

# Making our voices heard:

Older people and decision-making in East and Central Europe

September 2001

**HelpAge**  
**International**  

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Leading global action on ageing

HelpAge International is a global network of not-for-profit organisations with a mission to work with and for disadvantaged older people worldwide to achieve a lasting improvement in the quality of their lives.

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#### **Making our voices heard: Older people and decision-making in East and Central Europe**

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## Introduction

### Background

The dissolution of socialist state planning systems across East and Central Europe from 1989 onwards was a catalyst for far-reaching changes affecting almost every aspect of ordinary people's lives. The transition to market-led economies brought financial instability, unemployment and crises in public funding. Old models of provision collapsed, triggering new kinds of activity in the non-government sector.

At the same time, countries across the region experienced an increase in the proportion of older people in their populations. This demographic shift put further pressures on social provision already under strain in critical areas such as pensions and healthcare. Fresh ways of thinking and new kinds of collaboration were needed to ensure older people's welfare and reduce their vulnerability in the post-Soviet era.

Yet the role of the voluntary sector in supporting older people in East and Central Europe, and its relationship with the public sector, have been little studied or documented. Practical information about what non-government organisations are active with older people, and where, is also lacking.

HelpAge International has worked with older people's groups and non-government organisations in East and Central Europe since 1991, and in 1994 established a support and information network which now has over 40 members in 12 countries.

Evidence from this network shows clearly that transition affected older people's wellbeing on many fronts - economically, socially, psychologically and physically. But most national governments and international bodies have paid little attention to older people's needs and concerns when implementing economic and social reforms. For example, older people were not consulted or involved in programmes to deal with the side effects of transition, even though they were disproportionately affected by measures such as reduced subsidies.

In 1998, East and Central European network members identified the need for:

- More published information about non-government organisation work with and for older people across the region.
- Better networking between non-government organisations, to improve the exchange of good practice and build a shared evidence base for advocacy activities.
- Stronger links between local government and the voluntary sector.

With funding and support from the Local Government and Public Service Reform Initiative of the Open Society Institute, HelpAge International and the network agreed a research and publishing project to address these needs.

Transition has affected older people on many fronts — economically, socially, psychologically and physically.

This publication presents the perspective of non-governmental organisations working on the ground.

#### Aims of this publication

*Making our voices heard: Older people and decision-making in East and Central Europe* is the second in a series of HelpAge International publications designed to:

- Build a clearer picture of older people, their groups and voluntary organisations across the region.
- Examine how voluntary efforts relate or could relate to state sector provision.
- Support networking and the development of new networks, by publishing the names and addresses of a sample of non-government organisations working with and for older people.

The first publication, *Nothing about us without us: Older people and decision-making in East and Central Europe*, covered Albania, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Slovenia. This booklet covers Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (with a particular focus on Serbia), Macedonia, Moldova, Romania and Ukraine.

Taken together, the two publications give a picture of work with older people almost all countries with members in the HelpAge International East and Central European network. They are not intended to be in-depth studies of the kind already available from international agencies such as the United Nations and the World Bank. Instead, they present the perspective of non-government organisations working on the ground and offer practical tools for networking.

*Making our voices heard: Older people and decision-making in East and Central Europe* offers:

- A regional overview which analyses the changes older people have seen, the challenges they face, and how the voluntary sector has responded.
- Brief summaries of older people's situation, the role of government and non-government organisations country by country, based on research commissioned within the East and Central European network.
- Case studies of older people's groups, clubs, unions and non-government organisations at work on the ground.
- A directory of non-government organisations working with and for older people across the region.

It will be of interest to:

- Older people's groups and organisations interested in exchanging information and expertise, building joint platforms, and forming national networks.
- National and local governments wishing to develop relationships with non-government organisations working with and for older people in East and Central Europe.
- National and international donors, non-government organisations and agencies wishing to build a clearer picture of voluntary activities with older people across the region.

This publication is based on commissioned research carried out by members of HelpAge International's East and Central European network during 2000/2001, and on discussion and identification of key issues arising across the network.

Full country reports and directories have already been published in local languages and circulated to policy makers, academics and non-government organisations in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia), Macedonia, Moldova, Romania and Ukraine. They are available on request from individual researchers (details at the end of each relevant country summary, pages 11-34).

HelpAge International and the East and Central European network

Founded in 1983, HelpAge International has three key objectives:

- To support the development of organisations working with older people.
- To provide a voice for older people, especially the most disadvantaged.
- To develop grassroots project activity.

Through its Eastern and Central Europe network, it aims to:

- Build the capacity of organisations working with older people across the region, by providing training in fundraising, organisational development and agecare.
- Promote exchange visits and the dissemination of evidence, information and good practice.
- Assist the development national networks and joint advocacy platforms.

Research and publishing have proved effective tools to support the wider goal of networking. HelpAge International has helped stimulate the formation of national networks of non-government organisations working with older people in Slovenia and Lithuania, and national forums are under discussion in Croatia, Bosnia and Moldova.

We are committed to working with members to build new types of collaboration within the voluntary sector, and between voluntary and public sector bodies, to benefit older people across East and Central Europe. We place a strong emphasis on encouraging older people's participation and using their evidence as the basis for project planning and advocacy activities.

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We are committed to building new types of collaboration to benefit older people across East and Central Europe.

Feelings of deep disillusion and disappointment amongst older people across the region are common

## Overview and recommendations

### Overview

More older people and fewer resources

The governments of the East and Central European countries featured in this publication — Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia), Estonia, Macedonia, Moldova, Romania and Ukraine — all face a common task. Like most other nations across the world, they must now plan systematically for increasing numbers of older citizens.

In 1990, older people aged 60 and over formed around 20 per cent of total population in this region. By 2025, about 40 per cent of Estonia and Ukraine's populations will have reached this age. A demographic shift on this scale demands new ways of thinking about older people's needs — and their contributions to society.

The challenge is not simply to extend existing provision. It is to rebuild it. In the last decade, many older people across the region have experienced a dramatic collapse in the standards of economic and social security they enjoyed in the Soviet era. At the same time, their traditional role in families and communities has changed substantially, reshaped by pressures including conflict, poverty and migration.

New freedoms, new insecurities

Older citizens in all the countries studied now live under democratically elected regimes and enjoy greater political freedom. But the mood amongst many older people is the opposite of celebratory. Material hardship, the collapse of personal assets, and the erosion of public safety nets have produced high levels of stress. Non-government organisations working with older people say feelings of deep disillusion and disappointment are common.

There is a feeling that history has dealt this generation a particularly harsh set of cards. As Gavrilă Gaina, president of the Association of Pensioners of Moldova, says: 'We have lived through war, fascism, Stalin's gulag, and famine. People who gave their health and lives to the country, and spent up to 50 years working for it, are now forgotten and poor.'

The inadequacy and unreliability of pension payments, the main form of support for most older people aged 65 and over, is a major source of unhappiness. Governments across the region have coped with the liquidity crisis brought on by a worsening balance in pension funds by cutting pension entitlements, raising pensionable age, and delaying payments.

The real value of pensions has plummeted. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, for example, some estimates indicate that pensions now cover just 20 per cent of basic needs. In Romania, the value of pensions dropped from nearly half to a third of average salaries between 1990 and 2000. At the same time, subsidies for staples such as food and basic medicines have been slashed.



### Economic and social challenges

Most older people must meet the costs of heating, rent, lighting, food and medication from their pensions, leaving little margin. In Macedonia, for example, older people spend on average 30 to 40 per cent of their outlay on household expenses, and a further 30 per cent on medicines. This generation sees paying bills on time as a priority. In winter months, this can leave them with very little cash for food.

Opportunities for older people to supplement their incomes have been sharply curtailed by the impacts of economic transition. Those in rural areas can grow some of their own food. Many work for cash, or within families in return for reciprocal support. Some are reduced to begging or using services such as soup kitchens.

Across the region, the older generation is primarily female, and many live alone. For example, women aged 65 and over now outnumber men by nearly a third in Ukraine. While around one in four older men are married, one in three older women is unmarried or widowed.

In the Balkans, older people are among those who have found it hardest to recover from the effects of the 1991-95 war. In Bosnia-Herzegovina, for example, 9,000 older people still live in temporary reception centres, forming a disproportionate 13 per cent of all residents. A third of all refugees in Serbia's collective centres are aged 65 and over, and suicide rates run high in the age group. Those older people who have managed to return to their roots find problems claiming land and re-establishing their livelihoods and place within the community.

### The need for a voice

Politically, the structures through which older people used to feel part of the state decision-making apparatus have been weakened. Their concerns have become less visible and relevant following the collapse of centralised planning systems. Pensioners' associations and councils of veterans retain their legitimacy through vast membership rolls, but they face a new and changed world, in which former levels of state provision are unlikely to be restored. They urgently need to find new ways of influencing government policy, beyond lobbying round pension values.

Older people form a substantial and growing vote in the new democracies across the region. But they tend to vote out of nostalgia for past certainties rather than on the basis of candidates' policies on ageing. The result is that 'grey vote' remains unfocused, although older people are the most consistent voters and, in the countries of the former Soviet Union, often targeted in electoral campaigns.

Formal democratic structures have as yet done little to encourage older people to take part in decision-making or to identify their interests systematically as a group. New forms of 'democracy from below' are needed if older people are to make their voices heard. Community-based non-government organisations have a real opportunity to assist the process through the evidence they gather daily in their work with older people.

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In post-conflict countries, refugees and internally displaced persons are part of transition society

Different challenges, different responses

The countries covered in this publication encompass a wide range of social, economic and historical experience. Some fall within the Balkans and former Yugoslavia: Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia, Macedonia and Romania. Others fall in the western former Soviet Union: Estonia, Moldova and Ukraine.

While some common themes emerge, it is clear that each country faces its own particular set of challenges. For example, Romania and Estonia are both candidates to enter the European Union. But Romania is a large country with serious economic difficulties, where one in two older Romanians lives in poverty, while Estonia has made economic progress and has relatively well-funded provision for older people. Romania has emerged from a long period of national dictatorship; Estonia from a period of spirited resistance to Soviet rule which strengthened its tradition of proud self-reliance.

In post-conflict countries such as Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Macedonia and Serbia, refugees and internally displaced persons are part of a transition society. Collective centres and short-term humanitarian interventions dominate the non-governmental landscape and have mostly eclipsed local pre-existing voluntary bodies. Their growing voluntary sectors have largely been created from outside.

Bosnia-Herzegovina, for example, has now some 1,500 international and national non-government organisations, whose operations have largely replaced those of the state. Sustainability is a real issue, although as this publication shows some local, community-based initiatives are developing.

Romania, where foreign aid has been poured into voluntary organisations, presents yet another case. The extent of external funding has arguably created a dependency culture. It has also made it difficult for well-funded non-government organisations to lobby cash-strapped local authorities about resources with any kind of authority.

For older people in Ukraine and Moldova, the last decade has brought grinding hardship in the wake of almost complete economic collapse. The deterioration in their living standards may have been less dramatic and rapid than that experienced by older people in the countries which emerged from war-torn former Yugoslavia, but it has been equally devastating. Yet government policies on care and support for older people remain undeveloped, and public-voluntary sector collaboration is weak, with little mutual understanding.

Estonia, on the other hand, shows that state-sponsored non-government organisations can complement and add to the roles of traditional community-based organisation such as older people's clubs, as well as influencing policy. The Pensioners' Union of Estonia, for example, recently lobbied successfully for new national legislation for older people, and for government agreement that older people were a priority group for some degree of protection from the economic uncertainties of transition.

The voluntary sector: a diverse picture

This publication reports on work by a range of different voluntary organisations to help older people in a part of the world where transition has

changed almost every aspect of life. It paints a diverse and varied picture of their aims and activities.

The organisations which have emerged in East and Central Europe over the last ten years include humanitarian service providers, self-help groups, community-development organisations, hobby clubs and local branches of state-sponsored national older persons' associations. They are at different stages of development and evolution, with differing challenges and opportunities.

New opportunities have arisen to influence local government, which part-funds most social services across the region, and to involve older people in decisions about the services they want and need. There are examples of work to empower older people in advocacy and public campaigns. In practice, direct service provision often feeds into the wider goal of lobbying on policy.

Older people and non-government organisations in each country will need to agree key priorities and strongest areas for collaboration with the public sector. The growth of a sustainable 'third sector' working for older people in most countries is likely to be dependent on finding fruitful and complementary ways in which to collaborate with local government.

Some common features

The research assembled points to some common principles and approaches emerging across the region's growing non-government sector, particularly among the countries of former Yugoslavia. One strong theme is the importance of volunteering — by and for older people — as a way of building links and capacity at community level. Another is the growth of mixed funding sources for non-government organisations, including international donors, corporate sector sponsors, and local government help from funding projects, to providing office space and other gifts in kind.

It shows clearly that non-government organisations, themselves often groups of older people, are well-placed to encourage older people actively to contribute to mutual support, voluntary activities and wider community development, for example, through self-help groups, social involvement and public campaigns. Policy makers tend to see older people as passive recipients of pensions and care. By helping older people challenge this model, non-government organisations can also help them influence policy agendas.

Across the region, non-government organisations and groups concerned with older people's wellbeing and welfare have unique opportunities to enable them, as a growing proportion of the electorate in new democratic structures, to influence government decision-making on policies and allocation of resources.

A growing force

Across East and Central Europe, shared experiences of isolation, poor access to health and social care, and income insecurity have brought older people together in an increasing number of voluntary associations, from self-help and educational groups, to registered charities.

In some cases, these have been built on existing structures. Pensioners' organisations, for example, have quite naturally taken on a welfare support role.

Non-government organisations, themselves often groups of older people, can do much to encourage mutual support and self-help

There is a clear need for new models of ageing in modern society, adapted to greater longevity and reduced state provision

In other cases, such as Macedonia, where humanitarian care was in the past largely supplied by church or state, wholly new groups have sprung up.

The vast majority of voluntary organisation activity is focused on welfare activities and services which supplement state provision. Some seek to influence government policy, though this function is still relatively undeveloped.

Public and voluntary sector relationships

The research conducted for this publication suggests that some governments are increasingly interested in, and supportive of, voluntary sector activities. The Romanian government, for example, has created a national Council for Older People and passed legislation to allow registered charities to work on a contract basis for the public sector. But the general picture is that strategic and operational links between the public and voluntary sectors remain undeveloped.

The large number of older people's clubs and groups which exist are not actively involved or consulted by policy makers to any great extent, and could derive some advantages from higher visibility. The state shows more interest in non-government organisations which seek to plug gaps in state provision. In some countries, particularly the former Republic of Yugoslavia, contracting out services to non-government providers has become widespread.

Where contracting out exists, it provides non-government organisations with new opportunities and, in principle at least, secure funding. But the rationale is often cost. The danger is that when non-government organisations take on the supply of services formerly provided by the state — such as direct healthcare provision in Moldova — they reduce their scope to influence policy or develop new models of provision. In these situations, they may need to safeguard their ability to speak out on issues such as quality of care.

The voluntary sector can act as an important source of new models of support for older people, such as the 'hospice at home' service developed by Second Breath in Moldova, or the homecare programme developed by the Foundation for the Support of Older People in Romania.

