POLICIES AND PROGRAMMES FOR OLDER PERSONS IN ALBANIA

Report of a Fact-Finding Mission
10 – 13 October 2011

Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA)
Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD)
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BACKGROUND TO THE MISSION

The Government of Albania, in a letter dated 10 June 2011 from the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities to the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, Division for Social Policy and Development, requested the provision of technical assistance regarding the situation of older persons in Albania.

In view of the request, the Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development approved an advisory mission to Albania, aimed at providing advisory services and developing a technical assistance framework on ageing in Albania.

The mission consisted of two UNDESA/DSPD staff members: Mr. Oleg Serezhin, Technical Cooperation Unit and Mr. Robert Venne, UN Programme on Ageing. The mission visited Albania from 10 to 13 October 2011.

General Objectives of the Mission were as follows:

A. To assess current socio-economic policies in order to identify areas for potential technical assistance and further advisory services as well as concrete interventions and actions required for addressing the issue of ageing in Albania;

B. To provide advice to the Government in building national capacity to develop, coordinate and implement policy measures to address ageing issues at the national level and to mainstream ageing issues across public and private sectors;

C. To brief representatives of the Ministry, other relevant Government agencies and major stakeholders on the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) and its second review and appraisal in 2011-2012 as well as the UNDESA technical cooperation mandate;

D. To identify further steps in conjunction with the UN Country Team in Albania for developing a framework for assistance on social issues to the Government of Albania.

SUMMARY OF ACTIVITIES

The mission started its activities by meeting with the Focal Point on Ageing in the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. The official provided an overview of the situation of older persons in Albania and pointed out that the retirement age for women is 60 and for men 65 years of age. The vast amount of emigration from Albania starting in the 1990s led to smaller families, an altered age structure because many emigrants tend to be younger and challenges to supporting the older generation because of the absence of younger family members. The Focal Point described services for older persons. 1650 older persons live in residential homes across the country and while some residential homes are operated by Government, there are also private residential institutions in Albania. In addition to residential facilities, the Government
would like to provide more ambulatory services as well as more day care centers for older persons. The Focal Point provided the mission with copies of the publication “The document of cross-sector policies on ageing: 2009-2013”, which contains an analysis of the current situation of older persons in Albania and a blue-print of future Government policy interventions with regard to demographic ageing and older persons.

The mission attended a parliamentary hearing of the draft legislation on ageing. Members of the Government, parliamentarians and civil society participated in the hearings. Hearings discussions confirmed that issues of ageing and support of older persons are very urgent for Albanian society. During the hearings, the Minister for Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities stated that Government policies have been decentralized and harmonized with the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing. 25% of Albanians will be older persons by 2025 and life expectancy is projected to rise to 80 years in that year. Currently, 33% of older persons suffer from at least one disease. Older persons receive most of services and medicine in health care centers around the country. A new strategy on social protection for older persons focuses on increasing the income for older persons, especially in remote and rural areas. 543,000 older Albanians receive energy supplements and there are five residential homes that are run by the Government, while six are privately run. In addition, there are eight day and community care centers. Overall, services for older persons have been improved and the budget in this regard has been increased by 40%. Standards for Government-run residential homes have been established and improved. During the International Day for Older Persons on 1 October 2011 there were several organized activities. Government plans to pilot more home services for older persons, improve social services and to encourage local Government to shoulder more responsibilities, e.g. service provision and enhancing age-adequate infrastructure. Civil society representatives took the floor thereafter and stressed more effective implementation of cross-sectoral policies for older persons. In addition, they demanded evaluation of residential homes, an information center for older persons and that local Government should play a greater role in implementing policies for older persons in the future. According to the civil society representatives, the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities should improve the standards of residential homes and create a strategy to communicate more effectively with older persons. Also, awareness raising on health and social issues as they relate to older persons is necessary as well as sensitivity toward older persons who wish to continue to work. With particular respect to the health sector, clinical protocols as well as geriatrics as a specialty in medical school are needed. Older persons occupy 40% of all hospital beds while their ratio of the general population hovers around 10%. Every health center should be equipped with a social services center. It was also criticized that Albania spends only 10% of its GDP on social services while 7% of all incomes go to the pension fund. Therefore, the draft law on social security needs to be improved. Due to the very high level of informal work, 60% of older persons receive only a minimum pension. In addition, care demands are rising since many children of older persons have emigrated. Besides increased demand for support services at home and for health services due to chronic diseases including geriatric care and more day care centers, there is also a need for psycho-social services. A law to protect older persons is needed to ensure that they will be able to enjoy their rights. This law should define social services, standards for
residential homes and their rights. An overall review of how much is spent on older persons and on which services is needed. Additionally, civil society representatives should become focal points during more governmental consultations. The Minister for Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities responded that 6.7% of GDP went to social services and currently this ratio should be at 9%. In addition, a new law has been drafted for older persons. A proposed fund for social assistance would provide resources for new day centers on the local level. A member from the opposition party pointed out that the draft law was not sufficiently consulted with NGOs and that there is no deadline for adoption, that policies for older persons are not monitored and evaluated, that there is a lack of services in rural areas and a lack of general data on older persons, that older persons are not prepared for retirement and that it is not clear how many older persons would like to use residential and day care centers. Another member of the Parliamentary Commission on Health and Social Issues suggested to remove the value added tax on bread, milk, flour etc. to make basic foods more affordable for older persons.

