

# Life for The Seniors (LifeS)

Project No. 2023-1-DE02-KA210-ADU-000158865

## THE POLITICAL AND SERVICES IN POLAND FOR ELDERLY PEOPLE

Fundacja Gaudete



## Participating organization - partner

The Gaudete Foundation was set up in 1992. The word "gaudete" (from latin) means enjoyment, contentment and fulfillment in life. The head office is situated in Katowice, region of Silesia. The Gaudete Foundation is NGO and non profit organization.

The Gaudete Foundation deal with education through:

- improving competence of adults,
- evolving skills connected with personal development,
- carrying out trainings in the area of: mentoring, tutoring and coaching.

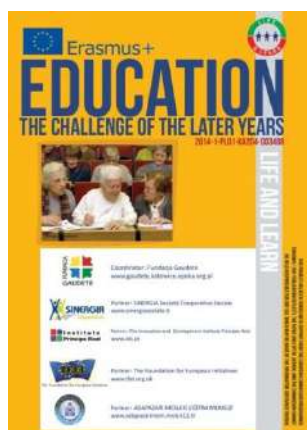
The Gaudete Foundation provides support to people in difficult life situations through psychological advice and economic advice, career counseling, support for young people in the social economy. The Gaudete Foundation supports teachers, trainers, and adult educators in their professional development by implementing a thematic project



Silesian Voivodeship, or Silesia is a voivodship, province in southern Poland, centered on the historic region known as Upper Silesia (Górny Śląsk).



## The organization's previous experience in educating seniors



Education The Challenge of the Later Years



Saudade Project. The problem of loneliness in old age



Taillored offer for Adults Fingerprints Learning

## Socio-economic situation of older people in Poland

### Demographic situation

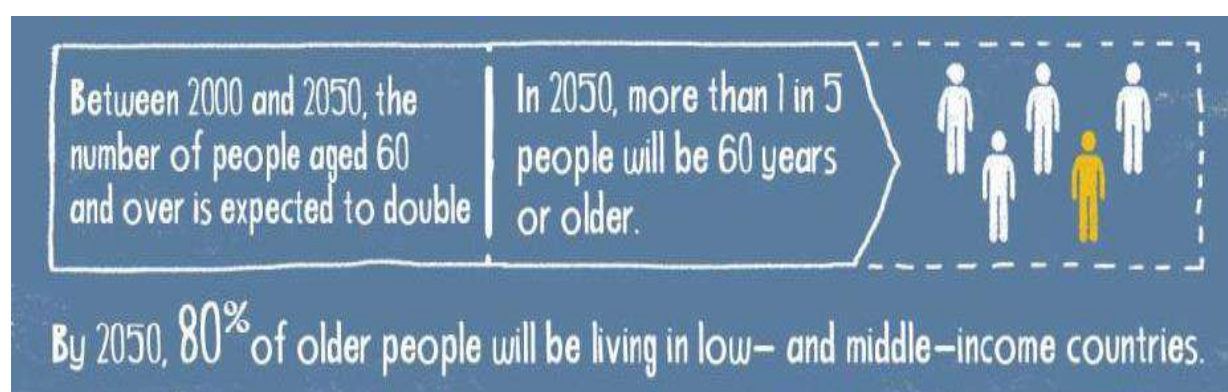
At the end of 2023, the population of Poland was 37.8 million, including nearly 9.8 million people aged 60 years and older (25.9%).

The majority of the elderly population are women. In 2023, similarly to the previous year, they constituted 58.1%.

Among seniors, as many as 2/3 are widowed, including over 80% of women living alone. Single-person households are run much more frequently by women. According to data from PolSenior survey, approximately 33% of women aged at least 75 will live alone. Singularization is associated with loneliness, and increases the risk of social exclusion.

In Poland, as in other countries, the ageing process of the population is currently taking place, which is mainly the result of such natural phenomena as: Increase in the average life expectancy.

In 2022, the average life expectancy of a man at birth was 72.6 years, while of a woman – 80.7 years.



