Research Council of Lithuania

LITHUANIAN SOCIAL RESEARCH CENTRE

Research project: work in progress

Construction of Wellbeing of Older People: Politics of Empowerment, Indicators of Monitoring and Voice of Older People

Sub-topic: *Measurement of wellbeing of older people: towards enhancement of currently available indicators*

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Project information

- Project period: 2018-2021
- Funding agreement between *Lithuanian Research Council* and *Lithuanian Social Research Centre* No. DOTSUT-254 (09.3.3-LMT-K-712-01-0063), funded under 2014-2020 Operational Programme for European Union Funds Investments in Lithuania
- Implementing institution: Lithuanian Social Research Centre

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Need for research

- Population ageing in Lithuania + a long-term decline in birth rates and intensive migration outflows

Challenges

- fiscal stability of welfare state (WS)
- effective participation of OP (50+) in the labour market
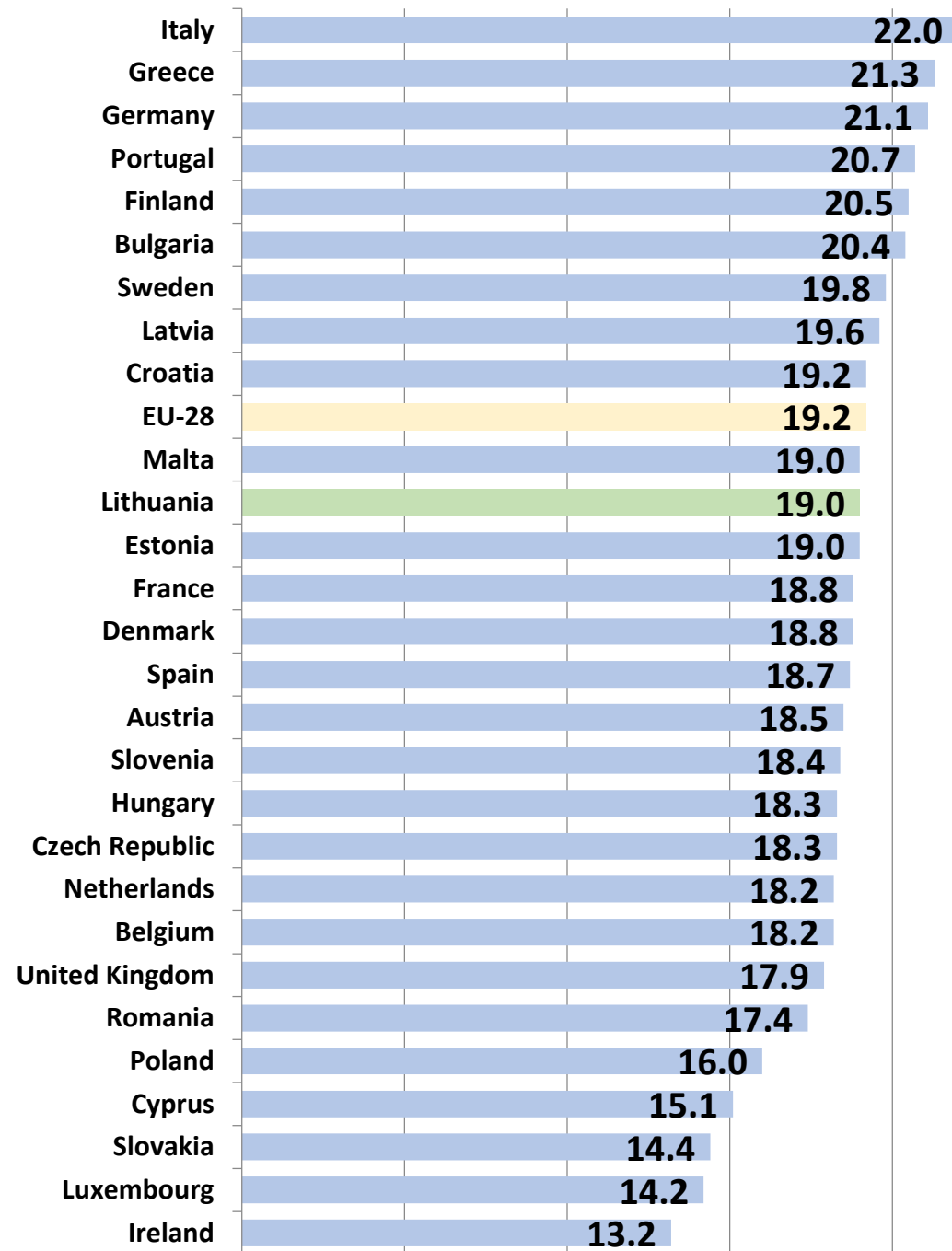- effective participation of OP in social life