After the hearing, the mission met with parliamentarians who are members of the Parliamentary Commission on Health and Social Issues. They pointed out that geriatrics should be included in the social sciences as well as in medical studies and that priority should be given to older women, poor older persons and older persons residing in rural areas.

The mission met with representatives of the Social Insurance Institute and was informed that the Institute provides information on and administration of pension funds, but does not provide policy development. 3.2 million Albanians live in Albania while approximately 1.5 million live abroad. There was consensus that Albanians living abroad should be contributing to the domestic pension fund. Currently, the Institute works on bilateral agreements with Greece and Italy in this regard since both countries are hosts to the vast majority of Albanian emigrants. Overall, 62% of Albanians contribute to the pension fund, but only 50% of workers in rural areas do so due to higher informal work arrangements. Overall, there are 560,000 pensioners in Albania. The minimum pension in Albania is US $110, the maximum is double that while the average pension amounts to US $135 plus extra for electricity and basic food stuffs. Due to the low level of pensions, most Albanians work right up to retirement age to maximize the overall monthly pension amount. The Social Insurance is financed to 88% by contributions and covers the remaining 12% through other revenue. There is quite a substantial number of pensioners (e.g. military, police, and fire fighters) who receive a pension without having contributed to the system and there are very few private pension funds in Albania. In 2010 there was a reduction of the employer contribution to the pension. A possible area of cooperation between the United Nations and the Social Insurance Institute could be to support the research unit regarding a database on pension systems, which could inform policy makers in the Government.

The mission met with representatives of State Social Services, which is part of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities. State Social Services runs and administers residential centers for older persons in Albania and services 1650 permanent residents and clients who use day care centers. It was pointed out that
Government and civil society are involved in this endeavor and that there is a need for age-adequate infrastructure in the residential centers. Due to changes in the make-up of Albanian families, 20% of older persons live currently alone. Thus, there is demand for one center per province/district in Albania and by 2013 every municipality should have a day care center. Overall, there is a strong need for conducting a needs survey of older persons in Albania. To illustrate the living conditions of older persons in residential centers, the mission visited an Older People’s Home in Tirana.

Two social scientists informed the mission about the situation of older persons in Albania. While there is improved legislation, a new mid-term strategy and functioning institutions, lack of policy implementation due to a lack of engagement of all actors (e.g. business community) seems to be the main problem regarding policies that benefit older persons. Due to high youth unemployment, there are no provisions to keep older persons in the labour market beyond retirement age. In general, there is a lack of social statistical data on older persons. In addition, the number of residential and day care centers is limited given the overall older population and long-term care facilities do not exist. There is a lack of funds to study issues related to older persons and there is no degree in gerontology.