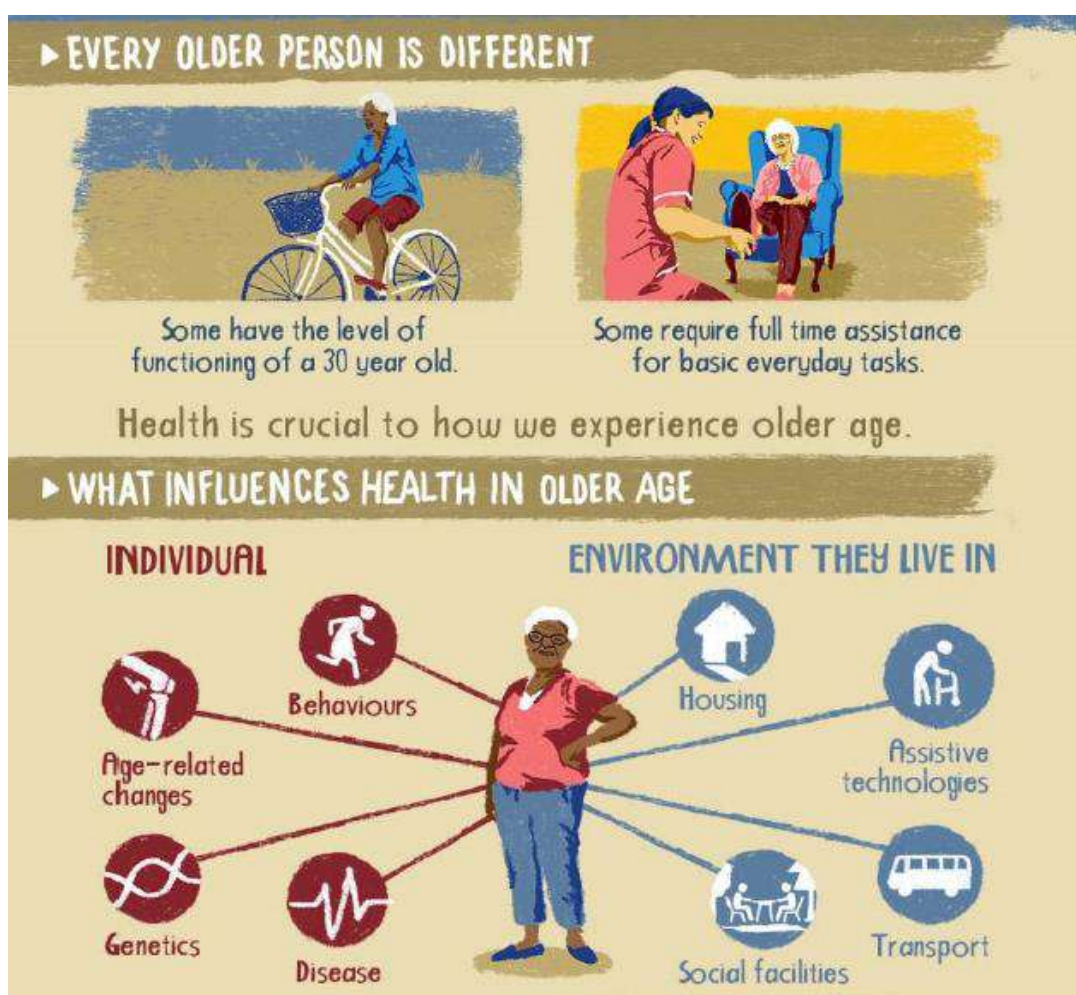
The results of Population Projections for 2014-2050 show that the ageing process in Poland is escalating. Despite the anticipated decline in the population by 4.5 million by 2050, a systematic increase in the number of people aged 60 or more is expected. By 2050, the population of people at this age will increase to 13.7 million and will account for over 40% of the total population (42% in cities and 38% in rural areas).

## The social policy for elderly people in Poland

The social policy for elderly people in Poland is one of the priorities of public activities, and its pursuit in 2015 was operationalised by the adoption of the Act of 11 September 2015 on elderly people (Journal of Laws, item 1705).

This document imposed on public administration authorities, state organisational units and other organisations involved in shaping the situation of elderly people an obligation to monitor the situation of elderly people in Poland.

As a result, every year the **Council of Ministers** prepares the Information on the situation of elderly people in Poland and submits it to the Sejm and the Senate.





The results of population forecasts for **2023–2060** indicate that the aging process of society is deepening.

The population of people aged 65+ will increase to 11.6 million and will constitute almost 40% of the total population.