Need for

- stronger role of OP in ensuring the sustainability of WS

- However, ageing of population and challenges linked to it have not been given due attention in the context of assessing the wellbeing of the population of the country, discussing measures to strengthen it and collecting empirical data to justify actions to be taken

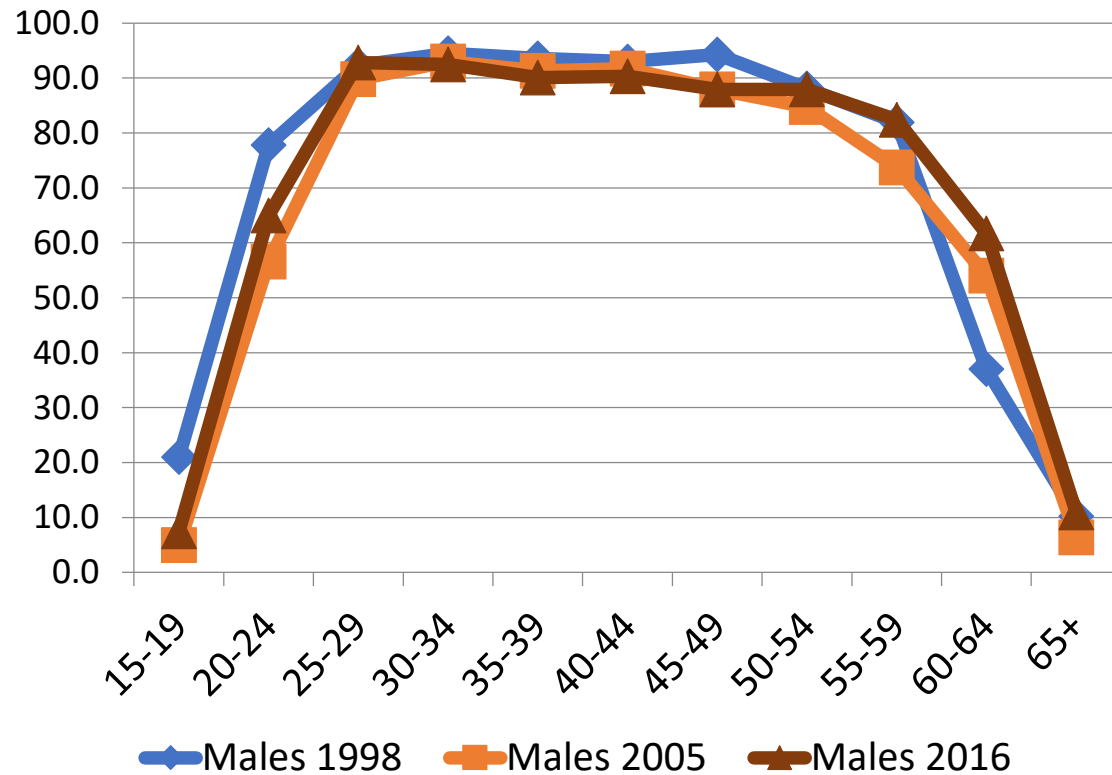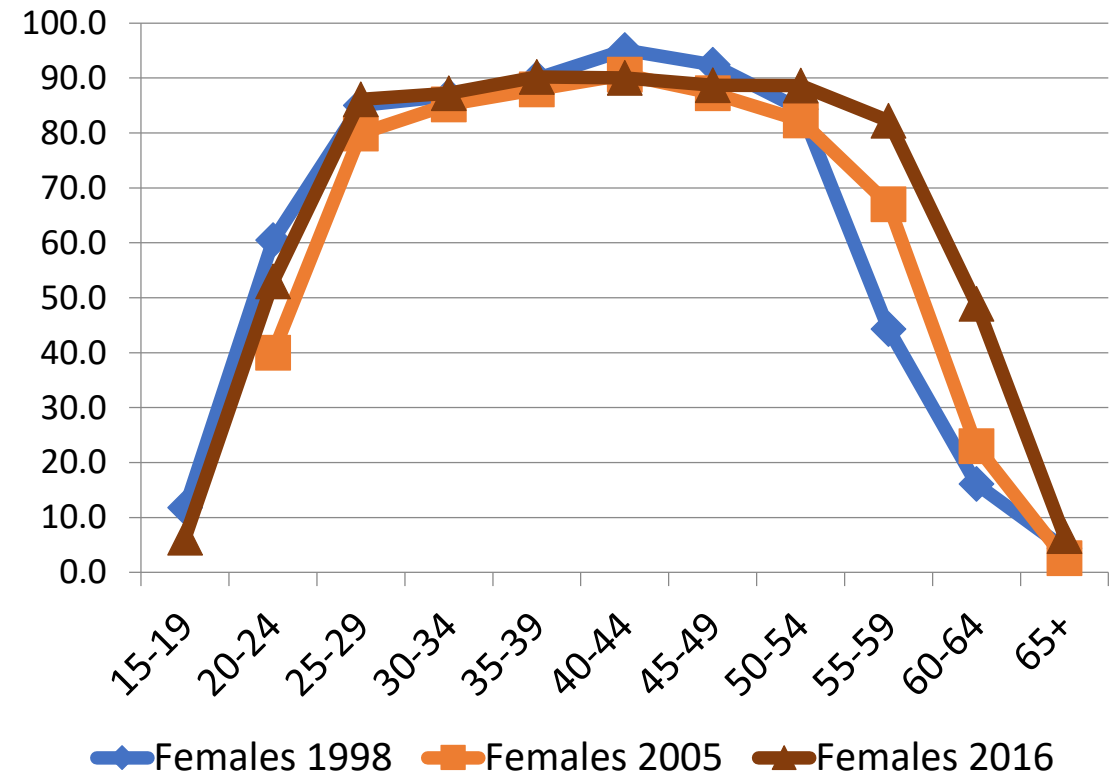**Proportion of population aged 65+, EU / Lithuania, 2016, percent**