The Ministry of Health informed the mission that there are 400 health centres and polyclinics and that all retired persons are covered by health insurance, which includes medicine and medical procedures. While standards have been developed for hospitals, pharmacies and doctors, there are no statistics on costs in the health care sector, no budget line for the promotion of a healthy life style and no ombudsman for patients. Geriatrics is not taught in medical school in Albania and long-term care for older persons does not exist. There is a definite need for more ambulatory nurse services, especially in rural areas of the country and for special tools that would benefit older persons, such as wheelchairs, hearing aids or special shoes. While there is some support for care takers in big cities, there is no training of care takers in basic care tasks.

A representative from the People’s Advocate Office stated that older persons contact her office mostly to complain about the low level, delays and disputes about the overall amount of their pension. The People’s Advocate Office inspects all hospitals and residential homes of older persons.

During a meeting with the Health Insurance Institute it was pointed out that 3.4% of income is contributed to health insurance of which employer and employee pay 50% each. Health insurance covers all basic drugs as well as all medical procedures except dental and optical care for older persons. In addition, some ambulatory services are covered as well. Satisfaction surveys revealed a positive attitude towards the health care insurance system amongst older persons. Albania spends approximately US $100 on health costs on every older person per year. Only 25% of all health costs are covered by contributions to health care insurance while 75% are financed through taxes. There is no data on costs of certain procedures or on overall cost development.
The mission met with a representative of the Sant'Egidio Community, which runs a facility for patients with intellectual disabilities in Tirana and visited the Mother Theresa’s Sisters’ community/volunteer centre, which is a residential home for older persons, including some with intellectual disabilities.

The mission met with representatives of UNDP and UNFPA including the UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative to explore areas of possible cooperation regarding demographic ageing and older persons in Albania as well as other social issues where UNDESA/DSPD has expertise.

The mission also met the Deputy Minister of Finance, who noted that one of the objectives in the near future is to establish a stronger link between contributions to the pension fund and out-payments from the fund. In addition, there is discussion of a pension reform in 2012. The Government would like to create a multi-pillar system as outlined by the World Bank. Also, there are two laws under discussion on social benefits and health care.

During a meeting with two representatives of the Ministry of Education and Science, the mission was informed that there are vocational and educational programmes as well as post-secondary programmes for older persons and training in health care for students that would benefit older Albanians. There are no legal limitations on a student’s age in Albania and everyone willing or aiming to pursue higher studies may attend universities. Occasionally, older teachers fill in when there is need for experienced teachers.

A round table discussion with representatives from national NGOs was organized. The mission was informed that social spending is only 10% of GDP in Albania compared to 23% in EU countries and that before the 1990s an average pension amounted to 70% of the average wage while now is has decreased to only 30%. Over 60% of older Albanians receive only a minimum pension and 20% of older persons consider themselves lonely. With regard to health, 60% of older persons suffer from chronic diseases, 6% have lost autonomy and 40% of all hospital beds are occupied by older persons. While geriatrics is a component in the nursing faculty, it is not part of the curriculum at the medical university. There is a great need for home care in Albania and protocols and a guidebook on health problems of older persons are being prepared. There were calls for enhancing consultations between Government and civil society regarding proposed legislation and data collection. For instance, a working group was set up ten years ago to study the living conditions of older persons in Albania, but the results were never published. There is a need for a comprehensive study on ageing in Albania providing data disaggregated by age, sex and rural/urban areas. Overall, there is a lack of human and administrative capacity with regard to policies for older persons. There is no age-adequate infrastructure in the country and the need for a UN Special Rapporteur and/or an international convention on the rights of older persons with expressed. In addition, there is no systematic monitoring of implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action.

In a meeting with two staffers in the office of the Deputy Major of the Municipality of Tirana, it was pointed out that national strategies on social inclusion are the basis for
municipal policies. However, since infrastructure and financial resources are missing, social services provided by the city of Tirana are very limited. Thus, there is a major focus on decentralizing services to all communities. Two new departments on gender and minorities have been recently established in the city. While there are two day care centres in the city, it is planned to open five additional ones in the near future. Those day care centres could also serve children and women in an intergenerational approach. The two day care centres offer entertainment to 160 older persons and a third centre, which is multigenerational caters to poorer older persons and offer lunch. New urban planning established new standards that make new buildings more accessible to older persons. The mission visited one day care centre following the meeting at the office of the Deputy Major.