In addition to activities aimed at providing direct services to older dependent people, it is also necessary to adapt the living environment to the functional capabilities of these people. Therefore, projects taking into account universal design as well as conducting research in the field of designing flats adapted to the special needs of dependent people have been planned.

## Social policy towards older people 2030

### Safety - Participation – Solidarity

The proposed directions of measures are based on three pillars: safety, participation and solidarity. These elements are a guarantee of proper implementation of measures leading to significant improvement in the quality and standard of living of elderly people in Poland.

**Safety** means being at no risk of poverty and having no concerns about one's health, mental and physical security, in all dimensions of the social life of the elderly person. Safety encompasses also protection of personal rights of elderly people, respecting their dignity, preserving the right to be independent in decision-making and protection against various forms of violence against them.

**Participation**, is seen as elderly people's active attitudes in all forms of activity they are able to perform given their age and health as well as living conditions. Living an active and healthy life has a significant influence on the health condition, while extending the period of elderly people's autonomy. Activeness is to raise awareness of the society, in particular seniors, of the importance of their participation in social life, develop a positive perception of old age in the society, promote a healthy lifestyle.

**Solidarity** – broadly understood as partnership of all generations within the local community in acting to the benefit of the elderly and joint action with the elderly to the benefit of the community in which they live together – is also essential.

Intergenerational and intragenerational solidarity also means respect and gratitude for older generations for the spiritual, material, cultural and social heritage taken over by young generations, expressed through creating decent living conditions, tailored to the needs of elderly and old people.

#### 1. Comprehensive approach to the subject of accessibility in Poland

The aim of the „**Accessibility Plus**” **Programme 2018-2025** is to ensure free access to goods, services and possibilities of participation in social and public life for persons with special needs, including elderly people. The programme focuses on adapting public spaces, architecture, transportation and products to the requirements and needs of all citizens.

## 2. Development of a network of day-care facilities for elderly people;

This is achieved, inter alia, by the „**Senior+**” **Multiannual Programme for 2021-2025** (continuation of the programme implemented in the years 2015-2020), which is addressed to local government units and consists in developing the network of day-care facilities for elderly people: „Senior+” Day Care Centres and „Senior+” Clubs. As part of the Programme, self-governments may apply, in an open competition for tenders, for funds intended for the creation or equipping a facility and for ensuring the functioning of already existing facilities.

## 3. Supporting innovative activities of non-governmental organisations for elderly people.

The programme improving the quality and standard of living of elderly people and supporting their social activation is the „**Active+**” Multiannual Programme for elderly people for 2021-2025 (Active+ Programme). The activities of non-governmental organisations for elderly people are also supported by the Civic Initiatives Fund (FIO) Programme implemented by the National Freedom Institute – Centre for Civil Society Development. Social Activity of Elderly People (ASOS Programme), which was aimed at improving the quality of life of elderly people and using their potential more fully in various social roles.

## 5. Strengthening communes in providing care services for persons aged 75 and more in their place of residence.

The „**Care 75+**” Programme is addressed to urban, rural, urban-rural communes of up to 60 thousand residents, which receive financial support up of to 50% of the expected costs of implementing the task with regard to providing care services, including specialist care services.



## **Creating conditions for solidarity and intergenerational integration.**

### **Intergenerational solidarity – Creating a World for All Ages**

To achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), the world needs to leverage the full potential of all generations.

Solidarity across generations is key for sustainable development.

We must collaborate to foster successful and equitable intergenerational relations and partnerships to ensure **“Leave no one behind”** (LNOB).

Leave no one behind (LNOB) is the central, transformative promise of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

Putting LNOB into practice requires several things from governments, multilateral agencies, NGOs and the private sector: having a clear understanding of what LNOB means; having a clear understanding of who is left behind; mobilising sufficient resources; confronting the roots and causes of marginalisation.

Intergenerational Solidarity is **cohesion between generations**.

It is a term that describes the relationship between different generations within society.

It is based on the idea that each generation is responsible for supporting others.

There are many ways to show intergenerational solidarity.

For example, grandparents can share their wisdom and experience with their grandchildren. Parents can spend time with their children and teach them about their values. And adults can mentor young people and help them navigate life’s challenges.

