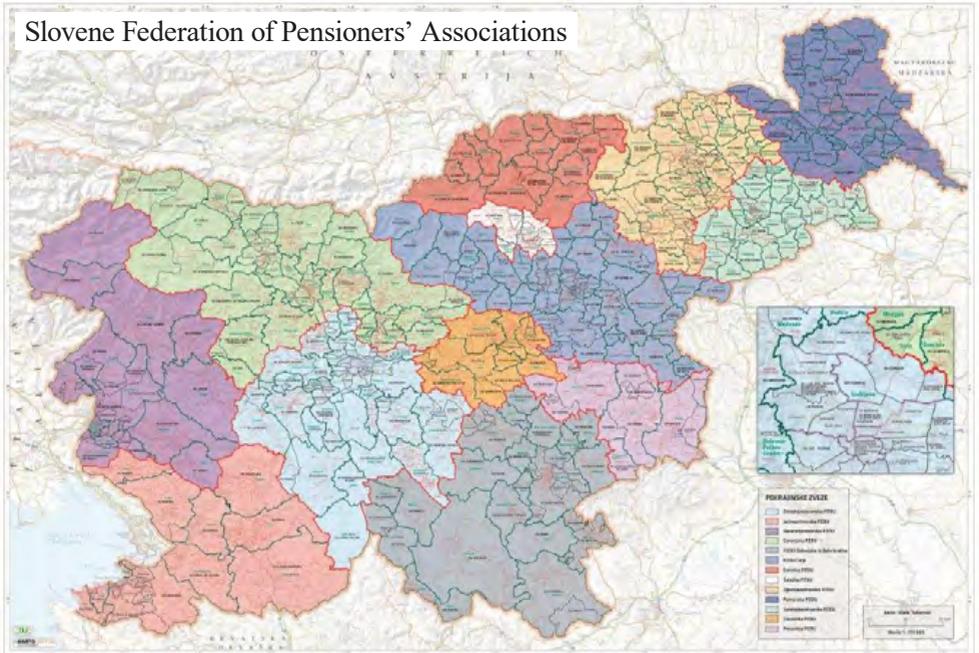
2018 Memorandum



Written by
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Slovene Federation
of Pensioners' Associations

Slovene Federation of Pensioners' Associations



Dear readers,

The Slovene Federation of Pensioners Associations has written and ratified the 2018 Memorandum, a detailed analysis of the situation of Slovenian pensioners and other elderly people which describes the areas where work needs to be done and the relevant authorities responsible for such work. The purpose of the memorandum is to inform its receivers, the political parties, and other holders of political power about our position, views, and expectations regarding future cooperation in dealing with the issues that we face. We've focused mainly on areas related to ensuring decent living conditions for elderly people and their inclusion in the society while keeping a close eye on the well-being of all generations, their cooperation, and mutual support when it comes to using the available knowledge and skills.

Our document gives insight into the demands of our increasingly old society to the political parties that are in the process of forming their programmes and adopting the measures for the implementation of the Strategy for a long-lived society, Vision 2050, Slovenian development strategy until 2030, and other documents, plus it suggests a range of solutions based on cooperation that would turn this demographic characteristic into a common challenge.

The most controversial and also constitutionally questionable is the redress of injustice and adjustment of pensions in order to match the situation prior to the 2008 financial crisis. Demands that are ten years old?! It's like buying a teddy bear to a fifteen-year-old. It'd be great if the teenager was still five years old, but time waits for no one and such a present would no longer be appropriate.

The pressures of politics on our work are substantial. Political parties seem to grow very fond of us before each election, but afterward, our demands usually fall on deaf ears. We hope that all political parties that have taken part in this year's elections would see this document as a step in the right direction, helping to ensure that the welfare state aids the most vulnerable members of our society to the best of its ability.

It is common knowledge ever since the times of the famous philosopher Aristotle that a good, happy state can't exist without educating its youth and members of all other age groups. To reach this ideal, Aristotle alludes to eugenics in the family, which he considered being the basic unit of society, and readers of our memorandum will notice a similar appeal to eugenics in Slovenian politics which should serve its people and subject all other goals to this purpose.

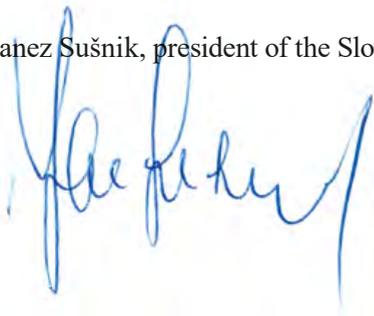
After ten years since the adoption of the 2008/2009 Memorandum huge changes have taken place. China has become an economic superpower and

the “petrodollar” has lost its dominant position on the worldwide markets. The USA has gone its own way, EU and its member states are dealing with Brexit, and climate changes are resulting in increasing numbers of natural disasters. Several new international and EU commitments (fiscal compact) have been adopted. We have the mandatory UN and EU agendas, a dangerous demographic inversion throughout Europe due to the ageing of society, plus the refugees and migrants. Almost all of these issues have become global facts. The state going ten years back wouldn't be a good way of making a step forward. This memorandum has been written by Tomaž Banovec and his colleagues. To paraphrase Aristotle's Politics, it is “the final appeal of Slovenian pensioners for the coming of age of our politicians.”