Organisations working in this way have real opportunities to influence state policy and practice on the basis of direct evidence. For them, the challenge will be to document older people's views professionally, and to find ways of involving government stakeholders in the process.

A society for all ages

The variety of older people's groups and associations which emerges from this and previous research is a useful reminder to public and voluntary sector bodies that older people form a large and diverse constituency.

Across western Europe, there is a clear need for new models of ageing in a modern society, adapted to the new realities of greater longevity and reduced levels of state provision. In the countries of East and Central Europe, where older people have experienced exceptionally high levels of economic insecurity and social dislocation over the last decade, this task is even more urgent.

Older people cannot be separated out from other economic and social groups, and ageing issues must be integrated into wider government planning in areas

such as health, welfare, education and employment. At the same time, it will be important to strengthen and support older people's roles within families, communities and societies.

As we approach the United Nations' Second World Assembly on Ageing (April 2002, Madrid), we need more than ever to think in terms of a society and policies for all ages. For all our futures, global population ageing must be seen as a springboard rather than a straitjacket to development.

### Recommendations

HelpAge International makes the following recommendations for improving public and voluntary sector work for and with older people in East and Central Europe.

#### **Governments and non-government organisations should:**

- Work together to identify and target the needs of vulnerable groups of older people, including:
  - in post-conflict situations, older people living in collective centres or returning homes to re-establish livelihoods and land rights
  - in countries which have raised or are planning to raise pensionable age, poor older people unexpectedly cut off from pensions
  - poor older people living alone in rural areas
  - older unmarried or widowed women without assets
  - older people in residential care.
- Strengthen strategic and operational collaboration, by:
  - sharing information and knowledge about the different sectors' work with and for older people
  - establishing mechanisms and fora for joint policy development
  - developing effective and efficient contractual and funding relationships
  - agreeing clear systems and policies for the transfer of beneficiaries between sectors.

#### **Governments should:**

- Co-ordinate national needs identification and provision by:
  - supporting systematic research into older people's needs and social contributions. and identifying appropriate research partners
  - fostering national, local and voluntary sector planning mechanisms which provide comprehensive, targeted support to vulnerable groups and areas
  - working with older people's forums and national networks where these exist
  - encouraging older people's organisations to help shape policies and programmes.

It will be important to support older people's roles within families and communities

- Monitor and build quality in non-government activities with older people by:
  - creating clear legislative frameworks and assessment procedures
  - setting up registration systems for voluntary organisations where these are not yet in place
  - helping the voluntary sector to develop new models of care and support
  - encouraging the growth of community-based organisations, especially in post-conflict countries
  - encouraging older people's active contribution, through, for example, volunteering, self-help groups and intergenerational activities.
- Build capacity at local government level by:
  - encouraging greater public and voluntary sector collaboration at local level
  - acknowledging and addressing resource issues faced by local government in carrying out national policies for older people.
- Lead national public education by:
  - improving public information about services available for older people
  - encouraging wider public understanding of older people's issues and concerns.

**Non-government organisations should:**

- Ensure quality and impact in their activities with older people by:
  - systematically gathering information on their own and other organisations' best practice
  - building networks with other voluntary sector bodies working with and for older people
  - building links with influential national bodies such as pensioners' associations, through initiatives such as training, information exchange and joint platforms
  - documenting and raising awareness of older people's experiences, through public education and advocacy activities
  - helping older people develop a clearer understanding of their rights and powers as voters, and encouraging them to lobby on a wider social agenda than pension provision.
- Improve joint working with the public sector by:
  - researching and seeking to complement public sector provision
  - making it a priority to build relationships with local government structures
  - developing their ability to contribute to policy through, for example, lobbying for or working with national older people's forums
  - promoting transparency through, for example, regular reporting on activities and impacts.

## Country summaries

### Bosnia-Herzegovina

#### Older people's situation

In the last decade, older people across Bosnia-Herzegovina have seen their expectations for the future, and their traditional roles, turned upside down. Economically, they have paid a heavy price for their country's transition from a centralised to a market economy. On top of this, many are still struggling to re-establish their livelihoods after a conflict which brought widespread disruption to civilian life.

The 1991-95 war which followed the break up of former Yugoslavia changed Bosnia-Herzegovina's demography. It left 6 per cent dead or missing, and drove 700,000 people — most of them young or middle-aged — to flee to other countries. Total population fell from 4.4 million to 3.6 million. The net effect has been an 'old age boom'. Bosnia-Herzegovinians aged 65 and over now make up 8.6 per cent of the population, as against 7.2 per cent before the war. Six in 10 are women.

Levels of social dislocation have been high, with half of all Bosnia-Herzegovinians now living in a different place from when the war started. Over 9,000 older people still live in temporary reception centres, where they form a disproportionate 13 per cent of all residents. Those who return home have problems claiming property, registering for social services and re-establishing a role in the community.

Before the war, public support structures were relatively well developed. But Bosnia-Herzegovina is now the second poorest country in the Balkans. Pensions, older people's main source of income, have been sharply cut and, according to some estimates, now cover just 20 per cent of basic needs. The pension system remains unreformed, paying different categories of workers at different rates. Many older people cannot pay for basic services such as water, and some work on the black market to make ends meet. Those living outside families are particularly vulnerable.

In rural areas, many of the younger generation have migrated to the towns in search of work, leaving the older generation to cope alone. Pensioners' associations focus their welfare efforts on urban areas.

Older people in financial difficulties have to rely on soup kitchens and other handouts provided by religious bodies and the Red Cross.

The votes of older people, clearly an important group in this new democracy, have been courted in recent elections. But national government's capacity to support and fund local government to implement policies for older people remains extremely weak.

#### Older people and government

There is a stark contrast between the government's political aspirations to support its older citizens — and the resources it has to turn them into reality.

By 1998, it was clear that the pre-war pension system, based on 4.5 workers paying in for every pensioner drawing out, was effectively bankrupt. Due to high unemployment and emigration, numbers of workers and pensioners were

The 1991-95 war led to an 'old age boom' in Bosnia-Herzegovina

Cuts in public services prescribed by the international community have hit older people particularly hard

now roughly equal. The government raised the age of entitlement from 60 to 65 for both women and men. The following year, it pledged support for older people at a national conference to mark the United Nations' International Year of Older People, but made no reference to help for those now excluded from pension provision.

Local government has the task of implementing the 'age friendly' policies agreed by national government. It has tried to assist older people in distress through piecemeal measures such as fuel subsidies, but lacks the resources to offer more comprehensive social or economic support.

The international community has played a major role in shaping both political structures and public policies for the new Bosnia-Herzegovina. But at the end of the 1996-99 reconstruction and recovery period it envisaged, economic growth and stabilisation remained elusive. At the same time, the post-war fiscal medicine prescribed by international bodies to underpin recovery, such as cuts in public services, has hit older people particularly hard.

The next few years will see a progressive withdrawal of international funding, coupled with continuing pressure for economic and social stabilisation as a pre-requisite for Bosnia Herzegovina's inclusion in the European Union candidacy process.

Older people and non-government organisations

There are now some 1,500 international and national non-government organisations at work in Bosnia-Herzegovina — a striking legacy of the high levels of concern triggered by the war. They have had a major influence in shaping welfare provision across the country, operationally and as funders. In some areas, their activities have largely replaced those of the state.

Most have developed in response to external funding, rather than out of locally expressed needs, and are in this sense 'implementing partners' rather than 'community-based organisations'. Their concern is primarily short-term medical care and humanitarian aid, rather than the longer-term development of health and social services.

Most non-government organisations working with older people have focused on meeting immediate needs for food, fuel and medicines. Some have provided counselling for post-war trauma. The Red Cross, however, is an exception. It runs an extensive and valued homecare programme which reaches some 13,000 older people.

While collaboration with the public sector has begun to improve, most non-government operations remain largely outside government legislative and planning frameworks and are driven by international funding. Few are involved at a community level. There is an urgent need for more joint working, particularly with local government.

The sustainability of non-government interventions remains a real concern. Poor links between non-government organisations and the public sector, coupled with the chronic under-funding of public services, means that strategies for transferring beneficiaries from one sector to another are largely absent. As a result, older people who get short-term help from non-government organisations may find that any improvements they experience are reversed in the longer term.



Non-government organisation case studies

**Osmijeh**  
**Gracanica, Bosnia-Herzegovina**

Founded in 1996, Osmijeh's aim is to foster community development through volunteering and self-help, with a particular emphasis on different generations working together to build a healthy society. It also supports the growth of civil society and the non-profit sector.

In one innovative programme, groups of older volunteers take part in a range of community projects. They visit older people who live alone or are housebound, helping out in practical ways and offering company and support. They work with children and young people, organise cultural and social events, and undertake environmental activities. The scheme has given them a chance to play an active role in society — and show that people can volunteer at any age.

The organisation works closely with a range of national government agencies concerned with social issues. At local level, relationships are also good. Local authorities recently gave Osmijeh a site for its new Centre for Psychosocial Support.

Osmijeh believes closer cooperation between extensive non-government sector in Bosnia-Herzegovina and the public sector is critical to developing strong services. It supports proposals to give voluntary organisations the legal right to extend their activities into areas of social provision at present run solely by government.

**Klub 15-100**  
**Banja Luka, Bosnia-Herzegovina**

Founded in 1998, Klub 15-100's membership includes some 5,000 pensioners and older people, as well as significant numbers of students and younger people.

It supports older people's involvement in their communities and develops projects to help different generations work positively together. Regular round tables on local issues, including those affecting older people, help different generations to exchange ideas and experiences. Older people are encouraged to take an active role in local social and cultural activities.

The older members of Klub 15-100 are also working to strengthen their new country's democratic processes. During the last election, they helped the Centre for Civil Initiatives to organise educational workshops for older people on electoral systems, political issues and how democracy functions. They monitored voting procedures at 36 polling stations in the Banja Luka area.

Klub 15-100 works with pensioners' associations and the new pensioners' party to develop government awareness of older people's issues. Through regular communications, and proposals for activities in areas such as education and human rights, it seeks to ensure that older people's voices will be clearly heard in government decision-making processes.

*Based on research by Zana Jokic. The full report in Bosnian is available from:*

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The older members of Klub 15-100 are working to strengthen democratic processes

Older Croatians  
have had to  
cope with  
widespread  
economic  
instability on  
substantially  
reduced levels  
of state support

Croatia

Older people's situation

Older people now make up some 12 per cent of the 4.5 million population of Croatia. Before the 1991-95 war, as part of the former Yugoslavia, older Croatians enjoyed modest but stable economic and social support. They now have to cope with widespread economic instability on substantially reduced levels of state support. Those uprooted by the war have faced real challenges to re-establish their lives.

Pension levels are low, on the assumption that families will help out. But high unemployment has put huge pressures on family budgets, making it difficult to care for older family members. It has also driven many older people to take early retirement, increasing the total number needing financial support. In the villages, the majority of older people work as long as they can. But in the towns, they cannot work, barred by government legislation to reserve jobs for the younger generation.

Some 200,000 pensioners cannot make ends meet, and nearly one per cent of older people are without income of any kind. The state provides some safety-net payments for those who are destitute, and still offers older people subsidised transport.

Nearly 60 per cent of older Croatians live in rural areas, from which large numbers of younger people have migrated to the cities and towns. The Croatian Adriatic islands, in particular, have lost their middle generation. Older people who worked on the land all their lives, but who failed to contribute to pension funds in the past, either through lack of resources or information, receive no payments of any kind.

Older people and government

The Croatian government has not to date systematically addressed the levels of economic hardship and isolation faced by older people as a group.

It has shown itself supportive of new types of non-government activity, including work with older people. For example, in 1998, it set up an office to support training, fundraising, education and policy development activities by the voluntary sector. The office also registers non-government organisations and maintains an overview of their activities.

It has also made some attempts to co-ordinate types of assistance, and in 1999 produced a guide to Croatian services for older people, to mark the United Nations' International Year of Older People.

There is a need to develop new models of care suited to present realities. Legally, the government places the duty of care for older people on adult children, but family structures and circumstances have changed, and the law is rarely enforced through the courts. Funding for residential care facilities across Croatia is scarce and standards typically low.

Older people and non-government organisations

Traditionally, national pensioners' organisations have been the most powerful older people's organisations in Croatia, with links at top government levels. They have encouraged older people to demonstrate against low pensions before elections, but have not, as yet, lobbied on any of the wider social issues affecting older people.

Some older Croatians are members of clubs focused on social activities and mutual support, including 'third age' associations with educational and cultural goals.

Humanitarian aid in Croatia was traditionally supplied by religious organisations, but during the war, new kinds of non-government bodies developed in response to international funding. They worked mainly with refugees, providing material aid and counselling. Most have now been wound down, representing a lost opportunity to build on their expertise to address new needs. A few humanitarian organisations continue to work with older people returning home.

Non-government organisation case studies

#### **Association MI Split, Croatia**

Set up to support refugees and returning refugees, especially older age groups, Association MI has gone on to develop wider programmes for older people in general. It has won a national reputation for its work to engage older people and skilled professionals, such as psychologists and social workers, in planning and running community projects.

Association MI's largest programme to date, launched in 1998, brings together several linked activities to improve older citizens' psychological, educational and social welfare, including counselling, social clubs, educational and recreational activities. The scheme involves 1,600 volunteer workers and beneficiaries, and is actively supported by Split city council, national government and local non-government organisations.

The association also runs an information centre for refugees, a subsidised meals programme and a volunteer centre. Funding sources include international donors and local and national government. It works on a contract basis with local government on four separate programmes, and with the national government's Department of Social and Health Care on policy issues.

It assists other non-government organisations developing programmes for older people, and aims to offer a positive model of how the voluntary sector can communicate and work co-operatively with both government bodies and the general public.

#### **Faust Vrancic Sibenik, Croatia**

Faust Vrancic came into being as a shelter for refugees — many of them older people — during the 1991-95 war which followed the break-up of former Yugoslavia. When the war ended, it went on to apply its knowledge to developing a range of community-based projects for older people. Its direct services now include a residential home for 55 older people and home visits for 45 older and disabled people.

Association MI  
has won a  
national  
reputation for its  
work to engage  
older people in  
community  
projects

The association believes that by promoting older people's welfare, it makes an important contribution to the quality of life of the community as a whole, and to building the democratic representation of all age groups. It publicises older people's issues and the role non-government organisations can play in helping them through the local radio station. Older people are encouraged to give direct interviews about their experiences and views.

Faust Vrancic sees it as a priority to build good working links with government bodies. Initially funded by international organisations, it has now won financial support from local government and the city council of Sibenik. No formal contractual relationship yet exists, but mutual understanding of how to work in complementary ways is steadily growing.

*Based on research by Nives Radeljic. Full report in Croatian available from:*

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## Estonia

### Older people's situation

Traditionally, Estonia was predominantly a rural society. To a large extent, older people were cared for within families in return for work in the household. Those outside families and without resources could claim poor relief. Culturally, there was a tradition of proud self-reliance.

Soviet rule after the Second World War brought major changes. Alongside growing industrialisation, farms were forcibly collectivised and one-fifth of all farmers deported to the USSR. Many older people in rural areas lost land titles, and workers on collectivised farms received their pensions at a later age than workers in industry or government. Seven in ten Estonians now live in towns.