The mission met with the **Mayor of Municipality No. 2 in Tirana**. The municipality has 100,000 inhabitants and experiences sizeable immigration, largely from rural parts of Albania. Many poor older persons reside in municipality no. 2 and there are no residential homes or day care centres in this part of the city. 6,000 inhabitants are older and many have only a minimum pension, of which they often pay 40% for electricity, water, etc. Many older persons have no relatives or have been abandoned by their children. Since many older persons have to purchase higher quality medicine and shoulder the extra costs, many live in destitute situations. The municipality intends to create a database on older persons to have more reliable information and identified a day care centre as most needed in the near future.

A meeting with the Deputy Minister of the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities wrapped-up the mission activities. The Deputy Minister discussed various ageing issues. Among the urgent priorities for the Government is to pass a draft law for older persons and a pension reform. The Deputy Minister also mentioned that the Government plans to offer geriatric courses and services in the future.

**FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Government addresses the needs of older persons through a welfare approach, providing services, e.g. primarily through residential homes and day care centers as well as through hospitals and by administering medicine. Broader issues of population ageing are not among the major priorities for policy action by the Government at this time, despite projections of a significant increase in the percentage of older persons in the population within the next decades. The mission, however, would suggest that, given the projected acceleration of demographic ageing and high level of emigration since the 1990s, it is not too soon for the Government to undertake measures to encourage all major stakeholders to act in advance to meet the challenges of population ageing.

One major current need is for advocacy and sensitization at local and national levels about the importance of addressing issues of ageing, taking into consideration the recommendations of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the ECE Regional Implementation Strategy of 2002. Raising awareness can be done by a) sensitizing national policymakers (Government officials and parliamentarians) involved
in the design and implementation of socio-economic policies and programmes and, b) launching a national public information campaign to draw the attention of the wider society to the issues of ageing, to encourage healthy and active ageing and to promote a positive yet realistic image of older persons. The national public information campaign should have strong input from civil society organizations with the objective of creating participatory, bottom-up awareness.

Sensitization of policymakers and lawmakers can be done through meetings (round table discussions, seminars, workshops) organized for Government employees and parliamentarians. Specifically, a series of meetings on the following themes could be conducted: (1) the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the ECE Regional Implementation Strategy: goals and recommendations as related to the demographic situation in Albania; (2) taking action on national priorities on ageing; (3) undertaking the second cycle of the review and appraisal of MIPAA and identification of future actions on ageing.

The national infrastructure on ageing is underdeveloped. The mission noted a lack of coordination among government offices dealing with ageing and related socio-economic and demographic issues. Lack of coordination means that the concerns of older persons are not sufficiently integrated into the policies and programmes of various government entities.

Albania has developed some national research and analytical capacity on population ageing and development. Yet the financial and human resources are not sufficient to provide high quality analytical information to support evidence-based policy development. The restricted potential of fundamental and applied science in Albania prevents national researchers from addressing the main challenges of population and individual ageing in the country, while international cooperation in the area of population and development studies, including population ageing, remains limited.

In formulating its recommendations, the mission focused on measures aimed at strengthening the national capacity of Albania to address the challenges of its ageing society. The proposed recommendations are organized into four clusters representing essential elements of national capacity: (1) institutional infrastructure; (2) policy process and policy measures (3) research, data collection and analysis; and (4) human resources. UNDESA, along with the UN Country Team in Albania, can provide technical assistance for implementing some of these recommendations.

(1) Institutional infrastructure
It is recommended that the Government take a leading role in establishing a permanent national coordinating body that cooperates with academia and non-governmental organizations in designing policies and strategies on ageing with the wider support of the general public. Specifically it is recommended that the Government should:
• Improve coordination between various government offices and agencies and cohesion of policies and activities that have relevance to ageing issues.
• Ensure that a permanent national coordinating body has the authority and functional ability to mainstream ageing issues into various government offices, including those that until now have not had any specific policies and programmes on ageing.
• Decide whether coordinating functions could be assigned to the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities.
• Ensure that all major stakeholders (government, non-governmental organizations, especially organizations of older persons, academia and the private sector) are involved in the work of a coordinating body on ageing.