Similar texts include numerous similar demands, but the scope of this Memorandum is so complex that some issues must be explained from the very first introductory pages.

Politics should be based on the following premises: well-being, happiness, equality, freedom, law, good life, inclusion in decision-making and management, and political pluralism. Can pensioners identify ourselves in any of these axioms and are we an equal partner in any of them?

Janez Sušnik, president of the Slovene Federation of Pensioners Associations



Slovene Federation of Pensioners' Associations

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Addresses

Political parties and political and executive bodies in Slovenia that, in the election year of 2018, will work on election programmes and promises and design action and other programmes aimed at implementing the Active Aging Strategy, Vision 2050, Slovenian development strategy 2030, and other development documents and ideas aimed at implementing fundamental structural reforms in 2018 and beyond while taking into account the situation, needs, desires, and capabilities of elderly people – seniors and pensioners.

2018 MEMORANDUM

on the positions, mode, and content of the upcoming cooperation with political parties and other holders of political power, and on the issues elderly Slovenians have dealt with in the past period, are dealing with in 2018, and will deal with in the upcoming 2018-2022 period

A. Successful Active Aging Strategy

The elderly in Slovenia, which make up almost half of the population and include more than 612,000 pensioners, believe that the management of long-lived society and aging strategies will only work if we act in accordance with the following principles of long-lived society management, which will continue to rise in importance in the following years:

1. people should live fulfilling lives at all ages, and the contribution of the elderly should be acknowledged and encouraged regardless of age, sex, ethnic origin, and health;
2. age should not determine the role, value, and potential of an individual;

3. people should enjoy long years of healthy lives, with the state providing suitable programmes enabling them to look after their health, either on their own or together with others;
4. the state should make sure that people can be actively involved in the work process for as long as they want and are able to, and in a manner they consider the most appropriate, while the society as a whole should encourage flexible employment and retirement;
5. the elderly should have access to information and communication technologies and other modern digital technologies and networks which are tailored to their needs;
6. the elderly should be included in education and training programmes – both professional and personal, focused on inclusion in society, active and healthy ageing, and maintenance of mental abilities;
7. the state should help the elderly get appropriate training for volunteer work, which they may take part in as long as they want, in a manner deemed most suitable by themselves and with their contribution fully acknowledged;
8. the state should aim to reduce the number of elderly living in poverty, provide special insurance schemes, and design additional pension pillars based on real-estate and other property;
9. the vulnerable elderly should be protected, safe, and free of fear;
10. the elderly should have full access to high-quality public services which are focused on the people, accessible, inter-connected, and tailored to their needs, whenever and wherever they may require them;
11. houses, buildings, common areas, transport infrastructure, and public infrastructure should be well-designed, accessible, safe, reliable, and easy to use for the elderly;
12. official data for analyses and counselling, along with all relevant information, should be available to the elderly in an easy-to-use and understandable format.

We wish that the announced, expected, and necessary structural changes will conform to these principles and expectations and that they'll be realized by action programmes, laws, and implementation and management measures for various long-lived society strategies. They should also include up-to-date knowledge, analyses, provisions of UN conventions, other commitments adopted on the international and European level, recommendations of OECD, EU, and other expert and political institutions. We've noted that the 2005 Madrid international action plan on ageing is not being implemented as expected due to its vagueness and universality. The European social pillar

with its twenty theses, which was adopted in autumn 2017, applies to Slovenia as well and has a lot of potential, if we manage to take into account our special requirements and possibilities. The EU and its members have found that a joint EU social policy is just as necessary as economic and monetary policies.

This vision is and will be our framework for evaluations of credibility of pre-election promises and legislation, as well as the standard for monitoring the measures and development policies of the newly formed Slovenian government. We expect that most of these issues will be resolved by the Council on active ageing and intergenerational cooperation, the Economic and social council, and other government bodies and National assembly committees. We sincerely hope that the relevant ministries and public-law institutions will prepare the promised action programmes related to the management of long-lived society which will be backed up by experts and well coordinated.¹

We expect that the representatives of the elderly will be able to take part in the preparation of materials related to us, as well as the consultations taking place before important decisions are reached. Only with active cooperation of users can measures, strategies, and policies become more effective. We'd also like to change the way we cooperate in these matters. In the past we have often been invited to discussions and have worked hard but the results weren't satisfactory.² We also expect such activities to be co-financed with state resources. We believe that the current election system should be changed and will insist with the proposals we've presented.³

¹ This lack of coordination between various factors usually becomes evident after coalition agreements have already laid out the important issues and concrete measures which aren't implemented. Even at the time of writing this we are faced with serious problems when it comes to implementing the established goals (health care, labour market, long-term care insurance, demographic reserve fund, etc. We haven't even seen the planned office for the elderly being established). The situation with the promised adjustments of pensions is similarly problematic.