As our population grows and ages, it’s more important than ever

**to create a world that is accessible and welcoming for all ages.**

## Actions for education for old age

Until old age (the whole society), through old age (from the youngest generation) and education in old age (older people). Learning is a lifelong pursuit that benefits personal development, well-being, and social participation regardless of age.

In a society of long life, education in older age is of particular importance and must be recognised as a political task and promoted at all levels of government.

The strategy for education in older age should be regularly updated and developed.

1. Education in older age aims at selfdevelopment and social participation.
2. Education in older age is basically voluntary and serves the personal enrichment of life, satisfaction and joy.
3. Education in older age must take into account all older people in their diversity and provide access for them.
4. Education in older age needs conditions that promote learning, encourage older and very old people to discover their own life and learning potentials as well as promote their participation and selforganisation.
5. Education in older age must take into account ethical and social issues as well as processes of societal change and their impact.



## **In the "Social Policy for Elderly People 2030", for the first time, actions targeted at dependent elderly people were designed**

Reducing the scale of dependence on others. Facilitating access to services that strengthen independence. Adapting the living environment to the functional capabilities of dependent elderly people.

The programmed Social Policy for Elderly People 2030. Safety - Participation - Solidarity is addressed to two groups:

- The general elderly population,
- Dependent elderly people, identified pursuant to the criteria existing in the law which ultimately are to clearly define dependence.

The document provides for the implementation of a number of actions for elderly people in general in the following areas:

- I. Shaping a positive perception of old age in society.
- II. Participation in social life and support for all forms of civic, social, cultural, artistic, sports and religious activity.
- III. Creating conditions enabling the use of the potential of elderly people as active participants in economic life and the labour market, adapted to their psycho-physical abilities and family situation.
- IV. Health promotion, disease prevention, access to diagnostics, treatment and rehabilitation.
- V. Increasing physical safety – preventing violence and neglect of elderly people.
- VI. Creating conditions for solidarity and intergenerational integration.
- VII. Activities for education for old age (care and medical employees), to old age (whole society), through old age (from the youngest generation) and education in old age (elderly people).

### **I. Shaping a positive perception of old age in society is carried out through:**

1. Combating discrimination on the grounds of age;
2. Raising the level of public awareness of the importance of participation of elderly people in social and economic life;
3. Counteracting negative stereotypes of old age by social educational campaigns;
4. Promoting ideas and actions aimed at preparing for old age and maintaining independence for the longest possible time.

### **II. Participation in social life and support for all forms of civic, social, cultural, artistic, sports and religious activity is carried out through:**

1. Shaping the public space friendly to elderly people, thanks to the elimination of information, technical, urban, architectural and communication barriers and the promotion of universal design, as well as the consolidation of knowledge in the field of road safety;
2. Supporting the functioning and development of organisations bringing together elderly people, municipal councils of seniors and other forms of social participation and representation of elderly people;
3. Development of volunteer work among elderly people, preparation for playing new social roles in the family, peer, neighbourhood, religious groups and other groups;
4. Facilitating participation in social life, culture, artistic activities, sports and recreational programmes and tourism of elderly people;
5. Supporting the activity of elderly people within the framework of religious organisations, bringing together seniors and those acting for their benefit.

### **III. Promotion of the principles of the silver economy among commercial and non-commercial entities is carried out by:**

1. Conducting information activities addressed to companies and social and solidarity economy entities in the field of knowledge of the principles of the silver economy and the needs and solutions related to the accessibility and adaptation of websites and electronic services for elderly people.

2. Conducting actions for the promotion of economic activity in the silver economy sector (including the development of social economy entities as a tool for social and professional activation of elderly people).

Conducting actions for the promotion of entrepreneurship of elderly people.

- **Social activity**, which includes activities aimed at increasing the participation of elderly people in active forms of spending free time, supporting dependent elderly persons and their environment in the place of residence, developing volunteer work of elderly people in the local environment and increasing the involvement of elderly people in the area of the labour market.

- **Social participation**, which contributes to strengthening the self-organisation of elderly people community and increasing the influence of elderly people on decisions concerning the living conditions of citizens.

#### **IV. Health promotion, disease prevention, access to diagnostics, treatment And rehabilitation.**

The Ministry of Health is proceeding with the adoption of a document entitled „A healthy future. Strategic framework for the development of the health care system for the years 2021-2027, with the perspective until 2030.” Concerning the care for elderly people.