(2) Policy process and policy measures
Given the close inter-linkages between several parallel demographic and socio-economic processes, policy responses to challenges of population and individual ageing in Albania have to be addressed in a holistic and comprehensive manner. Issues of ageing should be addressed together with other demographic challenges, primarily changes of family structures and international migration. The mission thus advocates the integrative (mainstreaming) approach to policy responses to ageing. At the same time, the mission recognizes the importance of ageing-specific policy actions aimed at improving the quality of life of older persons.

A. Measures to integrate issues of ageing into national policy process:
• Address challenges of population ageing within the content of already existing policies and ensure full implementation.
• Include an evidence-based approach in the national policy process.
• Ensure the exchange of information and coordination among government entities responsible for economic, social and demographic policy and programmes.
• Include participatory components into all phases of the policy process. Involve older persons in consultations regarding policy and programmes aimed at addressing their needs.
• Organize participatory, bottom-up awareness campaigns aimed at promoting positive yet realistic images of older persons in society.
• Mainstream (integrate) the concerns of older persons and inter-generational relations into national strategic planning.
• Integrate the human rights perspective into all laws, policies and programmes that pertain to older persons.
• Make sure that all major stakeholders within and outside the government are aware of the existence and content of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and the ECE Regional Implementation Strategy.

B. Measures to promote ageing-specific policy actions:
• Review the draft legislation proposal “Care of Older Persons” and to organize round-table discussion as a part of the awareness campaign.
• Finalize bilateral agreements with countries to which most Albanian migrated (e.g. Italy and Greece). Such agreements should ideally include the establishment of contributions of émigrés to the Albanian pension fund.
• Consider realistic adjustments to the pension system to ensure reliable payments, but also a continuous flow of contributions. Thus, include more Albanians into the group of contributors to the pension fund.
• Ensure a reasonable minimum pension that allows for coverage of basic expenses based on an average basket of goods and services.
• Address age discrimination of older workers in the labour market and in the workplace.
• Consider policies and programmes aimed at supporting “ageing in place” instead of promoting the institutionalization of older persons.
• Establish a system of day care centres in all parts of the country that are capable of providing care services for older persons.
• Train sufficient staff to provide adequate services in day care centres.
• Train selected personnel in the health care sector in geriatric matters.
• Consider opening a geriatric hospital in Tirana or geriatric departments in the existing hospitals.
• Offer geriatric training to medical doctors and post graduate students.
• Include into information campaigns issues concerning the role and contribution of older generations in the family.
• Consider developing an integrated family policy.
• Establish school curricula to educate children on life-long development, including active and healthy life-styles, and inter-generational relations.
• Ensure age-adequate environments that are accessible and allow older persons to fully participate in society.
• Build capacity within government offices and within civil society organizations to better reflect the situation of older persons, their growing numbers and their vulnerabilities.

(3) Research, data collection and analysis
Further developing national analytical capacity on ageing that will support evidence-based policy formulation processes. In this connection the mission recommends to:
• Conduct a national study on ageing by analyzing existing demographic and socio-economic data on older persons in Albania based on the current census findings as a basis for policy development and improved policy implementation. The existing information should be supplemented by qualitative data. The purpose of such a study would be to provide a sufficient body of evidence for formulating recommendations for action.
• Consider establishing a national centre on demographic ageing and development with the major task of informing and supporting evidence-based policies and programmes. The Centre could be responsible, among other tasks, for introducing a national system of demographic, social and economic forecasts that will serve government bodies in charge of national socio-economic policy formulation; the forecasts, among other things will show how population ageing will impact the national economy and the pension system.
• Support the development of essential analytical capacity within government offices dealing with ageing issues.
Use data emanating from the national census in 2011 to serve as baseline data for future, more detailed assessment of the life quality of older persons.

Consider collecting precise data on national health care costs to adequately develop age-sensitive primary health care, long-term care and provision of medicine.

Collect information about older persons in view of the upcoming second review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in 2011-2012, focusing on a participatory, bottom-up manner.

(4) Human resources
Lack of funding, training, coordination and rotation of staff are responsible for the insufficient attention to the concerns of older persons in the policy and programmes of various government entities. It is recommended that the Government should establish a programme to:

- Train professionals within government, civil society organizations, academia and the private sector on the consequences of demographic ageing and the situation of older persons in Albania.
- Assess needs and formulate specific requests for international assistance in training on ageing.