² This is the case with the proposed Long-term care insurance act, which has been discussed for the last twenty-three years. Similar things have been happening with various coalition agreements (including the last one), whose social aspects have failed to be followed through in most cases.

³ On numerous occasions the Slovene Federation of Pensioners' Associations has proposed legislation which has always been vigorously rejected by the National Assembly committees.

B. The most important focal points as we enter a new period after 2018

Population ageing is not just a burden, but also a development challenge

In accordance with articles 2 and 14 of the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia the elderly, who account for almost a third of Slovenia's population and are an important voters group:

- Expect that the new government of the Republic of Slovenia will support our efforts to live healthy and independently for as long as possible in order to make the most of our potential and use our knowledge, experience, and wisdom to facilitate a balanced development of our country; individual's age and ethnic origin should no longer be abused to determine their role, value, or potential.
- Expect that the new government will work together with us, the elderly, to faster implement the provisions of the Madrid action plan on ageing, the UNECE declaration, the 2017 UN ministerial conference, and other international recommendations and commitments. We hope that the new government will ensure consistent compliance with the provisions of articles 18, 34, and 63 of the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia. Intergenerational intolerance and hate publicly perpetrated by some individuals should be sanctioned immediately with appropriate political and moral consequences.
- The elderly in Slovenia were quick to identify the seriousness of the recession between 2007 and 2016. We were modest in our demands, which directly affected our financial situation coming out of the economic crisis. This cannot and must not be repeated in the future. Our independence should never be endangered, particularly when it comes to our social security and the right to decide on matters concerning ourselves. We expect that the predictions regarding partial mitigation of negative effects of the economic crisis felt by the elderly and the pensioners will be fulfilled. It seems especially illogical, unfair, and unreasonable to focus on solving wage discrimination issues affecting highly important but small groups,⁴ while neglecting the situation of the elderly and more than 610,00 pensioners.

⁴ An example of such practice is the separate regulation of salary classes for firemen and similar groups.

- We raise the issue (both in terms of expertise and political implications) of a socially acceptable ratio between the official minimum costs of living and the average pension and a detailed distribution of paid pensions. We expect a thorough and sensible reply and appropriate commitments to making sure it is followed through, along with regular reports on matters related to this issue.
- Once again we offer our cooperation to the government of the Republic of Slovenia in matters related to labour market management. Our goal is for people to be able to work for as long as they want and are able to, in a way they think best, and backed up by a flexible approach to employment and retirement. The elderly would like to warn about the serious structural problems in Slovenia related to vocational education, employment strategies, general productivity which is still comparatively low, and a lack of appropriate workers, all of which will continue in the future as well, it seems.⁵ It is our opinion that we need a complete structural reform of the labour market instead of improvisations and partial adjustments to current pressures. We urgently need a political debate regarding the introduction of flexible work assignments, time banks,⁶ share economy, and inclusion of the elderly in such arrangements.
- Since several governments were able to reduce the ratio between the average net retirement pension and the net salary from 67.7 % in 2007 to 59.3 % in 2016 (and this trend seems to continue), we demand a clear answer as to how this burning issue will be handled in the future. The current pre-election improvisations⁷ aren't promising and the experiences of the last nine years are decidedly negative.
- Exclusion from modern information channels (or falling behind of the elderly in this regard), which has been going on for the last two decades,

⁵ Tackling of this issue is a top priority and being too rigid would result in falling behind Europe and the rest of the world. Inclusion of the elderly must be facilitated by allowing them to work longer and to take part in modern forms of employment; plus, the elderly should be allowed to return to work and there are instruments already in place with this in mind, but they're not giving the expected results.

⁶ The pensioners are aware that to tackle major conjectural and even daily oscillations due to labour needs, regular working times and employment relationships of indefinite duration are not enough. In many other countries, such matters are handled with time banks.