For older people, the Soviet system provided basic pensions. It also provided some residential homes for older people in need, but those who entered such institutions lost their assets and pension rights. There were long waiting lists, with preference given to war veterans who had supported the Soviet cause. When the Soviet system collapsed, a period of hyperinflation ate away savings and pension funds entered a period of crisis. Many older people came out of retirement and went back to work.

About 14 per cent of Estonia's population of 1.4 million are now aged 65 or over. Economically, most are better off than their counterparts in other former Soviet-bloc countries. They are taxed at concessionary rates, and there are age-related subsidies for essential items such as medicines, public transport and car insurance.

But the high cost of living for older people on their own, and the collapse in the value of savings accumulated in the Soviet era, have undoubtedly caused hardship. An estimated one in three older people lives below the poverty line. Rapid social and political change has also brought feelings of dislocation. A former adviser to the government, Lauri Leppik, spoke at a conference in Brussels (2000) of older Estonians' growing sense of isolation and not belonging to their country.

They form a significant and active voting bloc which tends to elect candidates to the left of centre, but whose interests as a group are not identified with any single party. Six per cent of parliamentarians are aged 65 or over.

### Older people and government

The Estonian government has pursued a range of supportive policies for older people within the framework of the United Nations' Principles for Older Persons (1991). For example, in 1999, the Ministry of Social Affairs adopted a Senior Citizens' Policy laying out goals for social and economic welfare. In the same year, it set up an official advisory group, made up of older people's associations, social workers and gerontology experts, to help shape legislation.

It has taken action to put pensions on a sustainable basis. In 1992, national government voted to raise the official retirement age, and in 2000, it initiated full-scale pension reforms to a European-style three-tier model, with basic, occupational and voluntary contributions.

About 14 per cent of Estonia's population are now aged 65 and over

Non-government organisations have successfully developed a range of programmes which plug gaps in state provision

The government has also developed new patterns of care for older people along European lines, replacing an institution-based model with a national network of day centres, and developing social housing. Older people needing support are allocated social workers who supervise care arrangements.

Under the Social Welfare Act (1995), responsibility for implementation of services and benefits lies with local government, which is required to prepare five-year development plans, including detailed information about the provision they make for older people. However, services and benefits are conditional on resources available, and if the state cannot provide, the legal duty of care falls on offspring.

Older people and non-government organisations

Estonia has over 140,000 registered non-government organisations. A small number of these, around 130, are focused on supporting older people.

They have successfully developed a range of programmes which plug gaps in government provision for older people, typically at a community level. Their work includes social activities, daycare centres, home visiting, and education programmes designed to support active ageing.

The Pensioners' Union of Estonia lobbies on behalf of older people at national level, and helped the government develop its Senior Citizens' Policy. Pensioners' associations and organisations across the country run a large number of older people's clubs and social events.

Estonia's voluntary sector also contributes to gathering and analysing information to inform decision-making. In partnership with Tartu University, the Estonian Association of Geriatrics and Gerontology carries out a significant programme of research on ageing.

Non-government organisation case studies

#### **Self-help and Advisory Centre for Senior Citizens Tallinn, Estonia**

Founded in 1996, the Self-help and Advisory Centre is a volunteer-run day centre promoting older people's personal development and social integration. With over 500 members, it offers older people a rich programme of physical activities, social events and 39 hobby groups spanning interests from language learning to singing. Members even publish their own newsletter.

With the help of European Union funding, the centre recently launched a community outreach programme. It now trains and supports 50 volunteers — ranging from university students to a 97-year-old — visiting older people in institutions, hospitals and homes.

The centre actively supports good practice in other older people's day centres in Tallinn and across Estonia, for example by setting up joint seminars and supporting training initiatives. It has forged links with day centres in Latvia and Lithuania.

It enjoys a strong relationship with the public sector. Its chairman leads the national government's policy committee for senior citizens, and Tallinn city council actively supports the centre by waiving rental payments on its main building and, since 1999, contributing financial support.

**Pensioners' Union of Estonia**  
**Tallinn, Estonia**

The Pensioners' Union of Estonia dates back to a Soviet-era veterans' committee, and was reconstituted after Estonia's independence in 1991. It now has 30,000 members and branches nationwide, and enjoys government funding.

In its early years, the Union supported pensioners through welfare activities and aid distribution. It now has a broader social role in ensuring older Estonians remain active and sociable through, for example, organising cultural events. On the legal front, it improves their access to advice and information by helping fund legal counselling. It also supports older people's day centres.

The Union has taken an increasingly active role in lobbying and campaigning for higher pensions. In 2000, for example, it organised a demonstration of about 5,000 pensioners from all over Estonia. It has set up meetings with government members and political parties and taken part in drafting national policies for older people.

The Union puts substantial efforts into advocacy and has had considerable success in gaining recognition of its members' needs and demands. As a widely based and well-funded national body, it has undoubtedly helped raise public awareness of Estonia's older people and build a climate of positive support.

*Based on research by Marie-Liis Jarg. Full report in Estonian available from:*

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High levels of unemployment have eroded younger people's ability to help parents and grandparents

Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia)

Older people's situation

**Older people now make up 16 per cent of the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia's total population of 10.6 million — a proportion set to rise to 21 per cent by 2021.**

The 1991-95 war and the conflict in Kosovo had profound effects on this generation. They have seen death, displacement, NATO bombing, economic collapse and international sanctions. A sense of dislocation and pessimism about achieving a comfortable old age are widespread.

Serbia, which together with Montenegro makes up the new Republic of Yugoslavia, has traditionally put the family at the heart of care for older people. Over half of all older Serbs still live in extended families, and those who live separately typically maintain regular contact. But high levels of unemployment have eroded younger people's ability to help parents and grandparents, and placed new responsibilities on older people's shoulders. For the one in five older Serbs without any family support, life can be very hard.

The comprehensive system of state provision for older people which existed in former Yugoslavia is now in disarray. Pension levels are inadequate, and payments are often delayed. Problems in accessing medication for chronic and acute conditions are widespread, nutrition levels poor, and levels of stress high. Mortality rates among older age groups actually rose in the 1990s.

Conditions vary region by region, with some parts of the Republic — such as central Serbia — enjoying higher levels of development and services than others such as Kosovo. Rural areas typically have less access to services and support, with many older people living in isolation. There is evidence to suggest older farmers face particular difficulties.

Half a million Bosnian, Croatian and Kosovan Serbs were displaced by war over the last decade. Across the Republic, there are 750,000 refugees and internally displaced people. Of these, 100,000 still live in collective centres — a third of them aged 65 and over.

These older refugees are effectively destitute. Without citizenship and contribution records, they cannot claim pensions in the Republic, but have lost pension and property rights in the countries they fled. They live in basic conditions, often with poor food, facilities and inadequate clothing. Suicide rates are high — over 200 in one recent year alone. But solutions such as resettlement or full integration remain remote, blocked by continuing political tensions.

In general, older people's issues have a low profile in the Republic. They have no formal representation at government level, and there is little political or public debate of the need for new models of care to complement family and state. Little formal research into older people's needs or into particularly vulnerable groups has taken place.



### Older people and government

On paper, the Republic has strong frameworks in place to support older people. In reality, government spending is in crisis, as a result of transition, the cost of the war, and a collapse in tax revenues.

Universal age-related pensions are the norm, but levels are low and arrears frequent. The government wants to raise entitlement age by five years for both sexes.

Healthcare is free for all those aged 65 and over, with legislation controlling standards and types of services available. But lack of funds has eroded almost every aspect of provision, including equipment, infrastructure and the supply of basic medicines.

The state provides residential care and home care for older people. But the scope of support is very limited. There are some 8,000 places in homes for over 700,000 older people nationwide. Only 2,000 older people are eligible for home help, 3,000 for day care.

Little federal planning is in place to cope with anticipated increases in numbers of older people and people in advanced old age with serious disabilities and health problems. For example, the number of blind persons in the Republic is set to double by 2020.

At both local and national government levels, the Republic faces a significant challenge: to identify new, cost-effective models which bring together informal and formal provision for older people on the basis of a systematic analysis of their needs and wishes.

### Older people and non-government organisations

Pensioners' associations exist nationwide, and play a significant role in welfare work with poor older people, supplying food and other items. But they lack formal representation at government level and have poor links with the voluntary sector.

In Serbia, there is a long tradition of charitable work supported by the state or by the Serbian Orthodox Church and other religious organisations. The focus was typically welfare, with little wider community involvement or local fundraising.

But the Republic's voluntary sector is growing and changing. In the 1990s, new kinds of non-government organisations started to appear, initially in response to the humanitarian needs created by the war. Some have moved on to tackle a broader range of activities spanning welfare, medical care, counselling, legal advice and representation, with support from national and international sources.

In 1996, a Centre for Development of the Non-profit Sector was set up, with support from the Open Society Foundation, to co-ordinate and stimulate voluntary work. It recently published a directory of registered non-profit organisations across the Republic running to over 1,000 entries.

Community-based non-government organisations are well placed to act as a bridge between state actors, international non-government organisations, and needs at the grassroots. They have a strong potential role as advocates for older people, seeking to influence attitudes and resource allocation with both civil society and the public sector.

Pensioners' associations play a significant role in welfare work with poor older people

Sunce actively promotes the growth of civil society organisations

Non-government organisation case studies

**Sunce (The Sun)  
Kragujevac, Serbia**

Founded in 1994, Sunce was originally a student support group for children housed in collective centres in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.

It went on to work to older people, refugees and internally displaced people of all age groups, including older people. Over the years, Sunce has attracted a wide range of volunteer supporters, from the local and refugee communities, and from the worlds of medicine, teaching, social work and the arts. It has received funding from international donors including UNHCR and UNICEF.

Programmes span humanitarian assistance, psychological and social work with older people, education and income generation activities. Artistic expression is encouraged and plays have been performed in nearly a hundred collective centres.

Sunce places a strong emphasis on training and actively promotes the growth of non-government and civil society organisations. It has hosted workshops on a wide range of topics, including work with older people and the development and management of voluntary sector bodies.

**Timok Club  
Knjazevac, Serbia**

Founded in 1997, the Timok Club aims to improve the quality of life of vulnerable groups, including older people and refugees, through community-based volunteer activities, campaigning for the protection of human rights, and promoting an open, democratic society.

Supported by over 100 members, it runs a volunteer centre, women's groups, projects for older people, educational programmes with children and young people, anti-poverty programmes and citizens' education activities.

It works with a wide range of voluntary sector organisations in Serbia, and is an active member of several networks, including non-government organisations in the local Timok network and in southeast Serbia. International donors include the International Council of Voluntary Agencies and the UNHCR.

*Based on research by Dr Irena Grozdanic. Full report in Serbian available from:*

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## Macedonia

### Older people's situation

Older people make up 9.3 per cent of Macedonia's total population of some 2 million. The central challenge older Macedonians face is inadequate pension provision and, as a result, real difficulties in making ends meet. Many have very little disposable income once basic costs have been met. On average, they spend some 30 to 40 per cent of their outlay on household costs, and some 30 per cent on medication. A limited number of medicines are free but in practice they are difficult to access.

About half of all older Macedonians live in rural areas. Many villages are now substantially made up of older people. Many of the younger generation have left to find work, coming back occasionally to visit family graves and attend special events. Older people living alone, and unable to work the land, can find themselves very isolated, with little support from urban-focused national organisations such as pension associations.

Increasing numbers of older women live on their own, facing considerable economic hardship if they cannot afford private sector care and support. Widows, who under Macedonian law have very limited entitlement to deceased husbands' pensions, form a particularly vulnerable group, especially if they have no children.

The family remains a key source of mutual support, but an unemployment rate rising to one in three in the late 1990s hit family incomes, and ability to support older family members, hard. Those older people who moved with their families to the towns typically help boost household income from their pensions.

Older people living in institutions set up under the centralised care model of former Yugoslavia, including 15 state-run homes for those with severe physical or mental disabilities, form another vulnerable group. Government funding problems make residential care increasingly unsustainable, but homecare and day-care for older people remain largely undeveloped.

Older people form a significant voting bloc, but are not linked to any particular party. The 'grey vote' is divided, with conflict between their organisations weakening their ability to press for a joint platform. Seven parliamentarians aged 60 and over form a potential lobby group.

### Older people and government

In theory, national government policy is broadly supportive of older people. For example, the Law of Social Protection (1997) contains a range of specific articles relating to their economic and physical wellbeing.

Traditions of family support are underpinned by actively enforced legislation. Under Family Law (1997), the government placed a legally binding duty of care for older people on offspring, and parents gained the right to benefit from the pensions of any deceased children. Children must either care for infirm parents in their own homes or pay for residential care. But many families cannot realistically care for older family members as they used to, as a result of widespread unemployment and rural-urban migration.

## Older

Macedonians in rural areas living alone, and unable to work the land, find themselves very isolated

Economic support for older people has been cut back for nearly a decade

Government funds are tight, and there is an extensive 'black' economy which does not feed into Macedonia's tax base for public services. Economic support for older people has been cut back for nearly a decade. In 1993, the government placed restrictions on pensioners earning any extra income, and in 1996, initiated a phased raising of pensionable age for both sexes to 65 by 2003.

At the same time, other types of public support remain largely undeveloped. For example, there are no public health or nutrition programmes focused specifically on this age group.

Older people and non-government organisations

When Macedonia was part of former Yugoslavia, the state was responsible for all social care and related activities. The Red Cross and the Union of Pensioners were the only national registered voluntary agencies and both received government funding.

Since independence, international funding has stimulated the growth of new non-governmental organisations. The 'third sector' and its infrastructure are growing. Recently, new legislation was passed to regulate working arrangements between voluntary organisations and the state. Non-government organisations now pay for public registration and are required to publish details of their plans and funding.

However, the voluntary sector remains undeveloped and unco-ordinated. There is no official funding for most non-government organisations and it is only recently that they have been able to access international funding directly. There is a lack of a strategic overview of needs and how to target support to them.

In terms of older people, much of the work is welfare focused, with a focus on projects such as public soup kitchens. But daycare provision is developing and a self-help movement has begun to stir.

Macedonia also has a range of national older people's associations, of which the Union of Pensioners, a national body with 120,000 members and local branches, is most significant. It receives funding from the state and also charges member fees. It concentrates mainly on details of pension provision, with the wider agenda not yet a focus.

Non-government organisation case studies

#### **Club for the Elderly Chashka, Macedonia**

Founded in 2000, the Club for the Elderly is a volunteer-run day care centre working to improve the lives of some 170 local older people.

Practical services include hot drinks, a laundry and organised leisure activities, with plans to set up a hot meals programme. The club also provides opportunities for older people to enjoy regular social contact and develop networks of mutual assistance. The farmers among them, for example, share expertise on matters such as cultivation and cattle breeding.

The club operates from premises renovated and equipped by local government, with the help of funding from the Spanish government, and has received donations from other international sources. It enjoys professional support and assistance from the government-run Centre for Social Work.

On the national stage, the club aims to offer a replicable model of daycare services for older people to other voluntary agencies. But, in common with other non-government organisations operating in Macedonia, it has struggled to establish working links with national government, which rarely funds projects initiated by grassroots organisations.

**Centre for Social Work  
Gari, Macedonia**

Older people make up a substantial proportion of the population in many of Macedonia's villages. Unemployment has driven the younger generation to the towns in search of work in the towns, leaving older family members to cope as best they can.