Country	Percent
Italy	22.0
Greece	21.3
Germany	21.1
Portugal	20.7
Finland	20.5
Bulgaria	20.4
Sweden	19.8
Latvia	19.6
Croatia	19.2
EU-28	19.2
Malta	19.0
Lithuania	19.0
Estonia	19.0
France	18.8
Denmark	18.8
Spain	18.7
Austria	18.5
Slovenia	18.4
Hungary	18.3
Czech Republic	18.3
Netherlands	18.2
Belgium	18.2
United Kingdom	17.9
Romania	17.4
Poland	16.0
Cyprus	15.1
Slovakia	14.4
Luxembourg	14.2
Ireland	13.2

Source: Eurostat, 2017a

Ageing of labour force, Lithuania
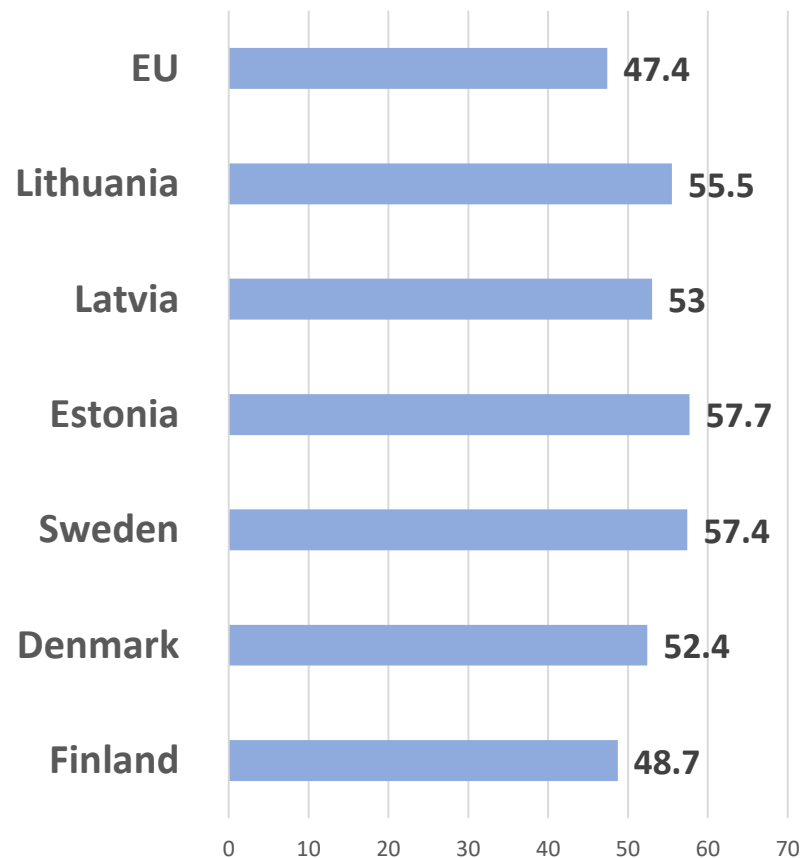# Economic activity rates by age, 1998-2016, percent

Males

Females

Males 1998 — Males 2005 — Males 2016

Females 1998 — Females 2005 — Females 2016

Potential of OP in Lithuania

Employment rate for age 50-74, 2018 2Q (Eurostat)

Country	Value
EU	47.4
Lithuania	55.5
Latvia	53
Estonia	57.7
Sweden	57.4
Denmark	52.4
Finland	48.7

Source: Eurostat, 2018

Global AgeWatch Index 2015, country rank:

- Estonia 23
- Latvia 35
- Lithuania 63

- *Lower recognition* of older workers in the Baltic countries (*European Working Conditions Survey*), *lower participation in voluntary activities, a higher share of older people who feel lonely* in the Baltic countries (*European Quality of Life Survey*), …

- Lithuania is similar to the Nordic countries and other Baltic countries in regard of high activity of OP in the labour market

- However, the conditions (welfare policy, public and employers' attitudes) which exist in the Baltic countries (in Lithuania in particular) prevent OP from achieving their full potential

- Thus, OP do have the potential in the Baltic countries; therefore, WS programmes should be aimed at the adequate use of the OP's capability and creation of appropriate conditions for OP to better adjust to the changing realities. This, in turn, would reduce their vulnerability and increase their resilience and capacity to overcome problems/crises

- How national WS model responds to population ageing?
- How it empowers older people?
- How it satisfies their wellbeing needs?

- Need for research-based, regularly updated and detailed data
- Comprehensive and consistent system of indicators for measurement of wellbeing of older people
- Attention to variety in OP group: it varies over time both in quantitative terms (the group is growing in number) and in qualitative terms (each following OP's cohort demonstrates varying economic, health and social characteristics)

