

## Filling the gap in long-term professional care through systematic migration policies (Germany, 23-24 October 2013)

### Challenges for long-term care in Poland and policy options to increase the supply of LTC staff<sup>1</sup>

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#### Introduction and background

The population of Poland, like the population of other EU Member States, is ageing. This requires planning and organisation of suitable measures aimed at addressing various needs of older citizens. In reply to those challenges Poland has taken several measures in 2012 and 2013 that allow for applying a horizontal approach towards ageing in State's public policy.

The demographic forecasts for Poland indicate that the size of working-age population will gradually be shrinking and at the same time the number of people in post-working age will be growing. Consequently, it is expected that the share of older people (60+ and 65+) in the population will be noticeably higher, increasing dependency ratios. According to forecasts, the population in Poland will decrease to 33.275 million and the dependency ratio will reach 55.7% compared to around 20% at present<sup>2</sup>. 20% of the population is now 60+ and the number of older senior citizens aged 80+ is 3.6% and rapidly increasing. It is estimated that in 2035 more than 7% of the population in Poland will be above 80. The intensive outflow of Polish citizens to EU countries<sup>3</sup> observed especially since 2007 accompanied with the tendency to settle outside Poland (if continued) might additionally contribute to a deterioration of the demographic situation in the long run. The above data clearly indicates that the demand for long-term care services for older people in Poland will grow within the next decades.

Available data on professions in oversupply or in deficiency based on specifically processed statistical data on unemployed and job offers indicate that elderly care workers and long-term care nurses are already in short supply.

Two main trends are identified when it comes to demand for long-term care services. The first refers to the growing number of **single households** of senior citizens and the second to the so-called **feminisation of ageing**.

Long-term care is traditionally provided by family members of dependent older persons, especially women 50+. This involves taking into account on one hand, the

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<sup>2</sup> *Demography Report 2010*, European Commission, 2010.

<sup>3</sup> Polish caregivers providing services in health care sector and as elderly care workers play an important role in satisfying labour shortages in some EU countries (i.e.,: Germany, UK, Italy).



increasing demand for care and on the other hand opportunities for employment of care givers. In Poland many people aged 50+ belong to the so-called **sandwich generation** and must divide their time among different family members – their children on one side and their dependent parents who require constant support on the other. This refers mainly to women aged 50+ who usually give up their jobs to perform care themselves as institutional service is not affordable. Employment rate of women 50+ in Poland is one of the lowest in the EU – **only 30%** of them are working.

The system of long-term care for older people must provide opportunities for so-called ageing in place. Therefore it should be based on *mobile care givers* including qualified medical assistants, social assistants as well as volunteers. Care services should be diverse in order to address different needs of older people due to their various health status.

As Poland is facing medical and assistive staff shortages, measures should be taken to promote employment in the care sector of professional care givers as well as assistants and volunteers.

### **Long-term care services for older people within the system of social assistance**

Within the system of social assistance there are several services available for senior citizens. These are social services or special social services. Services involve support in everyday life and special care services are addressed to people who due to illness or disability require additional help from qualified medical or care staff. Social assistance centres decide which service should be provided and under which payment regulations (partly or fully subsidised).

Social service can be provided at home or in day care centres. There are also care homes. People who need special medical support can be placed in medical care centres.

Within the next financial perspective of ESF 2014-2020 the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy plans to take up measures to develop a system of various forms of long-term care services for older people (institutional as well as enabling ageing in place).

### **Government Programme for Social Participation of Senior Citizens 2012-2013**

The concept of active and healthy ageing assumes that an individual is provided with an opportunity to remain socially productive for as long as possible. The social productivity is defined as any activity that generates goods and services, irrespective of whether it is paid or not, including activities such as home work, childcare, volunteering, assistance to family and friends.

During the European Year for Active Ageing and Intergenerational Solidarity, in August 2012, Poland adopted the **Government Programme for Social Participation of Senior Citizens 2012-2013**, coordinated by the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. At the same time a new organisational unit of the Ministry was established – the **Department of Senior Policy**, which is responsible for coordinating actions for active and healthy ageing. Among the main goals are the promotion of lifelong social participation and extending working life. The main objective of the **Government Programme for Social Participation of Senior Citizens 2012-2013** is to improve the quality of life of older people for dignified ageing through social activity.



The programme is based on four priorities:

- I. Education of the elderly;
- II. Social activity and integration within and between generations;
- III. Social participation of the elderly;
- IV. Social services on the basis of self-organisation and volunteering by the elderly.