In Gari and some other villages, older people have responded to their isolation by forming self-help groups offering each other mutual assistance. In the winter especially, these groups can be essential to survival. Older people get together in one house, and cook and eat together during the day. They watch out for each other's welfare and offer each other company and support.

These informal coping strategies are backed up by formal support from the public sector. The Centre for Social Work, based in the village and run by local government, offers a programme of financial assistance to the most vulnerable families. It also delivers food packages and visits older people in their homes.

*Based on research by Divna Lakinska-Popovska. Full report in Macedonian available from:*

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The club for the elderly aims to offer a replicable model of daycare for older people

Over 80 per cent  
of older  
Moldovans now  
live below the  
poverty level

Moldova

Older people's situation

For the one in five of Moldova's 4.3 million population aged 65 and over — 70 per cent of them women — the last decade of transition to a free-market economy has brought severe hardship.

Until independence in 1991, the Soviet system provided good benefits for older people. Pensions were universal, although differentiated, with higher payments for groups such as judges and government ministers. Basic healthcare was available. Public transport, medicines, fuel and equipment such as prostheses were subsidised.

Since then, the real value of pensions — on which 85 per cent of older Moldovans depend — has fallen dramatically, and there has been a near collapse in social security systems. Over 80 per cent of older people now live below the poverty level, many working informally to supplement their incomes. The rolling back of state subsidies has brought a sharp rise in their cost of living, while protracted delays in the payment of benefits have added to the stress of budgeting on inadequate incomes.

A recent survey of 1,500 people aged 65-90 conducted by the Moldovan non-government organisation, Second Breath, showed incomes were desperately low. Pensions ranged from US\$5 to US\$14 a month, and were paid three to nine months late. Only 11 per cent of those surveyed had managed to raise extra cash, mostly by trading items or selling assets. Over a third were receiving financial help from relatives or humanitarian organisations.

Nutrition, health status and access to health have worsened. Life expectancy in Moldova now stands at 66 — the lowest in Europe. From 1991 to 1999, the daily calorific intake of the average older person dropped by a half. Able-bodied older people in rural areas could grow some of their own food, but older people in urban areas suffered badly. Many older people now cannot afford the cost of basic medicines.

Since transition, the rural economy has collapsed. Many young people have left their villages in search of work and some 800,000 Moldovans have emigrated to other countries, leaving older family members to cope alone.

Not surprisingly, discontent and disillusion among older people are widespread. Second Breath's survey found nine in ten were unhappy with their situation.

Older people and government

Under Soviet rule, over 50 pieces of legislation defined how the government should assist older people, from economic provision, to care and subsidies. The collapse of the economy has left this comprehensive system of state support in disarray, with no coherent strategies to replace it.

However, the government is working on pension reform, and plans to move to a more sustainable three-tier model as soon as possible. In the short term, its decision to raise the age of eligibility for pensions for both sexes has brought even greater hardship.

There have been some experiments with safety nets for particularly vulnerable social groups, such as older disabled people. The government also recently agreed on the need to reform social care programmes and collaborate more with non-government organisations.

But poor implementation of national legislation remains a real problem, and much of the humanitarian assistance the national government does provide is channelled to urban areas, leaving those in the countryside to fend for themselves.

Older people and non-government organisations

There are now over 1,300 non-government organisations in Moldova, including several powerful organisations which date from the Soviet period. The Association of Veterans and the Association of Pensioners, for example, are very active at national level. Both have organised demonstrations, and have successfully raised the issue of low pensions with government.

The national government has shown some interest in the work of the non-government organisations and greater collaboration between public and voluntary sectors. In 1999, for example, it attended a national non-government conference, and in 2000, was present at the first national network meeting of non-government organisations working with and for older people in Moldova.

But at local level, links between government and non-government bodies remain weak, with anecdotal evidence of payments being demanded by officials in return for the right for non-government organisations to operate.

Non-government organisation case study

### **Second Breath Balti, Moldova**

Founded as part of the Open Society Institute's Gerontology and Geriatrics Programme in 1999, Second Breath is a volunteer-run association dedicated to improving the physical and social welfare of older people, many of whom live in very difficult circumstances as a result of Moldova's economic collapse during the 1990s.

Second Breath's programmes include regular home visits to 40 older people, medical advice and treatment, and a meals on wheels service. Its daycare centre offers meals, physical activities, medical advice and health awareness classes.

The organisation believes that older people must remain part of the social and cultural life of their communities. It runs a 'warm house' project which encourages groups of older people to visit other older, housebound people living on their own, share dinner with them, and hold a small party, often featuring traditional poetry and songs. It also organises dinners, concerts and dances for festive occasions.

A 'hospice at home' service, run by trained nurses, offers acutely ill older people medical care, counselling and companionship at home, alongside a networking programme which helps families of the dead and dying exchange experiences and offer each other mutual support.

Second Breath believes older people must remain part of the social and cultural life of their communities

**Volunteering is central to the Second Breath's philosophy and operation. It trains its own volunteers, and has organised two national conferences on volunteer activities with older people. It set up the first national network of non-government organisations working with and for older people in Moldova.**

*Based on research by Irina Baicalov. Full report in Moldovan available from:*

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## Romania

### Older people's situation

Since the collapse of the Ceausescu government in 1989, life has not been easy for Romania's 4 million older people, who form 18 per cent of the total population of 22.5 million. The country's transition from Soviet satellite to a market-oriented economy, within tight fiscal restraints imposed by the international community, has brought widespread economic and social problems.

One in two older Romanians now lives in poverty, as a result of a dramatic collapse in the value of both pensions and savings. Between 1990 and 2000, pensions dropped from about a half to a third of average salaries. Galloping inflation —still running at 41 per cent in 2000, after a peak of 300 per cent in 1993 — ate away lifetime savings and brought the collapse of the savings and loans organisations which traditionally supported older people with sudden outlays like burial expenses.

High rates of unemployment in the younger generation have put new pressures on the older generation. Many parents help out by, for example, sending their children food from farms and providing childcare.

Many of Romania's older people still live in rural areas, often in traditional three-generation families. In urban areas, they are more likely to live alone. Across the country, the most vulnerable, typically those who are isolated and living in poverty, rely on the church or non-government organisations for support. Some beg on the streets. Some 4,000 destitute or infirm older people live in government-funded hostels, poorly equipped to deal with older people with special health or mental health needs.

The financial crisis in the public health services has hit older people hard. Government decisions to reduce the list of subsidised medicines and cut back hospital funding have affected them disproportionately as a group. Payment systems for doctors, tied to numbers of patients rather than numbers of contacts handled, also discriminate against older people in need of regular medical attention. Between 1980 and 1999, male life expectancy dropped from 66.7 to 65.3, counter to worldwide trends.

As voters, older people represent a substantial but relatively unpoliticised group, which tends to be conservative in its voting habits. Pensioners' groups have lobbied the government on pensions, but to date have not engaged with wider social and healthcare issues for older people.

### Older people and government

The Romanian government is committed to reforming the pensions and social insurance model inherited from the Soviet period, and putting public finances on a sustainable footing.

It has made its support for older people clear. In 2000, it restored the links between pensions and salaries, imposed new statutory requirements on local government to provide services to destitute older people, and started to tackle the problem of poor care for older people in government-funded hostels by setting minimum agreed standards.

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and savings

Strategic and operational collaboration between the public and voluntary sectors remains undeveloped

It has created and funded a new policy body, the national Council for Older People, with international support. The council's role is to support older people's associations, take forward research, and help monitor and shape legislation. Membership includes local and national government and pensioners' associations, though there has been some debate around the need to widen representation.

In 1998, the government passed legislation allowing registered Romanian charitable associations and foundations to apply for public funding on a contract basis at regional level. Measures to support and regulate voluntary work are in hand.

These are welcome initiatives, but as in other transition countries, lack of public money remains a real constraint to implementation. There is a significant gap between the articulation of national goals and their funding at local level. The pressure on local government to deliver improved residential care, for example, has not been backed up with training or funding. Understandably, this has led to some scepticism and relations between national and local government are generally poor.

Older people and non-government organisations

There is little local tradition of non-government working in Romania. Until 1989, church and state dominated provision for those in need. But things have changed fast. The country now has some 250 non-government organisations, and recent changes in legislation now allow some to fundraise.

About 60 non-government organisations, most of them funded from international sources, work with older people to some extent. The focus is care and welfare, with few examples of campaigning or advocacy activities.

In theory, the Romanian government is keen to build the voluntary sector. It values non-government organisations' expertise, services and capacity to work in new and innovative ways. In practice, strategic and operational collaboration between the public and the voluntary sectors remains undeveloped, and the government has little role in monitoring or building quality in the sector as a whole.

A survey of non-government organisations and government bodies conducted for this report suggests that contacts remain largely reactive and joint planning or action is rare. However, both sides have constructive ideas for the future.

The non-government organisations surveyed often had a poor grasp of public sector legislative frameworks or activities for older people. Few offered public sector colleagues any kind of regular reports. They wanted the state to help them more — financially, and through sharing relevant information.

Government interviewees knew little about what the voluntary sector was doing, and over half had never worked with a non-government organisation. But they felt that non-government organisations could play a vital complementary role in mobilising volunteer support, fundraising and helping develop workable public policies for older people.

Non-government organisation case studies

**Foundation for the Support of Older People  
Galati, Romania**

Established in 1996, with support from local government, business, church organisations and international donors, the Foundation for the Support of Older People tackles social problems of vulnerable older people in the Galati area, especially those living alone and in poverty.

It runs a substantial homecare programme designed to allow older people to live independently outside institutions. Eleven staff and ten volunteers deliver hot meals and clothes to 450 older people's homes, help with cleaning and repairs, provide nursing, hygiene and medical care, and offer legal advice. Most of those visited are women with little or no income, and many are in poor health. It also runs a daycare centre.

The involvement of local public, private and voluntary sector organisations in setting up and maintaining the foundation has been central to its successful operation. For example, the local authority has recognised the foundation's contribution by awarding it a certificate of excellence for its work in social services, and pays for salaries and some development costs. This has in turn convinced a range of private companies offer sponsorship.

**Community Care Foundation  
Bucharest, Romania**

Founded in 1996, the Community Care Foundation's goal is to improve the quality of health and social services in Bucharest, with help from experts in the fields of public health, medicine, social services and nursing management.

It started by launching an integrated homecare programme for older people, designed to reduce institutionalisation. Developing training and promoting this new model of care have been important aspects of the work.

It went on to develop the first scheme in Romania to allow hospital patients to opt for care at home by a team of nurses and social workers, in partnership with two major hospitals in Bucharest. The programme helps cut the length of hospital stays safely, while patients can benefit from recovering in their own homes.

The foundation works closely with both public and voluntary sector bodies concerned with social and medical services, particularly in the field of homecare for older people, and actively seek synergies at community level. For example, in 1997, it brokered an agreement with local government, national government, the national Pensioners' Federation and two other non-government organisations to co-ordinate social and medical services for one of Bucharest's districts.

*Based on research by Roxana Irimia. Full report in Romanian available from:*

*Roxana Irimia  
C.P. 2716 O.P.12, 6600  
Iasi, Romania  
Telephone: +40 32 22 71 68  
Email: Roxana\_irimia@yahoo.com*

The foundation runs a substantial homecare programme to help older people live independently

Older Ukrainian women form a substantial and often isolated group

Ukraine

Older people's situation

The period since the end of Soviet rule in 1991 has been one of austerity for older Ukrainians, who make up nearly a quarter of Ukraine's total population of 50 million. They have fewer, poorer quality services. They have experienced a sharp reduction in financial security.

The national economy collapsed, with revenues in 1997 lower than in 1989. Inflation squeezed savings and incomes, and pensions are now worth a fifth of their value in 1991. Five million older people live below the government-agreed poverty level. Many supplement their pensions unofficially: one in three 'retired' people work.

High levels of unemployment, coupled with a high proportion of older people in the population, have increased levels of pressure on those in work. There has been substantial rural-urban migration and older people now form a third of the population in rural areas. Many live alone and in poverty, with little help from families or other sources.

Under the Soviet system, today's older Ukrainians experienced universal, high-quality education for the first time. On retirement, most enjoyed modest but stable pensions, even allowing for substantial differentials between payments for farmers and industrial or white-collar workers. But forced collectivisation of farms stripped rural people of land titles and roots, and undermined the family as a social and productive unit.

Male deaths in the Second World War, coupled with lower male life expectancy, have led to an imbalance between numbers of older women and older men, with nearly twice as many women aged 60 and over as men. Older Ukrainian women form a substantial and often isolated group.

Some 44,000 older Ukrainians live in homes, and 1.3 million are registered as disabled. The 'oldest old' of both sexes — those over 75 — are set to rise from 5 to 8.7 per cent of the population by 2026.

Older people now form a substantial proportion of all voters — 40 per cent. In the supreme parliament, 54 out of 449 deputies are aged 65 or over. But to date, older people have not lobbied for their interests systematically as a group.

Older people and government

Throughout the 1990s, the government of Ukraine has actively supported older citizens. In 1995, it enacted wide-ranging legislation covering older people's economic, social and political rights, and rights to care and participation, in line with the United Nations' Principles for Older Persons (1991). In 1997, it launched an older people's health programme at national and local levels. Since January 2000, 2 million poor pensioners have been helped with poverty-targeted monthly financial top-ups.

The government monitors and regulates public bodies' activities with, and support for, older people. It is working to place pensions on a more sustainable footing, and at the time of writing is looking at pension reform along the lines of a two-tier model: basic state pensions and pensions topped up by voluntary contributions.

But lack of resources, coupled with weak implementation structures, pose severe practical constraints on the realisation of state commitments to older people. Local government structures, charged with the task of implementing national legislation, simply cannot deliver. National legislation is widely seen as over-ambitious and over-extended in the face of the actual funds available.

Older people and non-government organisations

In the Soviet period, national non-government bodies such as the powerful Organisation of Veterans and the Ukraine Union of Veterans received official recognition, along with charities such as the Mercy and Health Fund and the Red Cross. There were few community-based organisations and the voluntary sector remained undeveloped.

Ukraine now has 350 registered non-government organisations, most of them focused on humanitarian activities and social services such as legal support. Only six per cent have a specific focus on older people. But self-help initiatives are growing — for example, in Kiev there is now a volunteer pensioner-to-pensioner network, with members offering each other mutual help and support.

Non-government organisations are regulated by national legislation, and have a developing infrastructure, including a nationwide network of ten resource centres supported by national and international funding. There is a growing need for more and better public and voluntary sector links in areas such as co-ordination and targeting of activities.

The veterans' organisations are active lobbyists and have their own parliamentary committee. However, they have remained substantially focused on single issues such as veterans' rights, and have yet to engage with wider social issues affecting older people.

Non-government organisation case studies

### **Mercy and Health Fund Kiev, Ukraine**

The Mercy and Health Fund of Ukraine, founded in 1989 and registered with the national government in 1992, is a federation of some 350 voluntary organisations dedicated to supporting poor Ukrainians and raising awareness of their needs with the public. The fund's 40,000 members share a vision of reviving and developing the ideals of mercy and humanity in Ukrainian society.