Poject aim: to examine theoretically and empirically the construction of welfare policies for OP at the level of policy-makers, practitioners and individuals, assessing the existing level of OP's wellbeing and offering innovative indicators for wellbeing monitoring.

Project tasks:

- Theoretical justification of the relationship between welfare state development and demographic changes (population ageing); analysis of WS models and policies, and their assessment in the analysed countries, identifying measures aimed at reducing social risks for older people and empower them in certain life domains:
  - OP's working life;
  - OP's financial stability and solidarity between generations;
  - OP's social inclusion and subjective wellbeing.

- Critical evaluation of the existing indicators for OP's wellbeing monitoring, conceptual justification and methodological approval of indicators that are less developed today.

Three Baltic countries – Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia – analysed in comparison with three Nordic countries – Denmark, Sweden, and Finland

- analysis of documents about WS systems in the reference countries reflecting their welfare policies

- analysis of secondary data characterising indicators of OP's wellbeing using accessible international databases

- representative surveys of the population aged 50 and older in Lithuania, Latvia and Estonia

- semi-structured interviews with welfare policy-makers and focus group discussions with representatives of OP organisations, operating in Lithuania

Task 2: Measurement of wellbeing of older people: towards enhancement of currently available indicators

- Currently available indicators
  - Active Ageing Index
  - Global AgeWatch Index
  - Comparative international surveys (*European Quality of Life Survey; European Social Survey; Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe, other*)
  - International and national statistics
  - National surveys

- Data available for general population or OP specific?
- What dimensions of wellbeing are covered?
- How conceptual and operational definitions correspond?
- How to advance currently available indicators to have a better informed policy making?