⁷ ⁷ It is unnecessary and ineffective to tackle this burning issue with new legislation before the elections. Experts claim that all services of the welfare state should be handled together, especially if the agreed 25 % GDP share will be kept until 2030 and 2060.

is a violation of Article 39 of the Constitution of the Republic of Slovenia. We expect state's support and help in the following areas: increasing the ability of the elderly to use digital technologies (digital literacy, subsidized access to equipment and communication networks, suitable user support), so that the elderly would have an easier time exercising their rights and obligations; ICT trainings for everyone interested so that they could again take part in work processes; providing elderly-friendly ICT services that are easier to use and enable simpler electronic communications and dealings with the state and other business entities.⁸

- Since lifelong learning and skill-building is the driving force behind the development of any society, we expect that the government of the Republic of Slovenia will provide better support for additional education and training programmes for the elderly (design of an action plan, development of suitable, financially accessible education programmes aimed at the elderly). We also expect there'll be enough suitably qualified people, technical equipment, and infrastructure available to carry out these programmes. This includes development of new skills for professional migrations at older ages and professional certifications for new vocations. This is also one of the methods of reducing old-age dependency.⁹
- Volunteer work will be increasingly important for the quality of life of all generations. That's why we expect the adoption of an action programme to increase the amount of volunteer work, making it possible to transfer some of the institutionalized engagements (concessions included) to non-governmental organizations.

⁸ We often get the feeling, which is backed by plenty of evidence, that in the process of computerization, user friendly communication of information is left at the sidelines. It is vital that content is arranged and a user-friendly experience is created before computerization starts. Consult further writings on immovable property and mass appraisal, along with Andrej Berden's article in Slovenian daily newspaper Dnevnik, December 2017.

⁹ Old-age dependency is determined as the ratio between the number of people aged 65 or older and the number of people aged between 15 and 64. In 2000 the EU had a ratio of 25 %, which will increase to 50 % by 2050 according to the projections. In Slovenia, the old-age dependency ratio was 21 % in 2002. The current projections indicate that in 2020, old-age dependency ratio in Slovenia will be at 29 %, and by 2050 it will rise to around 40 %. Eurostat's calculations indicate a ratio of 23.2 % for Slovenia.

Poverty is a threat to increasing numbers of the elderly in Slovenia

- In accordance with the fact that Slovenia is a welfare state (Article 2 of the Constitution), we expect that the new government will adopt and implement the necessary measures aimed at stopping and reducing social stratification, as it is laid out in Vision 50 in which the government declared its plans for “general prosperity”. It is unacceptable that income poverty risk among the elderly is so high in Slovenia compared with other EU states. The goals that have been set are very specific: “There will be 40,000 less people living below this threshold.”¹⁰ We don’t need such empty promises.
- We have to warn about the worldwide phenomenon of unequal ageing,¹¹ which develops throughout one’s life and manifests itself at old age. It is often caused by landmark events in people’s lives and the adverse effect of such events on their health, life expectancy, and low income at old age. Younger generations will be faced with even higher levels of age inequality. They are expected to live longer but, even now, are faced with a less stable labour market and rising inequality of personal income and household income distribution which will unquestionably affect them at old age. We propose that the responsible authorities analyze all these effects and take appropriate actions.
- Due to this inequality, the poorest people live in older households. Researchers have found that pensions account for more than 95 % of all funds in pensioners’ households (they are more or less the only source of income). Their real-estate (especially their housing) are old and in need of renovations to be suitable for safe living and home care. A state intervention is mandatory (German model).¹² We’ve presented our proposal as far back as 2014.¹³

¹⁰ The Minister of labour, family, social affairs and equal opportunities Dr. Svetlik announced this and repeated it in various union reports.

¹¹ OECD, page 15–18, <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/9789264279087-3-enSkrij>, Abstract and definition.

¹² We’ve written about this in 2014, when we suggested several solutions to the ministries (Ministry of the environment and spatial planning, Ministry of labour, family, social affairs and equal opportunities). We received no answer and the energy renovation backed up by public funds is by no means aimed at improving life at old age.

¹³ The idea has been presented to the Ministry of labour, family, social affairs and equal opportunities and the Ministry of the environment and spatial planning, both in writing and personally.

- In order to improve the situation of everyone who suffers or will suffer from old-age poverty, meaning that their pensions are too low (because of relatively low wages, other income, low insurance base, and other reasons) to ensure that their basic needs can be covered, we propose adoption of regulations of health-related benefits and other types of social aid related to the agreed basket of essential goods and services. It is mandatory to ensure detailed analytical monitoring of this phenomenon – mainly among the elderly.
- Slovenian elderly households are nowadays an important source of help for young families. The situation is changing as pensioners' standard is plummeting. Most pensioners can't pay full home or residential care with their pensions, let alone help their unemployed or underpaid offspring. We've been waiting for twenty-three years for the adoption of an act on long-term care and insurance which would include all available options, not only those that are institutionalized and carried out by public institutions. This act should make it possible to constantly improve one's skills and provide the basis for support and management of individuals' and family issues at home. Recommendations on community-based forms of coexistence have been adopted by the 2014 Social care resolution, but we still haven't moved past lengthy discussions.

