

# CALL TO ACTION TO STOP AGEISM IN SERBIA

## EQUALITY FOR ALL AGES

**Older age is the only assured future for most of us, and intergenerational solidarity is a fundamental contract between all members of society**

Bearing in mind the discussion at the National Dialogue on Ageing and Ageism held on 27 September in Belgrade, the situation and recommendations from the Special Report on Discrimination against Older People of the Commissioner for the Protection of Equality,

- Taking into account the wide diversity of older people and the different needs of certain groups, especially older women, “older” older persons, those living alone, in rural areas or in remote areas, poor or at risk of poverty, those who are exposed to disrespect, discrimination, neglect, abuse or violence,
- Considering the overall demographic trends in Europe, our region and Serbia - in which one in 5 citizens (over 20%) is older than 65, with a declining trend of population growth and increasing life expectancy as one of the greatest civilizational achievements,
- Facing multiple challenges including on pension and disability insurance, health and social protection systems,
- Acknowledging modern social values, the pace of technical and technological changes, as well as the changes in patterns of behavior that favor speed, looks, “terror of youth” and instant solutions in many aspects of life,

## THE COMMISSIONER FOR THE PROTECTION OF EQUALITY, UNFPA AND OTHER STAKEHOLDERS CALL TO

“STOP AGEISM”



for the full inclusion and realization of the human rights of all older persons

People of all ages and all generations, including older and younger, representatives of local and national authorities, independent bodies, academics, civil society and the private sector..., can jointly review existing policies related to ageing, agree on ways to respond to the current situation and to the needs and preferences of older persons to improve their quality of life and their social inclusion, to achieve equality and a society for all ages.

Following the recommendations outlined in the Special Report by the Commissioner, concrete steps can be taken towards equality in older age. Collaborative action can improve the position of older persons and ensure social inclusion, security, fighting discrimination and violence, adapting the social and health care system to growing needs, improving accessibility, infrastructure and transport, intergenerational solidarity, dealing with emergencies and other issues of importance to older persons and to all, through:

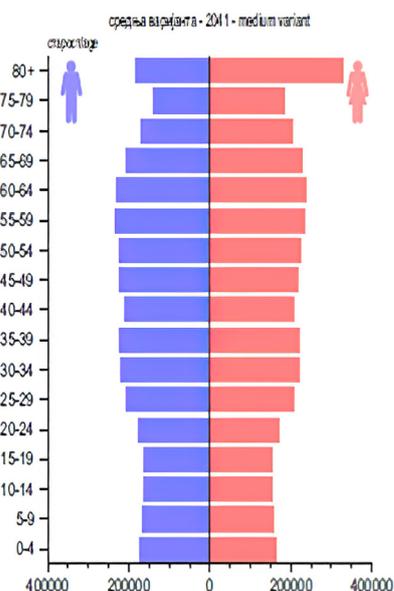
### 1. Activities at the local level, which include:

- Raising awareness of the concept and forms of discrimination, as well as the protection mechanisms, with special emphasis on the Special Report on Discrimination against Older Persons and its recommendations
- Organization of several round tables in different areas throughout the country to review the situation in specific regions and possible ways to improve the lives of older persons,
- Gathering of relevant actors – older persons, their associations, youth organizations, human rights organizations, decision makers from local governments, social and health care providers, and other actors at the local level,
- Formulation of conclusions on issues that directly or indirectly relate to the improvement of the situation of older persons, as well as development of an adequate support system in both specific regions and at national level.



## 2. Activities at the national level, which include:

- Holding consultative meetings with decision makers regarding the situation of older persons in Serbia and presenting the results of activities undertaken at the local level and the conclusions related to issues that directly or indirectly pertain to the improvement of the lives of older persons, as well as development of support systems,
- Providing a multisectoral approach to improving the situation of older persons with the participation of representatives of relevant ministries and parliamentary committees (in the area of human and minority rights, social policy, health, family care and demographics, rural welfare, etc.), as well as civil society organizations and providers of different services,
- Encouraging the policy-making process in line with the conclusions from the round tables and the recommendations of the Commissioner for the improvement of the situation of older persons in the areas of strategic framework, health and social welfare, service delivery, poverty reduction, community living, prevention of discrimination and violence, with special emphasis to the Covid-19 pandemic and the crisis situation,
- Carrying out activities to promote and encourage intergenerational solidarity and exchange of knowledge and experience between older and younger generations, including a prize-winning competition for elementary school students “Bridge of Understanding – Intergenerational Solidarity”, with the support of UNFPA, marking the International Day of the Older Persons.



## 3. Media sensitization on the situation of older people, through:

- Increased cooperation with local and national media on issues related to the realization of the human rights and equality of older persons, especially involvement of the media in activities planned for implementation at the local level,
- Encouraging the creation of informative and promotional content that breaks down stereotypes and prejudices against the older persons, raises the visibility and importance of the fight against ageism, highlighting examples of good practice,
- Empowering the media through trainings for journalists on non-discriminatory reporting.



#### 4. Creating practical tools/guidelines, for:

- older persons → a guide to full participation in society (how to exercise their rights, where they can get support, how to protect themselves from discrimination and violence...),
- young people → encouraging intergenerational solidarity and understanding (“today me, tomorrow you”),
- the media → encouraging non-discriminatory reporting, positive images of older persons,
- representatives of local authorities → a guide for the implementation of anti-discrimination policies and the development of support systems for older persons,
- decision makers → call to action for policy making and joint activities in order to improve the lives of older persons.