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Long-term care – use of the international definition in Slovenija

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Summary

Long-term care is an important social issue which has in recent years been the subject of intensive discussions at the international level. It is directly linked to the phenomenon of the so-called long-living society, which means that the society experiences changes in demographic relationships. The share of older people is growing, life expectancy is increasing and the need for long-term care is rising. This is one of the reasons why in the future we can expect that a larger share of the population will become dependent on long-term care. Many European countries have already started to systematically regulate long-term care (e.g. by adopting special acts regulating this area), and today practically all countries are faced with the important question of organising an effective and sustainable system of long-term care.

In Slovenia long-term care has not yet been systematically regulated. It is provided within the framework of different legislation and via separate social protection systems. The act regulating this area was being prepared for several years; the last draft was publicly discussed in 2010. In addition to the fact that long-term care needs to be urgently regulated in terms of content (adoption of the mentioned act), an important role is played by statistical monitoring of the mentioned area. There is namely a large need for organised, coordinated and systematic collection of such data, since this is an area that requires a more uniform approach. The data are increasingly important also at the international level, since they enable comparisons of different systems of long-term care and present input data for long-term projections of public expenditure related to population ageing, which are important for estimating the public finance sustainability of the country. Since systematically collected data are very important both nationally (adoption of the act) and internationally (projections, OECD reporting, etc.), in 2012 the Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia appointed an inter-institutional working group led and coordinated together with the Social Protection Institute of the Republic of Slovenia. The working

group includes representatives of all main actors providing data on long-term care (in addition to already mentioned institutions, the Institute of Macroeconomic Analysis and Development, the Ministry of Labour, Family Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, the Ministry of Health, the Slovenian Community of Social Institutions, the National Institute of Public Health, the Pension and Disability Insurance Institute, the Institute for Economic Research and the Health Insurance Institute of Slovenia). The main purpose of this working group is to establish the conditions for systematic statistics and monitoring of performance and development of long-term care in Slovenia.

The paper presents the platform for establishing and operation of the inter-institutional working group and key results of monitoring long-term care in Slovenia according to the international (OECD, Eurostat, WHO) definition.

The whole text is available in Slovenian language on
http://www.umar.gov.si/avtorski_prispevki/