Pensions are a source of new jobs because they boost economic development

- We expect that the receivers of this Memorandum are aware that pensions aren't just social aid, but also a right earned through work and based on contributions to the current society's wealth. Despite numerous populist statements that echo the sentiments of daily political issues, pensions have an important impact on merchandise flows, service flows, and cash flows and therefore don't hinder but boost economic and social development.
- The announced revision of the pension scheme which is to be coordinated with other (mainly health care) systems and the labour market reform affects mainly the situation of future pensioners. The following must be noted regarding the current pensioners (616,000): Unfavourable economic conditions that we've experienced in the past and the measures for their improvements have substantially decreased the ratio between the net pensions and net salaries (pension/salary). That's why it is mandatory to get a realistic appraisal of their effects and to consider eventual measures to improve these unfavourable conditions. We are gradually reaching a fi-

nancially sustainable situation in terms of public finances. That's why it is no longer tolerable to restrict people's rights; instead we should gradually improve financial and living conditions that would mirror the economic and social development.

- In the future, compulsory pension and disability insurance must remain the essential pillar of this system. The second, third, and fourth pillars can only serve as a useful addition to the first one. We are not against a modernization of the whole system with all the elements that improve and upgrade it, but no modernization should restrict the rights of current pensioners and cause more poverty. Long-term financial stability of the pensions fund is only possible with measures that: encourage the young to start participating in the work process at a younger age, encourage employees to stay at work until an older age, and create humane and safe working conditions. We support a model which maintains a general solidarity from all fiscal sources and which is reasonable and fair.
- Keeping the same pension amounts for the time they are being paid out ensures that they grow together with the growth of salaries (regular adjustments), with the same percentages applying to all categories of pensioners. A different approach would be a violation of the basic principle of the pension scheme, namely that pensions are mainly the result of individual's contribution during their active period. Poverty among the elderly can't be alleviated with sporadic or populist measures, especially when it comes to allowances that create new disparities. Pensioners' social assistance should be funded by clearly defined sources.
- Regarding the pensioners that have entered retirement before the full retirement age¹⁴ for whatever reason and, as a consequence, receive pensions that are too low to even cover their basic needs, we propose that we cooperate with the government and social partners in order to determine how to understand the poverty risk threshold and ensure fair distribution of the pension support and other social transfers which would prevent further impoverishment of elderly households. Impoverishment of the elderly also leads to impoverishment of their offspring, especially during times when the elderly can no longer manage on their own and need help due to age-related problems. Absence from work to provide care for elderly parents

¹⁴ Some countries (Italy and Sweden, for example) have already started to calculate the required years of service based on life expectancy. OECD has advised us to do the same. This should be seriously considered.

should be legally regulated and made possible, which is planned to be introduced by an EU directive.¹⁵

Ensuring a decent living standard of the elderly in Slovenia has a positive effect on the living standard of younger generations

- The elderly in Slovenia only appear to have a suitable living standard. Around 90 % of the elderly live in their own apartments and houses without major mortgage debts. These units were built for young families using the technology of the time and are in need of renovations and adaptations to be used by the elderly requiring personal or community-based care at their home. There's a widespread notion that the elderly should give their immovable property to their offspring, which (along with a lack of a suitable state-wide concept) doesn't facilitate appropriate exchange of accommodation units. The elderly end up living alone in apartments and houses that are too big and not adapted to them and their age – often in single-person households with very low income.¹⁶ Public housing schemes are inadequate because of insufficient public funds required for accommodation, subventions, and adaptations. The current share is 0.04 % of GDP, when it should be at least 0.4 % of GDP, which would still be well below the EU average.¹⁷
- There aren't enough rented flats which are suitable for the elderly in terms of price and living conditions (apartments with provided care, purpose-built apartments, etc.). Cost rent has been announced, social housing is geographically poorly distributed, and housing legislation from 2003 (amended in 2008) is too rigid to allow for a suitable rental market. We offer our cooperation to the Slovenian government in order to motivate the

¹⁵ ? will enable absence of work to provide care for elderly parents.

¹⁶ In 2015 the Statistical office of the Republic of Slovenia conducted a research which showed that 65,000 elderly women in Slovenia live in poor single-person households. We still haven't addressed this issue and we can't quantify it.

¹⁷ We've done a calculation. We'd need at least 140 million Euro a year to cover the costs of accommodation, but this money isn't part of the budgets until 2019. At the same time there is talk about housing allowance and introduction of cost rent for public and private apartments. When the elderly move from such units to smaller, more modern, and more suitable apartments, they do so spontaneously and without supervision. The idea of reverse mortgages also hasn't been put into practice. We've sent our proposals to the relevant ministries. We've received no answer.

younger generations to look for more appropriate housing for the elderly, which would also make more accommodation units available for young families. We'd also like to cooperate in the planning of common areas, infrastructure, and transport, which should all be well designed, accessible, easy to use for the elderly, safe, reliable, and appropriate for the changing climatic and weather conditions, along with suitable adaptations of accommodation units for elderly who require home care.