Work with older people has been a priority for fund from the outset. Member organisations run a wide range of humanitarian programmes, including free canteens, collection and distribution points for clothes and footwear, and workshops to repair prosthetic devices. They are fully independent in terms of activities, governance and disposal of funds.

Members receive support from local government, which has played a crucial role in funding projects for which donor money has been exhausted. For example, local government took over the financing of three nursing homes for older people in Odessa from Mercy and Health and also adopted 30 free canteens for single pensioners.

Local government structures, charged with the task of implementing national legislation for older people, simply cannot deliver

**Narodna Dopomoha (Assistance to the People)  
Chernivtsi, Ukraine**

Founded in 1993 by students at Chernivtsi University to plug gaps in state provision, Narodna Dopomoha provides humanitarian aid and social support to local people suffering the effects of Ukraine's economic crisis during the 1990s.

Many of Chernivtsi's pensioners subsist on pension payments under the poverty line. One of the Narodna Dopomoha's key projects is running a public kitchen in partnership with local government, which distributes 1,200 free hot meals a month to people in need, among them, substantial numbers of older people.

The public kitchen project is a good example of public-voluntary sector collaboration, and marks a significant step in the growth of good relationships between local authorities and non-government organisations. The city government pays for food, transport, electricity and water, and has helped improve record-keeping by funding the construction of a client database. Narodna Dopomoha maintains and equips the cooking facilities and canteen and hires and pays staff — about one third of the total cost.

*Based on research by Elena Palii. Full report in Ukrainian available from:*

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Kosmichna St. 5 apt. 137  
Kiev 02192, Ukraine  
Telephone: +380 44 543 2377  
Email: epalii@profit.net.ua*

## Directory of non-government organisations

This section gives details of non-government organisations whose work includes activities with and for older people in Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Estonia, the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia), Macedonia, Moldova, Romania and Ukraine, listed in alphabetical order by country.

### Bosnia-Herzegovina

#### **Alternatives — The Forum for the Women of Kakanj**

Contact person: Maksuma Topalovic

Address: Patriotske lige 37, Kakanj, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Telephone: +387 32 553 030

Email: maxi@miz.bn

Purpose and activities: Promoting economic and social independence; strengthening civil society and human rights; communications, education and training activities.

#### **Altruist Humanitarian organisation**

Contact person: Dubravka Andric

Address: Alekse Santica 28a, Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Telephone/Fax: +387 36 580 1224

Purpose and activities: Psychosocial work and medical care; networking; home care for older people.

#### **Association of Bosnian-Polish Friendship**

Contact person: Ramiz Alispahic

Address: Zlatikusa 7, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Telephone/Fax: +387 33 440 260

Purpose and activities: Educational and cultural cooperation.

#### **Bread of Life**

##### **Christian humanitarian association**

Contact person: Darko Malesevic

Address: Kozarska 6, Prijedor, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Telephone: +387 52 233 517

Fax: +387 52 222 216

Purpose and activities: Moral and material aid (food, clothing and medicine) for vulnerable groups, including older people.

#### **Buducnost**

##### **Citizens' association**

Contact person: Jelena Bajic

Address: Milosa Crnjanskog bb, Modrica, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Telephone: +387 53 880 200

Email: future@blic.net

Purpose and activities: Education and information; the development of civil society and protection of human rights; psychosocial support; public campaigning and networking.

#### **Caritas, Banja Luka**

Contact person: Dr Miljenko Anicic

Address: Kralja Petra I Karadjordjevica 125; Banja Luka, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Telephone: +387 51 300 890

Fax : +387 51 312 149

Email: caritas@inecco.net

Purpose and activities: Provision of humanitarian assistance to vulnerable groups including older people; rehabilitation of families; health care; promotion of charitable activities.

#### **Caritas, Sarajevo**

Contact person: Vlc. Stipo Knezevic

Address: Prusakova 13, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Telephone: +387 33 650 023

Fax: +387 33 471 241

Email: caritas@utic.net.ba

Purpose and activities: Provision of humanitarian assistance to vulnerable groups including older people; rehabilitation of families; healthcare; promotion of charitable activities.

#### **Dobrotvor, Prijedor**

##### **Serb humanitarian association**

Address: 29. Novembra bb; Prijedor, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Telephone/Fax: +387 52 235 00

Purpose and activities: Humanitarian activities for vulnerable groups, including older people.

#### **Dobrotvor, Sarajevo**

Contact person: Cincovic Milenko

Address: Sibenska 5; Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Telephone/Fax: +387 33 610 196

Purpose and activities: Humanitarian aid for vulnerable groups, including older people; psychosocial support and education activities.

#### **Genesis Project**

Contact person: Dijana Pejic

Address: Filipa Macure 1a, Banja Luka, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Telephone/Fax: +387 51 465 392

Email: genesis@inecco.net

Purpose and activities: Psychosocial support for those traumatised by war, including older people; promotion of democratic processes; integration and socialisation of returning refugees.

#### **Golden Autumn**

Contact person: Sanela Babic

Address: Pave Radana 20, Banja Luka 20, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Telephone/Fax: +387 51 231 469

Email: sanela@inecco.net

Purpose and activities: Development of civil society; humanitarian and medical aid.

#### **Idea: Democracy, Investment, Subvention**

Contact person: Predrag Strbac

Address: Bjelopoljska 16, Srb Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Telephone/Fax: +387 57 678 272

Email: idis@paleol.net

Purpose and activities: Development of community activities to benefit vulnerable groups, including older people; promotion of civil society.

#### **Klub 15-100**

Contact person: Mira Ljubojevic

Address: Cara Lazara 20, Banja Luka, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Telephone/Fax: +387 51 465 215

Purpose and activities: Promotion of community involvement and representation of older people; encouragement of interaction between the generations; support for democratic processes and citizens' education.

#### **Krajiska Suza**

Contact person: Almira Selimovic

Address: Banjalucka bb, Sanski Most, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Telephone/Fax: +387 37 682 562

Email: k.suza@bih.net.ba

Purpose and activities: Homecare programmes for older people.

#### **La Benevolencija**

Contact person: Jakob Finci

Address: Hamdije Kresevljakovica 59, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Telephone: +387 33 663 472

Fax: +387 33 663 473

Purpose and activities: Humanitarian, cultural and educational work with disadvantaged groups, including older people.

#### **Life Centre**

Contact person: Mirjana Guska

Address: X Hercegovacke brigade 66/4, Konjic, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Telephone/Fax: +387 36 729 269

Purpose and activities: Humanitarian aid for vulnerable groups, including older people and refugees; reconstruction activities; psychosocial support.

#### **Li-Women**

Contact person: Emira Hodzic

Address: Djacka 3, Livno, Bosnia-Herzegovina

Telephone/Fax: +387 34 202 166

Email: zenalivn@hotmail.com

Purpose and activities: Humanitarian aid; psychosocial work; promotion of human rights.



**Merhamet****Muslim charitable society**

Contact person: Edah Becirbegovic  
Address: Bistrik 2, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina  
Telephone/Fax: +387 33 534 609  
Purpose and activities: Humanitarian aid for vulnerable groups, including older people; healthcare; resettlement of refugees.

**Osmijeh**

Contact person: Hamdija Kujundzic  
Address: Lamele bb, Gracanica, Bosnia-Herzegovina  
Telephone/Fax: +387 35 787 281  
Email: osmijeh@bih.net.ba  
Purpose and activities: Development of voluntary work with vulnerable groups, including older people; promotion of civil society; education and information activities; networking.

**Palma**

Contact person: Vera Bosnjak  
Address: Kralja Tomislava bb, Prozor, Bosnia-Herzegovina  
Telephone/Fax: +387 36 770 982  
Purpose and activities: Humanitarian aid for vulnerable groups, including older people; resettlement of refugees.

**Pensioners' Association, Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina**

President: Enver Sarajlic  
Address: Cemalusa 1/II, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina  
Telephone: +387 33 471 160 lok 17  
Fax: +387 33 205 880  
Purpose and activities: Protection of pensioners' rights; public campaigning; advocacy; information; networking.

**Pensioners' Association, Republika Srpska**

President: Novak Dojcinovic  
Address: Grcka 19, Banja Luka, Bosnia-Herzegovina  
Fax: +387 51 214 789  
Purpose and activities: Protection of pensioners' rights; public campaigning; advocacy; information; networking.

**Pro Tempore**

Contact person: Medic Dragica  
Address: Vidovdanska bb, Doboj, Bosnia-Herzegovina  
Telephone: +387 53 223 964  
Fax: +387 53 223 377  
Email: prosenip@inecco.net  
Purpose and activities: Psychosocial and medical aid for vulnerable groups, including older people.

**Red Cross, Federation of Bosnia-Herzegovina**

Contact person: Marinko Simunovic  
Address: Titova 9a/V, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina  
Telephone: +387 33 207 513  
Fax: +387 33 213 907  
Email: hqrcbih@bih.net.ba  
Purpose and activities: Relief work, especially for victims of war and natural disasters; health improvement; promotion of mutual support and solidarity for vulnerable groups, including older people.

**Red Cross, Republika Srpska**

Contact person: Svanimir Djokic  
Address: Srpskih ratnika 1, Pale, Bosnia-Herzegovina  
Telephone: +387 57 223 533  
Fax: +387 57 223 534  
Purpose and activities: Humanitarian activities, healthcare and social work with vulnerable groups, including older people.

**Refugee Assistance Agency**

Contact person: Jagoda Petrovic  
Address: Sremska bb, Bijeljina, Bosnia-Herzegovina  
Telephone: +387 55 402 745  
Fax: +387 55 402 698  
Email: arajk@bn.rstel.net  
Purpose and activities: The development of civil society; medical and psychosocial assistance for refugees of all ages.

### **Ruhama**

#### **Humanitarian organisation**

Contact person: Rudic Salem I Hatidja  
Address: Crkvice 20c, Zenica, Bosnia-Herzegovina  
Telephone/Fax: +387 32 418 865  
Email: horuhama@bih.net.ba  
Purpose and activities: Psychosocial and medical support and homecare for older people.

### **Sanus**

#### **Humanitarian organisation**

Address: Cemalusa 1/II, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina  
Telephone: +387 33 471 16  
Purpose and activities: Humanitarian work to improve the economic status of older people.

### **Strength of Women**

Contact person: Jasna Mutisevic  
Address: Ludviga Pestica 8, Tuzla, Bosnia-Herzegovina  
Email: s.zenebh@bih.net.ba  
Purpose and activities: Medical and psychosocial support; food aid and legal aid.

### **Sumejja**

#### **Citizens' association of Bosnian women**

Contact person: Nafija Bevrnja  
Address: Zlatnih Ljiljana 4, Bugojno, Bosnia-Herzegovina  
Telephone: +387 30 251 038  
Fax: +387 30 251 595  
Purpose and activities: The development of civil society and promotion of human rights; protection of vulnerable groups, including older people, women and families.

### **The Valley is Still Mine**

Contact person: Belovic Marija  
Address: Nemanjica bb, Nevesinje, Bosnia-Herzegovina  
Telephone/Fax: +387 59 601 138  
Purpose and activities: Humanitarian aid for refugees, including older people; psychosocial support; education activities.

### **Topli Dom**

Contact person: Vujanovic Nikola  
Address: Edhena Eke Dzubura 51, Ilidza, Bosnia-Herzegovina  
Telephone: +387 33 642 076  
Email: toplidom@bih.net.ba  
Purpose and activities: Legal advice; education; protection and care of older people.

### **Vrelo**

Contact person: Balic Devleta  
Address: M.Balorde 2, Mostar, Bosnia-Herzegovina  
Telephone/Fax: +387 36 552 418  
Purpose and activities: Psychosocial support and work for the resettlement of refugees of all ages.

### **Women to Women**

Address: Hamdije Cemerlica 225/VIII, Sarajevo, Bosnia-Herzegovina  
Telephone/Fax: +387 33 524 353  
Email: Zena 2000@bih.net.ba  
Purpose and activities: To end discrimination against women of all ages, by the promotion of non-violence.

## Croatia

**Association MI**

Contact person: Nives Ivelja  
Address: Hrvojeva 12, 21000 Split, Croatia  
Telephone: +385 21 342 582  
Fax: +385 21 355 840  
Email: [udruga-mi@st.tel.hr](mailto:udruga-mi@st.tel.hr)  
Purpose and activities: Community-based welfare activities for older people, including counselling, social clubs, educational and recreational activities; refugee information centre; volunteer centre; work with local government; networking with other non-government organisations running programmes for older people.

**Baranja — Association for Peace and Human Rights**

Contact person: Gordana Stojanovic  
Address: Hrvatske vojske 18, 31327 Bilje, Croatia  
Telephone: +385 031 750 608; +385 031 750 892  
Fax: +385 031 750 608; +385 031 750 892  
Email: [baranja@inet.hr](mailto:baranja@inet.hr)  
Beneficiaries: 2764  
Number of members/volunteers: 35 members, 35 volunteers  
Purpose and activities: To raise the quality of communication between different ethnic groups through programmes including legal advice; support for older people and disabled people; education and training activities.

**Bosino — Association for the Care of Older and Disabled People**

Contact person: Nevenka Rajkovic  
Address: S. Markovica 109, 32000 Vukovar, Croatia  
Telephone: +385 032 442 351  
Fax: +385 032 653 659  
Beneficiaries: 190  
Purpose and activities: Support for older people through home visits, basic health services and humanitarian aid.

**Dobrobit****Charitable association**

President: Professor Dr Mladen Havelka  
Address: Kontakova 3, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia  
Telephone: +385 1 233 88 21  
Fax: +385 1 233 13 98  
Email: [dobrobit@dobrobit.hr](mailto:dobrobit@dobrobit.hr)  
Number of members/volunteers: 110 members, 80 volunteers  
Purpose and activities: Support for older people, including homecare and a telephone help line; improvement of the quality of social and healthcare for older people with special needs; workshops for partners and volunteers; networking.

**Faust Vrancic****Citizens' association**

Contact people: Zeljana Kostanic, Drazen Skarica  
Address: Brace Polica 3, 22000 Sibenik, Croatia  
Telephone: +385 22 212 647  
Fax: +385 22 200 193  
Email: [drazen.skarica@si.tel.hr](mailto:drazen.skarica@si.tel.hr)  
Purpose and activities: Social and welfare activities for older people and young people; development of democratic processes; communications activities.

**Luna****Youth association**

Contact person: Ana Milicic  
Address: Dr Ante Starcevic 41, 20 000 Dubrovnik, Croatia  
Telephone: +385 020 420 901, 091 504 2033  
Fax: +385 020 420 901  
Email: [ana.milicic@du.tel.hr](mailto:ana.milicic@du.tel.hr)  
Number of members/volunteers: 40 members, 30 volunteers  
Purpose and activities: Developing support and understanding between generations; promoting young people's voluntary activities with people in need; education for civil society; workshops; trips; publishing.

**Pensioners' Association of Croatia**

President: Alojz Malogorski  
Address: Preradoviceva 33, 10000 Zagreb, Croatia  
Telephone: +385 1 4550 619; 4818 281  
Fax: +385 1 4818 281  
Number of members: 250,000  
Purpose and activities: Representing and supporting 198 local pensioners' associations across Croatia; promoting and protecting pensioners' rights with national government; lobbying.