- International context and comparison ⟷ local context and policies?

- Interpretation of indicators on OP wellbeing ⟷ characteristic of a society as a whole?

- Conceptual dimensions ⟷ availability of indicators or construction of new / better corresponding indicators?

- General indicators [easy to apply?] ⟷ more specific [and precise] indicators?

- Quality and sufficiency of data: target sample (50+); response rates; involvement of all older age cohorts; diversity at older age

Focus on two dimension related to social wellbeing

- **Social inclusion** *(social relations and participation in social life)*

- **Intergenerational relations** *(transfers, support, interactions)*

UNECE: Ageing-related Statistics

- Overview of currently existing indicators
- Breakdown of indicators by their availability and soundness

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- **Demographic measures of ageing**
- **Longer working life**
- <mark>**Social inclusion and subjective well-being**</mark>
- **Health and independence in older age**
- <mark>**Intergenerational solidarity**</mark>

Source: UNECE , 2016

Active Ageing Index (AAI)

- EU context and countries

- Presumption: „the successful measures are those which enable and increase older people's participation in the labour market and in social and family activities"(Zaidi et al., 2013, Preface)

- "Active ageing" as added value for society

Contributions through paid activities: **Employment**

Contributions through unpaid productive activities: **Participation in society**

Independent, healthy and secure living

Capacity and enabling environment for active ageing

Source: Zaidi et al., 2013

Global AgeWatch Index (GAWI)

- Global context

- In 2015, comparison of 96 countries

- "… what works for older people…"? *(Amina J Mohammed, on Global AgeWatch Index 2015)*

- **Income security**

- **Health status**

- **Enabling environment**

- **Capability**

UNECE	GAWI	AAI

UNECE

- **Social inclusion and subjective wellbeing**

Social inclusion / exclusion

-Availability of social support networks and satisfactions with relationships: Social connectedness (AAI)

-Discrimination: discrimination [Longer working life: discrimination at work]

-Elder abuse and neglect: Elder abuse and neglect

-Barriers to inclusion (e.g. not feeling safe, not trusting others, lack public transportation): physical security (worried about safety) (AAI);

- Internet use and access, use of social media (proportion who regularly access the Internet)

- Leisure activities: Leisure activities

-Political participation: same as AAI

-Availability of transport: availability of transport

Subjective well-being

- **Intergenerational solidarity**

- Intergenerational transfer of knowledge [at work place]

- Older people's unpaid contributions (AAI)

- Intergenerational relations (intergenerational co-residence; intergenerational transfers (financial and non-financial)

- **Health and independence** [Mental wellbeing / Accessible architecture / Availability of transportation]

Source: UNECE , 2016

GAWI

- **Enabling environment** (social connections (relatives or friends to count on when in trouble); physical safety; civic freedom; access to public transportation)

- **Health status** (relative psychological wellbeing)

Source: Zaidi, 2013

AAI

- **Capacity and enabling environment for active ageing** (…; mental wellbeing; use of ICT (frequency); social connectedness (meet friends, relatives, colleagues at least once a month))

- **Participation in society** (voluntary activities; care to children, grandchildren; care to older adults; political participation)

Source: Zaidi et al., 2013

Next step: *Survey of Health, Ageing and Retirement in Europe* (SHARE)

- Social networks' analysis
- Provision of Support
  - Quantity, quality and characteristics of interactions with grandchildren /grand-grandchildren

- Other sub-dimensions to develop
  - Availability of transportation **|** chances (barriers) to participate in social life
  - ICT use **|** frequency and use for interactions
  - Role of community (local / social)
  - Trust
  - Need and availability of social services
  - Activities (e.g. voluntary activities (organized vs. individual), participation in cultural activities (like theater, concerts, etc.), participation in religious practices (country specific?), other)
  - Ageism

Thank you for your attention

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