- Commitments and announcements regarding community-based forms of coexistence, which have been adopted by the Social care resolution (2014) based on international recommendations, still haven't been implemented. Plans prepared by the Slovene Federation of Pensioners' Associations are being reconsidered, but there's still no action programme for this goal. Discussions about long-term care insurance have reopened this issue and we expect better cooperation between the relevant ministries and establishments which are in charge of institutionalized care and special housing for the elderly (purpose-built apartments, home-care, social housing, etc.).

Health promotion – the key requirement for an efficient state, high quality of life, and population happiness

The elderly demand¹⁸ an explanation regarding the expected relationship between the welfare state and the economy. Too large a scope of the former can quickly stifle the latter. That's why it is mandatory to define and determine individuals' responsibility for living a high-quality life today and tomorrow and what they're able to gain from the system. We are aware that, as a society or a state, we can't save everyone at whatever cost – including health care issues. It is the community's job to set up suitable conditions which make it possible for people to take care of themselves – and from here on in the responsibility can rest with the community and be based on solidarity. The proposed Slovenian development strategy 2030 announces (but doesn't enable) the possibility that the elderly, together with the state, ask themselves such difficult questions. The agreed upon solutions and strategies should last for longer periods of time.

¹⁸ We've borrowed an idea of Ms. Šmuc from her article in Slovenian daily newspaper Delo. Delo_25. 11. 2017_Silva Čeh. The strategy has limited the costs of social services to 25 % of GDP, which is what we have today. Structural changes must remain within this framework; pensions, health care costs, long-term care costs, social assistance, accommodation should all be dealt with in a coordinated manner. In this day and age, separating health care issues and pensions is unprofessional and unfair.

Citizens and voters include the elderly as well. We demand a clarification of the main relationships. Politicians, parties, and the government would then compete in who could implement this strategy better and faster.

- The government of the Republic of Slovenia is again starting a health care reform. Health care management should be comparable with international standards, adaptable, part of the world-wide system of knowledge exchange, and it should include top-quality and rare services. We are deeply concerned about the current unorganized situation, explosion of costs, waiting lines, and constant shifting of priorities. The network of health care institutions belongs to history and is completely irrational considering the current road network. Our health care system should be based on justice, accessibility, quality, and effectiveness. The elderly have always contributed our expert opinions, either as analysts or otherwise, but we haven't always been heard and we haven't received any answers. We expect that new arrangements will be appropriate and we agree with the necessary division of rights (assured and paid with public funds vs. paid by the people themselves or through their insurances). But we feel that the final arrangements should be made with our cooperation and consent.
- Private health care must act as a suitably monitored addition to the public health care, along with providing health care services as part of health tourism. But this should apply to public health care as well. The civil society should be allowed to cooperate in the monitoring and development of the health care system (and be provided with appropriate support to do so). The current situation with every single aspect of this field being the sole responsibility of the government (insurance, public institutions, investments, salaries, etc.) should be seriously reconsidered.
- The state should allocate more funds to non-governmental organizations which educate people about taking care of their health, and to activities aimed at improving people's health. The Slovene Federation of Pensioners' Associations is ready for this and has had good experience with the "Elderly help elderly at home" initiative. We expect an appropriate systemic solution for such humanitarian work (including its more extended versions).

Help programme for the elderly who require community help is more effective (and the recipients accept it more readily) if the recipients take part in the process

- Many third and fourth age elderly need help and care in order to satisfy their basic needs. This help is most often provided by their families and offspring, public institutions, voluntary organizations, and individual volunteers who don't always act in a coordinated manner. Considering the new focus on community-based forms of coexistence and neighbourly help, which is currently establishing itself in Europe, we propose to the new government that we work together on a medium-term strategy focused on satisfying the needs of the elderly who require such help at their homes, while living together with others, or within a community of neighbours. It is clear that we need a new way of determining and balancing institutionalized and community-based forms of help, along with a detailed action programme.
- Institutionalized care must be developed rationally,¹⁹ in cooperation with the state and local communities, and with help of non-governmental elderly and other organizations, so that all areas are covered. Cooperation of private care providers is welcome, but it must not negatively affect accessibility (due to high prices). Most of the care should be covered by deinstitutionalized forms of care. The current ratio of two pensioners/one carer in retirement homes cannot solve the current problems and the problems foreseeable in the future.