One component of the programme is the open tender for co-financing projects for seniors conducted by organisations operating in the area of public benefit. The first edition completed in October 2012 showed the enormous potential of local organisations acting in the field of active and healthy ageing – about 420 projects were co-financed. The second edition was announced in March 2013 and about 300 projects were co-financed. The programme budget amounts to EUR 15 million: 5 million in 2012 and EUR 10 million in 2013.

The programme has been revised and updated. It will be continued in 2014.

### **Long-term senior policy 2014-2020**

Another component of the programme is the project of long-term senior policy in Poland 2014-2020. In February 2013 the Senior Policy Council has been established as a supportive body for the Ministry of Labour and Social Policy. It comprises of representatives of other Ministries as well various other stakeholders: social partners, non-governmental organisations, experts and academics. The Council is responsible for preparing the project of long-term senior policy in Poland.

It is the first complex government document in the field of active and healthy ageing. It is now in the process of public consultations with various stakeholders and social partners and is expected to be implemented by the Government in January 2014.

The project of long-term senior policy in Poland 2014-2020<sup>4</sup> identifies priority areas where actions need to be taken within the next years. These areas are: independent and healthy living, social participation of older citizens, employment, intergenerational solidarity and silver economy. The project is based on key recommendations in relevant fields.

Main recommendations on long-term care services<sup>5</sup> are as follows:

1. Increased access to long-term care services to provide ageing in place;
2. Cash or in kind benefits to cover the costs of service;
3. Diversification of forms of care: institutions (care homes), assistants, help and self-help networks, etc.;
4. Eradication of barriers (legal, administrative) for legalising employment of informal care givers in order to reduce *grey market*;
5. More effective distribution of benefits according to the level of dependency;
6. Providing support for older people in single households via registry and monitoring of their needs in cooperation with medical staff and other entities;
7. Providing high quality care services by developing information and education system for care givers (e.g. family members);
8. Providing training for care givers (system of certification).

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<sup>4</sup> Prepared in strong participation of Senior Policy Council (intersectoral body).

<sup>5</sup> As for Sep 30 2013. The draft document is being in the consultation process in Oct/Nov 2013.



## Trends concerning the lack of workforce in long-term care in the context of the labour immigration to Poland

With growing participation of women in the labour market and gradual defamilisation of care services the development of remunerated services in the domestic care sector – both formal and informal – is visible. As research indicates, the above services are mostly performed informally (both by nationals and non-nationals), often with no formal qualification required, and the low prestige and low salaries of the job creates a niche often cultivated by migrant women – mostly Ukrainians<sup>6</sup>. Warsaw and other big cities, due to relatively higher incomes of households and higher than average participation of females in the labour market, are the most significant recipients of foreign labour force in domestic services (including the elderly care sector).

According to prognoses, the gradual growth in demand for low qualified foreign care workers in Poland is expected to be visible in the next decades<sup>7</sup>.

### Migration policy responses

Compared to other EU countries, Poland is still not a particularly attractive destination for a large number of immigrants, especially those highly qualified. The level of economic migration to Poland is still low. The proportion of foreign workers in the Polish labour market is the lowest among OECD countries and amounts to 0.3%, while the average for OECD countries is at approximately 12%<sup>8</sup>.

However, the Polish economy needs immigrants. Particularly important for Poland are those solutions which flexibly fill the gaps in labour supply in the sectors that do not require high qualifications and those in seasonal work within sectors such as agriculture, construction, manufacturing, trade, transport and household chores. A large role here can be played by mechanisms promoting migration based on circulation rather than settlement.

Polish migration policy<sup>9</sup> emphasises the future role immigration – among other factors – might play in alleviating the consequences of demographic changes. Although the Polish migration policy does not target directly the need to satisfy the demand in the elderly care sector, certain tools fostering the completion of labour gaps in this branch (among others) are already in place.

Currently, the demand for foreign workforce in Poland is predominantly of short-term character and affects mostly low qualified jobs. Foreign labour supply in Poland applies mostly to neighbouring countries (Ukraine, Belarus, Russia) with strong domination of citizens of Ukraine. Responding to the already existing patterns, well established migration networks and cultural proximity of the above

<sup>6</sup> Kindler Marta 'A Risky Business? Ukrainian Migrant Women in Warsaw's Domestic Work Sector.' Amsterdam University Press. Amsterdam, 2012.