**Pensioners' Association, Korcula**

Contact person: Tomislav Prizmic  
Address: Stari grad, Korcula, Croatia  
Telephone: +385 020 715 686  
Number of members/volunteers: 350 members, seven volunteers  
Purpose and activities: Putting pensioners in touch with each other; voluntary work; social support for older people.

**Pensioners' Association, Rijeka**

Contact person: Ivica Farkas  
Address: Kruzna ulica 5, 51 000 Rijeka, Croatia  
Telephone: +385 051 212 109  
Number of members: 13,000  
Purpose and activities: Protection of pensioners' interests and support for those in need.

**PGDI — Citizens' Democratic Initiative Project**

Contact person: Dijana Antunovic Lazic  
Address: V. Pelagica 3, 32000 Vukovar, Croatia  
Telephone: +385 032 653 628  
Fax: +385 032 653 628  
Email: prg@vk.tel.hr  
Beneficiaries: 750  
Number of members/volunteers: 38 members, 70 volunteers  
Purpose and activities: Humanitarian aid and healthcare for all age groups, with special support for older people. Information clubs; programme to support interethnic trust and mutual understanding; women's forum.

**Samobor Club for Older People**

Contact person: Ljubica Braja, President  
Address: Kompareova 5, 10430 Samobor, Croatia  
Telephone: +385 1 3361 737  
Number of members: 280  
Purpose and activities: Social and cultural events for older people in Samobor; health programmes; home visits for sick members.

**SVIMA**

Contact people: Nives Radeljic, Veronika Borcic  
Address: I. Pergosica 6, 10090 Zagreb, Croatia  
Email: svima\_2000@yahoo.com  
Purpose and activities: Collecting information about non-government organisations active in the area of social welfare; supporting networking between those that work with specific age groups.

## Estonia

**Eelespea (Forget-me-not)**

Chair: Vaike Talpsepp

Address: Metsa 19, 45501 Vosu Laane-Virumaa, Estonia

Number of members: 43

Purpose and activities: Providing an active and fulfilling social life for older people in Vosu, through organised hobby groups, such as dance, song and drama.

**Gerontology and Geriatrics Association of Estonia**

Chair: Anneli Soots

Address: Kooli 34-13, 50409 Tartu, Estonia

Telephone/Fax: +372 7 421 774

Email: egga@medi.cut.ee

Website: egga.cu.ee

Number of members: 117

Purpose and activities: Improving the wellbeing and quality of life of older people; training for work with older people; bringing together professionals, family members and older people to discuss issues and find solutions; publishing activities.

**Pensioners' Union of Estonia**

Chair: Sven Parn

Address: Estonia pst. 15, 10141 Tallinn, Estonia

Telephone: +372 6 466 424

Fax: +372 6 773 596

Number of members: 30,000

Purpose and activities: Information, support and cultural activities for older people; public education about the needs of older people.

**Grandpas' Club**

Contact person: Hovart Peebo

Address: Raua 1, 10124 Tallinn, Estonia

Telephone: +372 6 612 699

Number of members: 27

Purpose and activities: Social activities and mutual support for older men, including games, talks and competitions.

**Halastus — Society of Retired Medical Professionals for People with Disabilities**

Contact person: Liidia Laanoja

Address: Hurda 7-2, 51005 Tartu, Estonia

Telephone: +372 7 422 010

Number of members: 106

Purpose and activities: Helping housebound disabled older people, with a membership base of older people who need help — or offer it.

**Kerkokell (Churchbell)**

Contact person: Hilda Haba

Address: Vonnu, 62401 Vonnu Tartumaa, Estonia

Telephone: +372 7 492 382

Number of members: 25

Purpose and activities: Social activities to support older people in Vonnu, including handicrafts, singing, dance and outings.

**Kodukotus (Sweet Home)****Pensioners' organisation**

Chair: Lehte Parn

Address: Jakobi 19, 51014 Tartu, Estonia

Telephone: +372 7 432 982

Number of members: over 700

Purpose and activities: Events and information for older people; hobby clubs.

**Pensioners' Union of Helme**

Chair: Paul Udras

Address: Helme post office, 68608 Valga County, Estonia

Telephone: +372 76 34 246

Number of members: 300

Purpose and activities: Social activities and events for older people in Helme.

**Pihlamari (Rowanberry)**

**Chair:** Helju Vakkerman

**Address:** Vanasilla tee 27, 76401 Laagri, Saue vald,  
Estonia

**Telephone:** +372 6 79 74 18

**Number of members:** about 50 older women

**Purpose and activities:** Promoting a healthy and active social life for members, through group activities including handicrafts, cookery, gymnastics, yoga and dance.

**Self-help and Advisory Centre for Senior Citizens**

**Contact person:** Lia Napa

**Address:** Jaan Poska 15, 10126 Tallinn, Estonia

**Telephone:** +372 6 013 563

**Fax:** +372 6 013 754

**Email:** ehf@infonet.ee

**Number of members:** 450-600

**Purpose and activities:** Day centre based on the principle of self-help and volunteer work, with older people's clubs and organised activities.

## Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia)

**A Step Closer**

President: Mirjana Sokolovic  
Address: Cirila i Metodija 18, Stara Pazova, FR Yugoslavia  
Telephone: +381 22 311 930  
Email: step.closer.yu@ptt.yu  
Purpose and activities: Social and humanitarian activities to promote the quality of life of vulnerable groups, including older people, single parents, refugees, displaced persons and young people with mental health problems. Work to support links across the generations.

**Amity**

Contact person: Nadezda Sataric  
Address: Spanskih boraca 4, Belgrade, FR Yugoslavia  
Telephone/Fax: +381 11 131 261  
Email: amity@yubc.net  
Website: amity-yu.org  
Purpose and activities: Social and humanitarian activities, including work with older people.

**Centre for Volunteers**

Contact person: Jelena Pavlovic  
Address: Zmaj Jovina 34, Belgrade, FR Yugoslavia  
Telephone: +381 11 3283 306  
Email: info@crnps.org.uk  
Website: www.crnps.org.yu  
Purpose and activities: Development of voluntary activities, including work to support older people.

**Domovina**

President: Nevenka Bajic  
Address: Sedma Sutjeska 10 L, Krnjaca, Belgrade, FR Yugoslavia  
Telephone: +381 63 793 402  
Purpose and activities: Medical and psychosocial support for refugees; homecare for older people.

**Duga**

President: Tomislav Milovanovic  
Address: Luke Tufegdžica 31, Sabac, FR Yugoslavia  
Telephone: +381 15 344 858  
Email: dugasa@ptt.yu  
Purpose and activities: Provides aid and support to refugees, displaced persons and vulnerable groups, including older people.

**Eliksir**

Address: Bircaninova 26, Krusevac, FR Yugoslavia  
Telephone: +381 37 29 376  
Purpose and activities: Healthcare and health-education work with older people, children, pregnant women, refugees and disabled people; sports and cultural activities, including a dance school.

**Eterna**

Contact person: Tanja Kostic  
Address: Zrmanjska 16, Belgrade, FR Yugoslavia  
Telephone: +381 11 558 081  
Purpose and activities: Psychosocial aid and support for older people, including promotion of healthier lifestyles.

**Family Care**

President: Dr Ljiljana Abramovic-Savic  
Address: Nusiceva 4, Belgrade, FR Yugoslavia  
Telephone/Fax: +381 11 3230 534  
Email: asljiljana@sezampro.yu  
Website: www.familycare.org.yu  
Purpose and activities: Family health care and support for vulnerable groups, including women, children, older people and those affected by war, through mobile health teams.

**Grig**

President: Milan Samardzija  
Address: Cetinjska 2a, Belgrade, FR Yugoslavia  
Telephone: +381 102 771  
Email: grig@drenik.net  
Purpose and activities: Promoting healthy interpersonal relations in families and between social groups; work with the Roma population.

**Horizonti**

President: Marija Stefanovic  
Address: Ljubicka 32, Cacak, FR Yugoslavia  
Telephone: +381 32 43 645  
Purpose and activities: Work with refugees and internally displaced persons, including psychosocial services and support for older people.

**Kljajicevo — Co-ordination Board for Refugees and Internally Displaced Persons**

President: Savic Jovan

Address: Prvomajska 31, Sombor, FR Yugoslavia

Telephone: +381 25 852 652

Purpose and activities: Psychosocial support for older refugees.

**Lastavica**

Contact person: Ljilja Radinovic

Address: Obilicev venac 2, Belgrade-Surcin, FR Yugoslavia

Telephone: +381 11 8440 054

Email: lastavic@eunet.yu

Purpose and activities: Support for older people; accommodation and psychosocial support for refugees and displaced persons, including female refugees from Krajina and women living in collective centres; establishing links with local and international government and non-government organisations working with refugees in Serbia, Croatia and Bosnia.

**Novi Sad Humanitarian Centre**

President: Perica Mandic

Address: Antona Cehova 10, Novi Sad, FR Yugoslavia

Telephone: +381 21 612 339

Email: nshc@eunet.yu

Purpose and activities: Improving the health, physical and psychological welfare of vulnerable groups, especially those affected by war, including older people, refugees, Roma and children. Promoting civil and social rights and social and humanitarian activities through the development of volunteer networks.

**Open Door**

Contact person: Ivan Delevic

Address: Josifa Snersona 3/II - 37, Kragujevac, FR Yugoslavia

Telephone: +381 34 220 719

Purpose and activities: Humanitarian work for older people.

**Open Health Club**

President: Dr Svetomir Trifunov

Address: Beogradska 31, Sombor, FR Yugoslavia

Telephone: +381 25 468 184

Fax: +381 25 468 130

Email: saka@sombor.net

Purpose and activities: Humanitarian activities for vulnerable groups, including refugees, Roma and older people.

**Osmeh**

President: Zorica Raskovic

Address: Marsala Tita 141, Vrbas, FR Yugoslavia

Telephone: +382 21 707 297

Email: osmehvrb@eunet.yu

Purpose and activities: Economic and social support for refugees, especially women, children, older people and invalids in two collective centres in Vrbas; promotion of integration into the local community; small grants programme; vocational training; legal and psychological counselling.

**Osvit**

**Citizens' association**

Contact person: Ljubisa Bajic

Address: Mice Stanojlovica 17, Sabac, FR Yugoslavia

Telephone/Fax: +381 15 369 437

Email: osvite@elvod.co.yu

Number of beneficiaries: 12,000

Purpose and activities: Integration of refugees from former Yugoslav republics through counselling, medical help, psychological and legal assistance; work with older people; support for single mothers and children with foster parents.

**Pensioners' Association, New Belgrade**

President: Milos Ivošević

Address: Bulevar AVNOJ-a 157 A, New Belgrade, FR Yugoslavia

Telephone: +381 11 609 965

Purpose and activities: Information, protection of human rights, public campaigns and advocacy on behalf of pensioners in New Belgrade.



**Pensioners' Association of Serbia**

Contact person: Dusan Markovic  
Address: Svetozara Markovica 32, Belgrade, FR Yugoslavia  
Telephone: +381 11 3231 487  
Purpose and activities: Information, protection of human rights, public campaigns, advocacy and networking for pensioners in Serbia.

**Philanthropy — Charity Fund of the Serbian Orthodox Church**

Contact person: Deacon Ivica Janjic  
Address: Dositejeva 17, Vranje, FR Yugoslavia  
Telephone: +381 17 412 734  
Email: cvkljubvr@yahoo.com  
Purpose and activities: Medical, welfare and social support for impoverished social groups, including victims of disasters, older people and poor families; building charitable activity in the Serbian Orthodox community.

**Red Cross, Federal Republic of Yugoslavia**

Contact person: Dr Ljubica Dragisic  
Address: Simina 18, Belgrade, FR Yugoslavia  
Telephone: +381 11 623 564  
Email: jckbgd@jck.org.yu  
Purpose and activities: Humanitarian aid including soup kitchens, first aid, home care, blood donation drives, health education, family tracing service.

**St Luka — Friends of Hilandar Association**

President: Dr Predrag Govedarovic  
Address: Pop Lukina 17, Belgrade, FR Yugoslavia  
Telephone/Fax: +381 11 699 417  
Number of beneficiaries: 40,000  
Purpose and activities: Charitable outpatient facility providing medical and psychosocial assistance to sick, suffering and poor people, including refugees and older people.

**St Nicholas — Family Health Care Centre**

President: Dr Olga Pavasovic  
Address: Salvadora Aljendea 18, Belgrade, FR Yugoslavia  
Telephone: +381 11 181 912  
Purpose and activities: Providing free complementary health care and assistance through education and counselling for refugees and socially vulnerable families, Roma people and internally displaced persons, including 24-hour telephone advice service, counselling and family support. Research programmes; cooperation with universities, associations and other organisations dealing with family health issues nationally and internationally.

**Single Mothers**

President: Dusica Bursac-Babic  
Address: Njegoseva 29, Zemun, FR Yugoslavia  
Telephone/Fax: +381 11 3161 462  
Email: sammajke@eunet.yu  
Purpose and activities: Providing accommodation, advice and social support for vulnerable women of all ages, including single mothers, refugees and displaced people; support for older people, including work therapy.

**Sunce (The Sun)**

**Humanitarian association**  
President: Voja Lucic  
Address: Luja Pastera 17, Kragujevac, FR Yugoslavia  
Telephone/Fax: +381 34 62 700  
Email: sunce@infosky.net  
Website: www.sunce.org.uk  
Purpose and activities: Practical, social and psychological support for refugees in collective centres; creative and art workshops for children; courses and training for adolescents; support for older people.

**Tera — Creative Woman**

**Citizens association**

President: Spomenka Zarkovic

Address: Rajka Ruzica 31, Belgrade, FR Yugoslavia

Telephone/Fax: +381 11 500 591

Email: terasjmj@eunet.yu

Purpose and activities: Material and psychological support for refugees and internally displaced persons; support for vulnerable women to build new skills and gain financial independence; assistance to older, disabled and marginalised people, including raising awareness of rights and mutual support.

**Timok Club**

President: Vladan Jeremic

Address: Cara Dusana 4, Knjazevac, FR Yugoslavia

Telephone: +381 19 734 177

Email: tim\_klub@ptt.yu

Purpose and activities: Developing an open democratic society through local self-government and protection of human rights; support for vulnerable groups; protection of the environment; interregional co-operation; work with volunteers; campaigning and publications.

**Union of Yugoslav Psychotherapists**

President: Professor Dr Snezana Milenkovic

Address: Palmoticeva 37, Belgrade, FR Yugoslavia

Telephone: +381 11 501 269

Email: nenam@eunet.yu

Purpose and activities: Treatment of mental illness and promotion of mental health, including for older people.

**Viktorija**

President: Mirjana Milenkovic

Address: Vojvode Putnika 48, Kragujevac, FR Yugoslavia

Telephone/Fax: +381 34 370 334

Email: mirakg@ptt.yu

Purpose and activities: Support for older people; assisting the education of refugee children in collective centres and other accommodation.

**Vizija**

**Women's association**

Address: Gospodar Jovanova 7/1, Belgrade, FR Yugoslavia

Telephone: +381 11 635 280

Email: vizija@infosky.net

Purpose and activities: Improving the material condition and independence of women of all ages, through education, economic support and humanitarian work.