The main objective – in the field of care for elderly people – is to improve the quality of life and health of seniors and their caregivers. This is to be achieved through the development of human resources, the development of forms of day care, home care and innovative forms of care. What is assumed is the support for informal caregivers and the coordination of community-based care.

#### **V. Increasing physical safety – preventing violence and neglect of elderly people.**

In particular, it is important to take actions aimed at:

- counteracting violence and discrimination against elderly people.



## **VI. Creating conditions for solidarity and intergenerational integration.**

In connection with the changes taking place in the demographic structure of the population, an extremely important role is also played by solidarity, which, in a broad sense, means the community of all generations in a local community in acting for the benefit of elderly people and the community of action with elderly people for the benefit of the community in which they live together.

**VII. Activities for education for old age** (care and medical employees), to old age (whole society), through old age (from the youngest generation) and education in old age (elderly people).

In particular, it is important to take actions aimed at:

- organising activities, trainings, courses, etc. enabling the acquisition of new skills and competences among elderly people and empowering them in the labour market,
- organising cultural, educational, sports and recreational projects in order to manage the free time of elderly people and strengthen intra- and intergenerational integration,

## **UN Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWG-A)**

Poland participates in the discussion on implementing the rights of elderly people and developing the UN Convention on the Rights of elderly people.



**SDG 3:** to strive to ensure quality of life at all ages

and maintain independent living including health and well-being.

**SDG 4:** to promote lifelong learning and adapt the educational system in order

to meet the changing economic, social and demographic conditions.

**SDG 10:** to mainstream ageing in all policy fields with the aim of bringing societies and economies into harmony with demographic change to achieve a society for all ages)

## Helpline dedicated to Seniors

As part of the Corps, a helpline dedicated to seniors has also been launched.

By calling the toll-free number 22 505 11 11, elderly people can ask for help in everyday activities which require them to leave home but are made more difficult due to the current pandemic. The person accepting the application provides the contact number of a senior in need of support to an appropriate social assistance centre in the given commune. An employee of the centre contacts the senior, verifies the application and determines all the details related to the provision of assistance. Volunteers will provide elderly people with necessary products. Elderly people may also report a need for support by calling directly to a social assistance centre competent for their place of residence. *We offer friendship, conversation, and support for people aged 55 or over, especially those who may be experiencing feelings of loneliness and isolation.*

## Actions targeted at dependent elderly people

Ensuring optimal access to health, rehabilitation and care services tailored to the needs of dependent elderly people. Dependent person – a person whose activity is reduced due to impaired bodily functions, which necessitates another person's permanent or long-term support in order to satisfy the necessities of life of the dependent person. In accordance with the constitutional principle of subsidiarity, providing that the state should not interfere in matters individuals are able to cope with on their own, the key actors in social policy for elderly people include:

1. Family – as the basic institution and social group;
2. The state – through responsible development of socio-economic conditions conducive to accomplishment of objectives and tasks;
3. Local government – through implementation of tasks in particular local communities, adapted to the diversified demographic and socio-economic situation at the regional and local levels. Involvement of local governments enables a thorough diagnosis of the situation and needs as well as adapting particular measures to local conditions and needs;
4. Non-governmental organizations, in particular social and solidarity economy entities– to diagnose the needs of elderly people and respond to them using local community resources, and to complement measures implemented by public entities.

## Developing a positive perception of old age in the society.

Developing a positive perception of old age in the society will be implemented through:

1. Counteracting ageism;
2. Raising public awareness of the importance of elderly people's participation in social and economic life;
3. Counteracting negative stereotypes regarding old age through social educational campaigns;
4. Promoting ideas and actions aimed at getting prepared to old age and maintaining autonomy for as long as possible.



**Counteracting ageism** will be implemented by making individuals aware of their rights, sensitizing them to manifestations of disadvantageous treatment and providing information on availability of free legal assistance, if needed, through:

- Implementation of anti-discrimination projects and social campaigns;
- Incorporating issues related to counteracting ageism into the National Action Program for Equal Treatment.

*Positive perception of aging is a key predictor  
of quality-of-life in aging people*

The material was prepared by: Fundacja Gaudete, Poland

<http://www.gaudete.katowice.opoka.org.pl>