<sup>7</sup> Report concerning the labour market demand for foreigners in Poland, Social Policy Institute, 2010 (Raport z opracowania prognozy zapotrzebowania na kwalifikacje i specjalności na polskim rynku pracy w perspektywie kilkunastoletniej z punktu widzenia kształtowania polityki imigracyjnej państwa wykonanej w ramach usługi badawczej pt. „Przeprowadzenie badań nt. systemów imigracji różnych grup migranckich oraz dopuszczenia ich do polskiego rynku pracy, np.: osób wysoko wykwalifikowanych; zagranicznych studentów polskich uczelni; studentów szkół zagranicznych odbywających praktykę/staż w Polsce; pracowników delegowanych przez firmy zagraniczne; pracowników tymczasowych z państw sąsiadujących”, Uniwersytet Warszawski Wydział Dziennikarstwa i Nauk Politycznych, Instytut Polityki Społecznej, 2010).

<sup>8</sup> International Migration Outlook, SOPEMI 2011, OECD, p. 443.

<sup>9</sup> Document 'Polish migration Policy - state of play and future actions' adopted by Polish government in 2012.



mentioned countries, Polish decision makers decided to introduce simpler rules of access to the Polish labour market for citizens of 5 countries (in addition to the neighbouring countries also Moldova and Georgia). As the specific character of foreign labour demand in Poland is expected to continue in the years to come<sup>10</sup>, the Polish migration policy recommends continuing the liberal approach towards short-term workers from chosen countries of the Post-Soviet region.

### **Legislative framework (third country nationals)**

#### *Work permits without the labour market test*

Although the general rule on the access of third country nationals to foreign market envisages obtaining the work permit, in some cases it is issued without conducting the labour market test. One of the exemptions from the labour market test requirement is especially dedicated to domestic services provided to private households (care giving included) by the citizens of 5 countries: Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Moldova and Georgia. According to available data for the last two years such permits constituted 11.14% (12,984) of the total work permits number and over 95% of them were issued to citizens of the Ukraine. The vast majority of the permits issued on the basis of provision (allowing the labour market test exemption) for domestic workers were issued by Mazovian Voivod.

#### *Short-term work simplified procedure*

The highest rate of foreign employment in the domestic sector in Poland refers to the so-called simplified procedure<sup>11</sup>. The simplified procedure presently allowing to perform citizens of 5 countries (Ukraine, Belarus, Russia, Moldova and Georgia) to work for six months within twelve consecutive months without a work permit, provided the employer registers the declaration on intention to entrust work to the foreigner in the local labour office, was introduced (in its initial form) in 2006. Available data on the number of registered declarations indicate that it predominantly applies to seasonal work in agriculture, is also popular in construction, and to some extent, in domestic services<sup>12</sup>. The number of statements registered in labour offices greatly exceeds the number of work permits issued. For example: in 2012, 245,000 statements were registered with about 40 permits issued.

The simplified procedure allows also to continue the performance of work for the same employer on the basis of a work permit (issued without the labour market test procedure) after the 3 months 'trial period' of work on the basis of the declaration.

The available statistical data do not indicate the exact share and national structure of elderly care givers compared to the total number of foreigners with respect to whom declarations on intention to entrust work in the domestic sector are registered. The researchers indicate<sup>13</sup> that such work is often performed by

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<sup>10</sup> Looking ahead, Poland expects to increase demand for highly-skilled workers.

<sup>11</sup> Simplified procedure is the most popular framework for work of foreigners in Poland and shows strong scale wise domination in comparison to the employment performed on the basis of general rules (work permits).

<sup>12</sup> Although the share of domestic sector related declarations within the total number of all declarations is not significant (3.73 % of the total), it is higher than the number of regular work permits issued with regard to same sector (19,158 of declarations comparing to 12,984 of work permits in the years 2010-2012).

<sup>13</sup> Anna Kordasiewicz, report on ethnic dimension of the market of domestic services in Warsaw, Social Policy Institute, 2010 („Etniczny wymiar funkcjonowania rynku usług domowych w Warszawie”, ISP, Warszawa, 2010).



Ukrainian women. According to qualitative data, Ukrainian women often perform such jobs within the simplified scheme on a rotary basis – one person works for the maximum period of six months and is replaced by another migrant woman performing the job for another six months. Given the psychologically strenuous character of the job, possibility of performing it on a circular basis may be considered a favourable option.

According to qualitative data, work of migrant women in the elderly care sector in Poland is often performed within 'the living-in' formula and with no formal written contract, which often exposes the migrant to the risk of various forms of exploitation<sup>14</sup>.

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<sup>14</sup> Kindler Marta 'A Risky Business? Ukrainian Migrant Women in Warsaw's Domestic Work Sector.' Amsterdam University Press. Amsterdam, 2012.