## Macedonia

**Adra****Adventist charitable association**

Address: Petar Pop-Arsov 25, 1000 Skopje,  
Macedonia  
Telephone: +389 2 234 073

**Blagovestie Foundation**

Contact person: Snezana Georgievska  
Address: Ivo Ribar Lola bb, 1000 Skopje,  
Macedonia  
Telephone: +389 2 212 482  
Purpose and activities: Donations and support for  
vulnerable groups, including older people.

**Caritas, Macedonia**

Contact person: Antun Ceremutich  
Address: Vietnamska bb, Shuto Orizari, 1000  
Skopje, Macedonia  
Telephone: +389 2 650 487  
Purpose and activities: Humanitarian assistance for  
marginalised groups, including older people and  
refugees.

**El-Hilal****Humanitarian organisation**

Contact person: Bedzeti Arbresha  
Address: Mladen Gruevski br. 2, Gostivar,  
Macedonia  
Telephone: +389 42 213 496  
Purpose and activities: Humanitarian activities to  
support vulnerable groups, including refugees, older  
people and people living in poverty.

**Homos****Humanitarian organisation**

Contact person: Dzeljal Emin  
Address: Vashingtonska bb, 1000 Skopje,  
Macedonia  
Telephone: +389 2 614 202  
Purpose and activities: Social care, training, advisory  
work and information for vulnerable groups,  
including older people, single parents and orphans.

**Humano Srce****Humanitarian association**

Contact person: Branka Petrovska  
Address: Bul. Jane Sandanski 49/9, 1000 Skopje,  
Macedonia  
Telephone: +389 2 444 429  
Number of members: 12  
Purpose and activities: Humanitarian programmes  
across Macedonia.

**Jeta****Humanitarian association**

Address: Gradishte 14/33, 1000 Skopje, Macedonia  
Telephone: +389 2 233 873

**Kam — Sonce of Skopje****Humanitarian organisation**

Contact person: Raif Selatin  
Address: Lika Gerov 12/14, 1000 Skopje,  
Macedonia  
Telephone: +389 2 335 458  
Purpose and activities: Humanitarian activities,  
including training and advisory work with women,  
children and older people; care for orphans and  
single parents; health protection.

**Klasje na Dobrina****Humanitarian organisation**

Address: Samoilova 112, 1000 Skopje, Macedonia  
Telephone: +389 2 119 144

**Majka Tereza****Humanitarian association**

Contact person: Jashar Polozani  
Address: Dimche Kovachevski 1, Struga, Macedonia  
Telephone: +389 96 76 659  
Fax: 389 96 76 659  
Number of members/volunteers: 480 members, 479  
volunteers  
Purpose and activities: Humanitarian programmes  
to counter the effects of the economic crisis on  
vulnerable groups, including older people.

**Milosrdie — Orthodox Church of Macedonia**  
**Humanitarian organisation**  
Address: Vodnjanska 42, 1000 Skopje, Macedonia  
Telephone: +389 2 296 105  
Purpose and activities: Support for vulnerable groups, including older people.

**Mir**  
**Humanitarian organisation**  
Contact person: Velija Amet  
Address: Maksut Sadik 5, 1000 Skopje, Macedonia  
Telephone: +389 2 622 731  
Purpose and activities: Humanitarian work with young people, children, older people and women; health education activities; training and advisory work; collaboration with other organisations.

**Naser Veliu**  
**Humanitarian charitable association**  
Contact person: Rahim Musliu  
Address: Ivo Ribar Lola 47, Gostivar, Macedonia  
Telephone: +389 42 83 103, 84 393  
Fax: +389 42 84 393  
Number of members/volunteers: 300 members, eight volunteers  
Purpose and activities: Mutual financial support and other kind of collaboration.

**Nov Pocetok**  
Contact person: Roger Doan Van Hay  
Address: Partizanski Odredi 153/B2-16, 1000 Skopje, Macedonia  
Telephone: +389 2 347 933  
Purpose and activities: Programmes for disabled and older people.

**Opae**  
**Humanitarian association**  
Contact person: Redzep Shakiri  
Address: Opae, opshtina Lipkovo, Kumanovo, Macedonia  
Telephone: +389 31 478 300  
Fax: 389 31 478 500  
Number of members/volunteers: 65 members, seven volunteers  
Purpose and activities: Community-based environmental programmes; assistance to poor people; activities within schools.

**Organisation of Women, Republic of Macedonia**  
Contact person: Mirjana Dimovska  
Telephone: +389 2 239 113  
Purpose and activities: Humanitarian work; support for the rights of women of all ages.

**Red Cross, Republic of Macedonia**  
Contact person: N Narashanov  
Address: Kocho Racin br. 13, 1000 Skopje, Macedonia  
Telephone: +389 2 114 355  
Purpose and activities: Humanitarian work, including an advisory centre, activities with refugees, and programmes for older people and disabled people, through 30 branches nationwide.

**Sv. Nikola**  
**Humanitarian organisation**  
Contact person: Pero Milevski  
Address: Pionerska br. 15/4, Sv. Nikola, Macedonia  
Telephone: +389 92 443 613  
Number of members: 15  
Purpose and activities: Assistance to people of all ages suffering from diseases such as cardiovascular problems, leukaemia and cancer; support for disabled people; counselling and information work.

**Union of War Veterans**  
Contact person: Ksente Bogoev  
Telephone: +389 2 235 444  
Purpose and activities: Protection of the rights of war veterans.

**Union of Women, Republic of Macedonia**  
Contact person: Savka Todorova  
Address: 11 Oktomvri br. 17, 1000 Skopje, Macedonia  
Telephone: +389 2 234 815/115 899  
Purpose and activities: Humanitarian and advisory work for women of all ages, including a telephone hotline and education work to promote women's rights and involvement in policy-making.

**Zivot i Nadez**  
Contact person: Aleksandra Ilieva  
Telephone: +389 2 130 370  
Purpose and activities: Programmes to support older people's legal rights.

## Moldova

**Batrinete fara Tristete (Old Age without Sadness)****Public organisation**

President: Valeriu Marciuc

Address: str. Nicolae Costin 65/2 ap.68, Chisinau, Moldova

Telephone: +373 31 517375

Beneficiaries: 60

Number of members: seven

Purpose and activities: Residential care for older people; distribution of humanitarian assistance to older people, including bedding, clothes and fuel.

**Batrinii****Public organisation**

President: Vera Caminscaia

Address: str. Vasile Lupu 135, Orhei, Moldova

Telephone: +373 29366

Beneficiaries: 20

Number of members: four

Purpose and activities: Humanitarian aid and social rehabilitation for older people.

**Bunatatea — Republican Association of Pensioners**

President: Gavrilă Gaina

Address: str. Bucuresti 79, Chisinau, Moldova

Telephone: +373 31 224390

Number of members: 720,000

Purpose and activities: Addressing the social and practical problems of pensioners; encouraging older people to take part in democratic processes; contributing to the development of Moldova.

**Caritas, Moldova**

President: Vladimir Nadcrenicnii

Address: str. Andreevski 7, Chisinau, Moldova

Telephone: +373 22 293156

Purpose and activities: Humanitarian support for vulnerable members of the Catholic community, including older people, through seven nationwide branches; homecare programmes.

**Eterna — National Association for Older Women**

President: Liudmila Petrimari

Address: str. Gheorghe Asachi 64/1 ap. 109, Chisinau, Moldova

Telephone: +373 31 736781

Purpose and activities: Publicising the rights of older women.

**Hessed System, Moldova****Hessed Yeguda (Chisinau)**

President: Lev Gineitor

Telephone: +373 22 506008

Fax: +373 22 564108

Email: hessed@mer.un.md

**Hessed Jacob (Balti)**

President: Posalia Berdichever

Telephone: +373 31 26394

**Hessed Joseph (Bender)**

President: Vladimir Gureev

Telephone: +373 32 26624

Fax: +373 32 29504

**Hessed Hana (Tiraspol)**

President: Anna Condrashenko

Telephone/Fax: +373 33 32268

**Hessed Rachel (Ribitna)**

President: Raisa Aculova

Telephone: +373 55 33944

Fax: +373 55 33968

Purpose and activities: Founded in the 1990s, Hessed is a nationwide charitable movement for Jewish communities, especially older people. Programmes include meals on wheels, care packages, medicines, help in emergencies, homecare and daycare centres.

**National Association of Community Care**

President: Nicolae Stanciu

Address: str. Avramenco 22 ap. 7, Chisinau, Moldova

Telephone: +373 22 548251

Beneficiaries: 20

Number of members: seven

Purpose and activities: Volunteer homecare programmes for older people.

### **National Association of Nursing**

President: Elena Stempovskaya  
Address: str. Columna 150, Chisinau, Moldova  
Telephone/Fax: +373 22 246659  
Beneficiaries: 150  
Number of members: 13,000  
Purpose and activities: Nursing care for older people through 38 branches across Moldova.

### **Older People's Club for Nurses and Doctors Public organisation**

President: Ana Botnaru  
Address: str. Renasterii Nationale 20, Orhei, Moldova  
Telephone: +373 235 24361  
Beneficiaries: 15  
Number of members: three  
Purpose and activities: Support services for retired nurses and doctors.

### **Organisation of Veterans, Moldova**

President: Dumitru Zidu  
Address: str. Banulesc Bodoni 16, Moldova  
Telephone: +373 22 233370  
Number of members: 27,000  
Purpose and activities: Protection of the rights of veterans; support for their welfare.

### **Pentru Democratie si Umanism (For Democracy and Humanity)**

President: Ala Bondarenco  
Address: str. Vlaicu PircaLab 40 ap. 12, Chisinau, Moldova  
Telephone: +373 3 121 36 62  
Purpose and activities: Producing and distributing a wide range of publications; human rights seminars; free legal consultations for older people.

### **Red Cross, Moldova**

President: Nina Lungu  
Address: str. Dzerjinski 67A, Chisinau, Moldova  
Telephone: +373 22 729644  
Purpose and activities: Nationwide programme of humanitarian support for vulnerable groups, including older people; hot meals, care packages, medicines and home care.

### **Second Breath**

#### **National gerontological association**

President: Irina Baicalov  
Address: str. Bulgara 142 ap. 45, Balti, Moldova  
Telephone: +373 31 79474, +373 31 60303  
Email: secondbr@beltsy.md  
Website: www.beltsy.md/secondbr  
Number of members/volunteers: 15 members, 10 volunteers  
Beneficiaries: 500  
Purpose and activities: Wide range of volunteer-supported medical and social services for older people, including a day centre, homecare programmes, meals on wheels, and a 'hospice at home' programme for terminally ill people. Training volunteers; organising national conferences; national networking with other voluntary sector bodies.

### **Semectus Association**

President: Vasile Severin  
Address: str. Docuciaev 13 ap. 79, Chisinau, Moldova  
Telephone: +373 22 733411  
Number of members: three  
Purpose and activities: Volunteer humanitarian aid for older and disabled people.

### **Sperantele Batrinilor (Older People's Hopes)**

#### **Public organisation**

President: Alexandra Tetiu  
Address: str. Basarabiei 31, Edinet, Moldova  
Telephone: +373 246 22261  
Beneficiaries: 40  
Number of members: five  
Purpose and activities: Care and support for older people living in the north of Moldova (Edinet and nearby villages).

### **Veterans' Club**

#### **Public organisation**

President: Vladimir Climov  
Address: str. Pushkin 78, Balti, Moldova  
Telephone: +373 31 22180  
Beneficiaries: 35  
Purpose and activities: Cultural programmes, including an orchestra and a choir.

## Romania

**Activ Association**

Contact person: Daniel Hliban  
Address: CP 38, Posta Generala 1, 6800 Botosani, Romania  
Telephone/Fax: +40 31 518 675  
Purpose and activities: Support for disadvantaged people in the community, including older people.

**Alzheimer's Society of Romania**

Contact person: Catalina Tudose  
Address: Bd. Mihail Kogalniceanu 95A, Sc.A, Et.1, Ap.8, Sector 5, 70603 Bucharest, Romania  
Telephone: +40 1 686 3470  
Fax: +40 1 311 3471  
Purpose and activities: Moral, medical and material support through homecare to mentally ill older people, especially those with Alzheimer's disease.

**Ana, Pitesti****Women's association**

Contact person: Liliana Stanescu  
Address: Str. I.C. Bratianu nr. 44, 0300 Pitesti, Romania  
Telephone/Fax: +40 48 220 634  
Purpose and activities: Humanitarian, social and medical services for disadvantaged groups in the community, including older people.

**Bucovina Ladies' Society**

Contact person: Mihaela Grosu  
Address: Str. Ana Ipatescu nr.9, Bl. 3D, Ap.6, Suceava, Romania  
Telephone/Fax: +40 30 212 693  
Purpose and activities: Promotion of the involvement of women of all ages in the social and cultural activities of the community.

**Caritas Confederation**

Contact person: Cristina Loghin  
Address: Str. Washington nr.38, Ap.2, 71421 Bucharest, Romania  
Telephone: +40 1 231 2900  
Fax: +40 1 230 4013  
Purpose and activities: Medical and social care for disadvantaged groups, including older people.

**Casa Sperantei Hospice**

Contact person: Malina Dumitrescu  
Address: Str. Poarta Schei nr.16, 2200 Brasov, Romania  
Telephone: +40 068 419 780  
Fax: +40 068 475 717  
Purpose and activities: Provision of palliative care and hospice services for terminally ill people of all ages.

**Christiana****Medical Christian association**

Contact person: Elisabeta Cseke  
Address: Str. Gheorghe Sincai nr.9, 1900 Timisoara, Romania  
Telephone/Fax: +40 562 17 096  
Purpose and activities: Improving the quality of life of disadvantaged groups, including older people.

**Community Care Foundation**

Contact person: Valentin Vladu  
Address: Str. Calea Floreasca nr.8, Sector 1, Bucharest, Romania  
Telephone: +40 1 230 2332  
Fax: +40 1 211 9137  
Purpose and activities: Improvement of the quality of community medical and social services for all age groups, including older people.

**Community Support Foundation**

Contact person: Stefan Ciobanu  
Address: CP 23, OP 3, 5500 Bacau, Romania  
Telephone/Fax: +40 34 185 658  
Purpose and activities: Community development through medical, educational and social activities for vulnerable groups, including older people.

**Consortium for Local Development**

Contact person: Eugen Iordanescu  
Address: Bd. Victoriei nr.8-10, 2400 Sibiu, Romania  
Telephone/Fax: +40 69 216 751  
Purpose and activities: Improving local social services and support for vulnerable groups, including homecare services for older people and social work with homeless people.

#### **Elena Cuza Foundation**

Contact person: Emil Popa  
Address: Str. Avintului nr. 1, 6500 Vaslui, Romania  
Telephone: +40 35 313 403  
Fax: +40 35 314 762  
Purpose and activities: Community development activities in the Vaslui region.

#### **Equilibre Association**

Contact person: Rodica Caciula  
Address: Str. Av. Garofeanu nr. 17, Sector 5, 70497 Bucharest, Romania  
Telephone: +40 1 413 1743  
Fax: +40 1 411 9729  
Purpose and activities: Support for vulnerable and marginalised groups; development of community partnerships; strengthening civil society.

#### **Foundation for Community Care**

Contact person: Mirela Arvinte  
Address: Piata Stefan cel Mare 10, Bl.C5, Sc. B. Ap. 38, 5600 Piatra Neamt, Romania  
Telephone: +40 33 211 591  
Fax: +40 33 222 324  
Purpose and activities: Improvement of community health through medical and social services.