Control over the use of public finances

- The biggest challenge regarding public finances and welfare state has actually been temporarily determined. In at least two of its publications, the government has announced a goal of 25 % of GDP for welfare state's common functions and services, which set a standard for well-being and happiness in accordance with the situation and the funds available at that time. It is therefore safe to assume that the elderly ourselves will have to make a serious, organized effort to reach this goal. The rapid increase in the numbers of old and very old people means that their health care si-

¹⁹ Recommendations regarding these issues are well-known (community-based care). We've translated them and used them, but not much has happened. The big players in this field refuse to take any actions. Community-based care was part of our 2014 Social care resolution. We haven't moved any further.

tuation will be different in the future. Considering the current financial frameworks supported by both OECD and EU, we expect that a complete structural reform of the public sector (in the narrow sense, i.e. excluding businesses and companies), which will take into account the situation of the elderly, will soon take place.

- Effective control over the operations of public institutions²⁰ and, most of all, their services, is possible only with the cooperation of users, members of the civil society stakeholders, who should be part of public institutions that carry out services for the elderly. It is essential that all such work is backed up by expertise, knowledge, and financial support for all non-governmental organizations taking part.

C. Summary of concrete proposals

1. The announced and urgently needed set of coordinated action programmes arising from the government's strategy (plus other strategies) and prepared in accordance with the financial circumstances should be adopted as soon as possible. Due to the already achieved net pension/net salary ratio of 59.5 %, the substantially decreased value, and the further downward trend, additional austerity measures affecting the elderly are immoral and politically detrimental to the future government. The elderly have long been aware of the uncoordinated nature and ambiguity of adopted strategies. The government should therefore increase the coordination of the activities in this area, as they've determined that approximately 110 strategies are uncoordinated, with the predetermined public funds consumption at 90 %.
2. Despite being the largest social group defined with adequate accuracy, the elderly aren't represented in bodies that decide our fate. This should be handled right after the elections; our proposals are old (2009) and promises have already been given, but as of yet, nothing has been done.
3. The government has set up a Council on active ageing and intergenerational cooperation. Conditions should be established that will allow it to adopt, implement, and monitor the efficiency of the Active Ageing Strategy and the relevant action programme strategies. Representatives of various departments that will cooperate in the Council or an organ with similar functions must be given executive powers that will enable them

²⁰ The elderly should focus on monitoring the effects of services instead of getting involved in organizational and staffing solutions which are often unproductive.

to accelerate the implementation of the goals of the strategy within their field.

4. The government should keep their promise and set up an Office for the elderly which would take over a large share of work in the field of ageing management and have independent finances. This Office should also develop support functions in the field of safe ageing and suitable information measures for the target population. The Office should become the central base for expert knowledge and finances for the work of the Council of elderly.
5. The ministries should immediately finish the announced updated action programmes, as determined by the Active Ageing Strategy and other relevant documents. The strategies should be constantly monitored and updated in accordance with the shifting situation at home and worldwide. Public financing and action programme management should also be adopted.
6. Visions and strategies won't be successful unless they're accompanied by analyses suitable for ageing management and structured data. Evidence-based ageing, which includes international commitments and comparisons with the situation at home, was and will be one of the demands of the pensioners' association and one of the main objectives of the strategy and the applicative research. Coordination of all social records should be a priority in 2019. The asymmetry of records and statistical data (compared with other social groups) should be eliminated (How do the 612,000 elderly live?).
7. Along with statistical assessments, EU-based assessments, and establishment of a poverty risk threshold (three aspects), it is mandatory that we develop solutions and interpretations and prepare a general overview of the minimum basket of basic goods and services for elderly households (for various types and purposes). Austria, Netherlands, and other countries²¹ have developed similar things for the elderly. We also need coordinated records that would facilitate a fair distribution of financial and other forms of help among individuals.²²

²¹ An example is the German Bertelsmann study of elderly households carried out before parliamentary elections.

²² In 2015 there were 270,000 people living below the poverty risk threshold and most of them were pensioners. Even more important is the share of elderly people living alone – most of them poor women. We keep on raising this issue, but a solution still hasn't been figured out. It is also not clear how much social assistance is provided to the pensioners.

8. We won't be able to solve the problems of long-lived society management without the involvement of seniors, households, families, and senior self-help organizations, even if the state provides more help. Volunteer work must have suitable financial support and its activities must be insured, the state must ensure stable co-financing of volunteer organizations, and volunteer work should be acknowledged as a major factor in society's development, which it currently unfortunately isn't. Volunteers and their associations must be advised on appropriate fields of work, along with suitable coordination and financing on all levels (municipality, state).
9. The Economic and social council should include representatives of major non-governmental seniors' organizations in their work, and they should be given all the support they need for such involvement.²³ It is not normal or fair that decisions regarding the elderly and the pensioners (612,000) are taken without their representatives. Scientific materials for measures in this field should not be locked up in drawers of the people who propose them; they should instead be delivered to non-governmental organizations and other interested parties.
10. In order to coordinate the effects of welfare state's services (at least the pension insurance and health care insurance), we need joint adoption of measures related to the determined and announced demographic inversion. New, updated common platform should be prepared as a form of insurance for safe old age, health, long-term care, accommodation, and social assistance for the elderly, and also to help understand the mutual and external effects and harmonic cooperation of announced measures and changes. The elderly find it hard to be included in various uncoordinated solutions (health care without pensions). Friends from abroad and our experts continually warn us about this problem. The lack of coordination between experts and ministries is tiring – not only for the government, but also for the people and non-governmental seniors' organizations.²⁴
11. Representatives of non-governmental self-help seniors' organizations should be included in management bodies of institutions that directly affect the issues of elderly workers and pensioners and their formal and

²³ We cannot understand how they came up with a target replacement rate of 70 %, without a plan as to how and when this should be achieved.

²⁴ It hasn't been defined which organization or office should monitor and support the action programmes related to the Active Ageing Strategy and manage their coordination. Where should we address our needs, ideas, and criticism?

informal care. We need suitable financial support for such cooperation – either directly or through the previously mentioned fund.

12. The government should advise the municipalities that haven't yet established coordination bodies (councils for elderly issues) to do so as soon as possible so that coordination between the pensioners and care providers can start to take place. In some places, modern organization is already established (some urban municipalities and networks). Such bodies help prepare solutions related to ageing management in their geographical areas.
13. The government should implement the provisions from previous coalition agreements as soon as possible; they should also put more effort into measures that would allow additional forms of formal and informal pensioners' work without them losing too much of their well-deserved pensions. The elderly have noticed that a major reform of the labour market is absolutely necessary, due in part to the announcements of prolonging the period of formal employment. It has been empirically proven, interestingly enough, that working longer results in longer lifespan.
14. The new government should continue with the unimplemented programme of the previous government (educating the elderly about new technologies). Elderly people's incompetence in this area decreases their potential to be beneficial to the society.
15. The new government should take advantage of the experiences, knowledge, and wisdom of the elderly. It should not forget that our lack of skills with modern technology prevents us from quickly (in a week or even a day) delivering comments about proposed legislation. Legislative proposals should be open to public discussions for at least three months, which would give us enough time to prepare comments that could help the legislators and make laws easier to enforce. Methods of communication with various social groups should be semantically adapted to the needs and capabilities of each group.
16. Once a year, the government should discuss the reports related to this field and the implementation of the adopted action programmes related to the Active Ageing Strategy, and the Slovenian development strategy 2030, and define required measures.
17. Changes in tax and real-estate laws have been discussed for more than ten years. To some extent, we understand the effort it takes to pass such legislation, but we disagree about the costs of managing records and determining values being transferred to such an extent and in such a complicated manner to elderly owners of accommodation units and land,

who, as we all know, often live below the poverty risk threshold and couldn't cover such costs.

Conclusions

With this Memorandum, the Slovene Federation of Pensioners' Associations warns about the most serious problems of pensioners within the framework of long-lived society management in our country and the community of 27 countries that we are part of, along with proposing numerous solutions.

It is obvious from the government's annual programmes that other legislation will also have a significant impact on the status of the elderly and the pensioners. Our slogan is **No decisions about pensioners without them and us**. Members of the Slovene Federation of Pensioners' Associations and other pensioners (there are more than 612,000 of us) offer our cooperation to the government and all positive-minded people in order to help solve the issues that have developed during and before the recession and that are expected to persevere in the future as well. In solving these issues, we expect that the needs of the most vulnerable populations will be kept in mind.

Appendix

To correct the "injustices" and return back to where we were before the crisis in 2008 would mean that all social classes and groups were living in ideal conditions back then. The pensioners don't agree with that notion and think that it wouldn't be wise to return to the platforms of the past.

Amazing things have happened in the ten years since the 2009 Memorandum had been adopted. China has become an economic superpower, the USA has gone down its own path (March 2018), we're dealing with Brexit, and climate change is upon us. Several new international and EU commitments (fiscal compact) have been adopted. We have the binding UN and EU Agendas, a dangerous demographic inversion throughout Europe due to declining birth rates, the refugees and migrants, a lack of certain categories of workers, etc. Almost all of these issues – including the demographic inversion – have already been globalized. The state going ten years back wouldn't be a step in the right direction.

Besides, predictions for the period until 2060 or even 2030 are very uncertain; the main thing is to have well defined, measurable, and monitored transitional or "operational" goals, as France Bučar called them, and that non-compliance with these goals is sanctioned appropriately.

The Slovene Federation of Pensioners' Associations can help with this matter and notify relevant bodies if things turn out differently, but it can't do it on its own.

Ljubljana, from 24. 12. 2017 to 5. 4. 2018

President of the Slovene Federation of Pensioners' Associations Janez Sušnik

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