#### **Foundation for the Care of Older People**

Contact person: Dan Baciu  
Address: Str. Mehedinti nr. 15, 3400 Cluj Napoca, Romania  
Telephone: +40 64 165 587  
Fax: +40 64 431 326  
Purpose and activities: Development of models of medical care and psychosocial service for older people in the community.

#### **Foundation for the Support of Older People, Galati**

Contact person: Zamfira Sirghie  
Address: Str. Barbosi nr.6, 6200 Galati, Romania  
Telephone/Fax: +40 36 470 040  
Purpose and activities: Reducing the institutionalisation of older people in Galati county; support for those living in poverty, isolated, depressed or at risk of suicide.

#### **Geron Foundation**

Contact person: Aurelia Curaj  
Address: Str. Ferentari nr.17, Sector 5, Bucharest, Romania  
Telephone/Fax: +40 1 423 2340  
Purpose and activities: Development and promotion of integrated community care services for older people.

#### **Happy Old Age Association**

Contact person: Valentina Paraschiv  
Address: CP 2716 OP 12, 6600 Iasi, Romania  
Telephone: +40 32 127 819  
Fax: +40 32 227 168  
Purpose and activities: Improvement of the quality of life of older people in the community.

#### **Help Foundation**

Contact person: Radu Mocanu  
Address: Str. Petru Maior nr. 4, 5300 Focsani, Romania  
Telephone/Fax: +40 37 238 950  
Purpose and activities: Medical services for vulnerable groups, including older people, to supplement public services.

#### **Pensioners' Federation of Romania**

Contact person: Emilia Rosu  
Address: Str. Ministerului nr.1-3, Intrarea D, parter, Camera 56, Sector 1, Bucharest, Romania  
Telephone: +40 1 313 3655  
Fax: +40 1 312 6206  
Purpose and activities: Promotion and protection of the rights of pensioners; activities to improve their quality of life.

#### **Pensioners' Mutual Fund, Sibiu**

Contact person: Marius Roman  
Address: Piata Mare nr.8, 2400 Sibiu, Romania  
Telephone: +40 69 217 921  
Purpose and activities: Mutual assistance and self-help among members.



**Pro Vobis Foundation**

Contact person: Vitalie Slobozian  
Address: Calea Dorobantilor 99, Ap. 32, 3400 Cluj,  
Romania  
Telephone +40 64 412 897  
Fax: +40 64 412 944  
Purpose and activities: Improving the health of  
disadvantaged groups, including older people and  
HIV-positive people, through voluntary support.

**Romanian Society of Paleatology and  
Thanatology**

Contact person: Constantin Bogdan  
Address: Sos. Berceni nr.12, Sector 4, Bucharest,  
Romania  
Telephone/ Fax: +40 1 499 0844  
Purpose and activities: Promotion of the principles  
and practice of palliative care among medical  
practitioners and at social and community level.

**Sperante Foundation**

Contact person: Cornelia Predoiu  
Address: Str. Cristea Mateescu 8, Bl. 42, Sc.A, Ap.3,  
Sector 2, Romania  
Telephone/Fax: +40 1 242 3115  
Purpose and activities: Improvement of older  
people's quality of life.

**Together Foundation**

Contact person: Delia Greavu  
Address: Str. Unirii 104, 8700 Constanta, Romania  
Telephone: +40 41 546 851  
Fax: +40 41 546 445  
Purpose: Social and medical care for older people in  
their communities.

**White and Yellow Cross Foundation**

Contact person: Mariuca Ivan  
Address: Splaiul Independentei 169, Sector 5, within  
the University Hospital Bucharest, Romania  
Telephone/Fax: +40 1 315 1256  
Purpose and activities: Social and medical homecare  
services for people of all ages with special needs.

## Ukraine

### **Association for Lonely Older People, Kharkiv**

Director: Olexiy Cherepukhin

Address: 61204 Kharkiv, pr.Peremohy, 74-g, apt. 13, Ukraine

Purpose and activities: Support for isolated older people in Kharkiv.

### **Association of Veterans**

President: Igor Yuhnovski

Address: 60-a Saksaganskogo Street, Kiev, Ukraine

Telephone: +380 044 220 8457

Purpose and activities: National association of veterans of war and work, offering assistance to older people and pensioners.

### **Association of Sports Veterans, Lvivska**

Head: Dmytro Volzhanin

Address: 79044 Lviv, Melnikova Street 18, Ukraine

Telephone: +380 0322 34 0031

Purpose and activities: Assistance to older people and pensioners; protection of veterans' rights; sporting activities.

### **Charitas, Sokal**

Head: Maryana Yaremchuk

Address: 11 Klymiva-Legendy Street, Sokal, Lvivska obl. 80000, Ukraine

Telephone: +380 03257 4 82 79

Purpose and activities: Humanitarian work with vulnerable groups, including assistance to older people and pensioners.

### **Congress of Ukrainians from Holmshchina and Pidlyashya**

President: Olexandr Borovik

Address: Rivne, Shkilna Street, 27, Ukraine

Telephone: +380 0362 26 9421

Purpose and activities: Protection of members' interests; assistance to older people and pensioners.

### **Council of the Organisation of Ukrainian Veterans**

Head: Ivan Gerasimov

Address: 16-a Lipska Street, Kiev 03021, Ukraine

Telephone: +380 044 293 3292

Fax: +380 044 293 8312

Purpose and activities: Protection of the interests of war veterans and those who have retired from work; assistance for older people and pensioners.

### **Echo of War**

Head: Volodymyr Shtefan

Address: 8-b Yaroslaviv Val Street, Kiev-34, Ukraine

Telephone: +380 044 229 2394

Fax: +380 044 246 5697

Purpose and activities: Assistance to older people, pensioners and disabled people; protection of veterans' rights.

### **House and Family**

Head: Valentina Khvorostina

Address: 65026 Odessa, Ekaterininska Street 23, Ukraine

Telephone: +380 0482 21 8774

Purpose and activities: Business club, offering assistance to older people and pensioners.

### **International Society of Human Rights, Zhytomyr branch**

Head: Victor Bondar

Address: 10014 Zhytomyr, Novy Bulvar 4, room 48, Ukraine

Telephone: +380 0412 20 8294

Purpose and activities: Human rights protection and legal assistance, including for older people.

### **Society for Political Prisoners and Victims of Repression in Kiev**

Head: Adolf Kondratski

Address: Kiev, Kreschatik Street 36, room 101, Ukraine

Telephone: +380 044 221 2354, 225 1095

Purpose and activities: Protection of the interests of older people and veterans; charitable activities.

**Kindness****City charitable fund**

Contact person: Kristina Muzheka  
Address: 83017 Donetsk, b.Shevchenko 36, Ukraine  
Email: fund@crf.donetsk.ua  
Purpose and activities: Support for institutions of social protection, public organisations and foundations in Donetsk.

**Mahen Avot****Jewish charitable fund**

Head: Yurii Slutskii  
Address: Kiev-103, Nimanska St. 7, Ukraine  
Telephone: +380 044 295 6593  
Purpose and activities: Charitable assistance for older people and pensioners, primarily within the Jewish community; protection of rights; lobbying.

**Mercy and Health Fund**

President: Victor Mishchenko  
Address: 52 v Artema Street, Kiev, Ukraine  
Telephone: +380 044 219 1418  
Purpose and activities: Humanitarian assistance for Ukrainians living in poverty, including older people; promotion of charitable activity.

**Mercy and Kindness****City charitable fund**

Head: Praskovia Sydorenko  
Address: Chernihiv, Gorkogo Street, 84/101, Ukraine  
Telephone: +380 09522 2 7537  
Purpose and activities: Social assistance for pensioners and those disabled or made sick by the explosion of the Chernobyl nuclear plant.

**Metsenats**

Head: Victor Zakharchenko  
Address: Chernihiv, Frunze Street, 38, Ukraine  
Telephone: +380 04622 7 5614  
Purpose and activities: Humanitarian assistance for sick older people and disabled people; financial support for youth education.

**Narodna Dopomoha (Assistance to the People)**

Head: Ivan Kovalyshyn  
Address: 58029 Chernivtsi, Haydara Street, 9a, Chernivisti, Ukraine  
Telephone: +380 0372 58 5156  
Purpose and activities: Social and medical support services for vulnerable groups, including older people.

**Organisation of Older People**

Head: Miroslav Gavryliuk  
Address: 82100 Lvivska obl., Drohobych, I.Franka Street, 106, Ukraine  
Telephone: +380 03244 2 2106  
Purpose and activities: Assistance to older people and pensioners; protection of veterans' rights.

**Organisation of War Veterans, Zaporizhzhia**

Head: Mykola Petruchenia  
Address: 69037 Zaporizhzhia, pr.Lenina, 214, Ukraine  
Purpose and activities: Assistance to older people, pensioners and disabled people; protection of the rights of veterans from one particular regiment.

**Our Future, Odessa**

Head: Natalia Chernysheva  
Address: 650007 Odessa, Mechnikova Street, 92, Ukraine  
Telephone: +380 0482 34 4064  
Purpose and activities: Assistance for older people and pensioners in the area of Odessa; health protection and rehabilitation; protection of veterans' interests.

**Pensioners' Volunteer Movement**

Head: Angelina Moiseeva  
Address: 16a Lipska Street, Kiev 03021, Ukraine  
Telephone: +380 044 253 3159  
Fax: +380 044 293 8312  
Purpose and activities: Assistance to older people and pensioners.

**Red Cross, Ukraine**

Head: Ivan Usychenko

Address: 30 Pushkinska Street, Kiev 03004, Ukraine

Telephone: +380 044 225 0157

Fax: +380 044 225 1096

Email: redcross@ukrpack.net

Purpose and activities: Nationwide programme of assistance to vulnerable groups including older people and pensioners; health protection and rehabilitation.

**Shchyt Batkivshchyny**

Head: Andriy Chernoukha

Address: 02154 Kiev, Entuziastiv Street, 11/1 apt. 133, Ukraine

Telephone: +380 044 544 8490

Purpose and activities: Assistance to older people, pensioners and disabled people; protection of veterans' rights.

**Society of Pensioners, Odessa**

Head: Yadviga Kabachek

Address: 65011 Odessa, Bazarna Street, 29, Ukraine

Telephone: +380 0482 21 7413

Purpose and activities: Humanitarian assistance to older people and pensioners in Odessa; protection of the interests of veterans of war and work.

**Society of Political Prisoners and Victims of Repression, Ukraine**

President: Eugen Proniuk

Address: 7/16 Mezhyhirska Street, Kiev-71, Ukraine

Telephone: +380 044 416 2442

Fax: +380 044 293 3644

Purpose and activities: Protection of veterans' rights; scientific reports.

**Turbota-Khesed Avot**

**Jewish charitable fund**

Head: Natan Hombert

Address: 4-a Piperska Street, Kiev 03087, Ukraine

Telephone: +380 044 241 0303

Fax: +380 044 242 6880

Purpose and activities: Assistance to older people and pensioners; educational activities.

## Map of East and Central Europe



■ Countries researched for this publication

## Resources and references

A selection of print and online resources for further reading and research about the East and Central Europe countries covered in this publication.

The World Bank

**The World Bank.** *Making Transition Work for Everyone: Poverty and Inequality in Europe and Central Asia.* Washington: The World Bank, 2000

**Kudat, A, Youssef, NH.** *Older People in Transition Economies: An Overview of their Plight in the ECA Region.* Environmentally and Socially Sustainable Development Working Paper Number 12. Washington: The World Bank, 1999

See also the World Bank website at [www.worldbank.org](http://www.worldbank.org) for:

**Country at a Glance tables** Each table presents two pages of key indicators tracing trends in social and economic development over the last three decades, produced in conjunction with World Bank country staff.

**Data profiles** Drawn from the World Development Indicators database.

The United Nations

**United Nations Development Programme.** *Human Development Report: Countries in transition.* UNDP, New York, 2001

See also the UNDP website: [www@undp.org](http://www@undp.org) for publications and links to other UN system organisations.

Other resources

**Orlova, N.** *Poverty — the challenge of transition: the case of Moldova.* Paper presented and United Nations Global Forum, 'Local Governance and Social Services for all', 2-5 May 2000, Stockholm, Sweden

**Leppik, L.** *Poverty and policies to fight social exclusion in three Central and East European countries: Estonia.* Paper presented at the Observatoire Sociale Europeene conference, 'New Governance and the Social Dimension of Enlargement', 18 October 2000, Brussels, Belgium

## HelpAge International resources

***Making our voices heard: Older people and decision-making in East and Central Europe*** is the second in a series of two publications produced by HelpAge International's East and Central Europe Network. The complementary publication, ***Nothing about us without us: Older people and decision-making in East and Central Europe***, focuses on the situation of older people in Albania, the Czech Republic, Hungary, Latvia, Lithuania, Slovakia and Slovenia, and includes a directory of NGOs working with and for older people in each country.

Free.

### Briefing papers

***The mark of a noble society: human rights and older people***

***Capacity building and ageing: a position paper***

***Emergencies and ageing: a position paper***

***Gender and ageing: a position paper***

***Participation and ageing: a position paper***

***Poverty and ageing: a position paper***

Free.

### Other publications

***The Ageing and Development Report: Poverty, Independence and the World's Older People***

(Editors: Judith Randel and Tony German, 1999)

A HelpAge International report on the circumstances of older people in developing countries and countries in transition, with chapters on economic security, health, family and community life, poverty, gender and emergencies; and information on demographic trends and ageing in specific countries and regions.

Price: £14.95. Available from Earthscan Tel: +44 (0)20 7278 0433. Email: [earthinfo@earthscan.co.uk](mailto:earthinfo@earthscan.co.uk).

Website: [www.earthscan.co.uk](http://www.earthscan.co.uk)

***The Ageing and Development Report: a summary*** (1999)

A summary of the full report is available in English, French and Spanish.

Free. Available at [www.helpage.org](http://www.helpage.org) in English, French and Spanish.

### Regular publications

#### ***Ageways***

A journal exchanging practical information on ageing and agecare issues, particularly good practice developed in the HelpAge International network. Free to carers, health workers, members of older people's groups and project staff working with or for older people in developing countries and East and Central Europe.

Published three times a year in English and Spanish (Horizontes). Free.

Also published in Ukrainian and Russian. Contact: Viktor Mishchenko, Ukrainian Fund for Charity and Health, Artyoma Street 55 'b, Kiev 252053, Ukraine. Tel: +380 44 219 1 418

#### ***Ageing and Development***

A regular briefing which aims to raise awareness of the contribution, needs and rights of older people and to promote the development of laws and policies that will bring a lasting improvement to the quality of life of disadvantaged older people. Free to policy makers, programme planners and researchers concerned with development and poverty eradication.

Published three times a year in English and Spanish (Tercera Edad y Desarrollo). Free.

**Unless otherwise stated, all the above can be ordered from: Publications orders, HelpAge International, PO Box 32832, London N1 9ZN, UK. Tel: +44 (0)20 7278 7778. Email: [cdobbing@helpage.org](mailto:cdobbing@helpage.org) or order at [www.helpage.org](http://www.helpage.org)**

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