DESA’S ASSISTANCE AND NEXT STEPS
These recommendations contain proposals to strengthen national capacity in Albania to respond to the challenges of population ageing. DESA’s Division for Social Policy and Development could assist the Government of Albania in several areas, working in partnership with the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities and other agencies as appropriate. Such partnership will target existing gaps in information and skills, identifying and engaging stakeholders, both internal and external to the government, who would be willing to collaborate on ageing activities.

UNDESA could facilitate work of the UN Country Team on ageing and cooperation with other UN entities and Agencies. In this connection, UNDESA could approach the organizations of the UN system to assist in conducting a study on ageing based on the findings of the national census in 2011 that will also study overall life quality of older persons in Albania resulting in cross-cutting needs assessment of older persons.

A workshop on enhanced data collection regarding older persons in view of the second review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan could be envisioned. Upon request, UNDESA could seek to identify resources for sponsoring such a workshop in Albania.

A round table can be organized with DESA support to review and discuss the draft law for older persons. All stakeholders will be invited to the round table and the results of the discussions and recommendations will serve as an input to the draft law.

UNDESA could also assist in promoting participatory methodologies in the work of relevant Ministries, especially providing training on social assessment methodology. UNDESA could assist in establishing links and partnerships with foreign research centres.
for demographic and population research.

UNDESA could assist in a nation-wide awareness campaign on demographic ageing and the needs of older persons creating a realistic image of ageing in Albania. The above mentioned round table on the proposed draft legislation for older persons can be part of the awareness campaign.

The Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities must weigh the benefits of these proposals and prioritize next steps. Following the Government’s consideration of this report, further discussion on the modalities of DESA’s assistance can take place at the request of the relevant Ministry or other government agency.

LIST OF ANNEXES

A: List of contacts
B: Mission Agenda
ANNEX A

List of contacts

From the Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities
- H.E. Ms. Filloreta Kodra, Deputy Minister
- Ms. Denada Dibra, National Focal Point on Ageing
- Mr. Mihal Naco, General Director, State Social Services
- Ms. Anisa Softa Ruseti, Training Coordinator, State Social Services
- Mr. Gezim Tushi, Social Services Expert, State Social Services
- Ms. Merita Beqiri, Chief, Sector for Inspection of Standards for Older People
- Dr. Resul Domi, Director, Tirana Aged House, State Social Services

From the Ministry of Finance
- H.E. Mr. Nezir Haldeda, Deputy Finance Minister

From the Ministry of Education and Science
- Ms. Rezarta Godo, Head of European Integration and International Cooperation Department
- Ms. Dorina Rapti, Head of VET Sector, Department of Pre-University Education

From the Ministry of Health
- Dr. Errol Como, Focal Point Geriatric Protocols

From the Municipality of Tirana
- Ms. Aferdita Zeri, Advisor on Social Issues
- Ms. Eva Pojani, Director of Social Services

From the Municipality No.2 of Tirana
- Mr. Elez Gjoza, Chief of office
- Ms. Ledi Ballhysa, Secretary of the Chief

From the People’s Advocate Office
- Ms. Anila Nepravishta, Deputy Ombudsman

From the Social Insurance Institute
- Ms. Evelina Koldashi, General Director
• Mr. Ali Emini, Deputy Director
• Mr. Hasan Hoxha, Deputy Director

**From the Health Insurance Institute**
• Mr. Naun Sinani, Adviser,
• Mr. Gazmend Koduzi, Director, Primary Care
• Ms. Laureta Mano, Chief Sector, Legal Department

**From the UN Country Team**
• Ms. Zineb Touimi-Benjelloun, UN Resident Coordinator and UNDP Resident Representative
• Ms. Doina Bologa, Country Director, UNFPA
• Dr. Manuela Bello, Assistant Representative, UNFPA
• Ms. Elida Nuri, National Programme Associate, UNFPA
• Ms. Entela Lako, Programme Analyst, UNDP

**From Civil Society**
• Ms. Kozara Kati, Executive Director, Albanian Center for Human Rights
• Prof. Dr. Edmond Dragoti, Tirana University, Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Social Work
• Prof. Asc. Dr. Merita Xhumari, Professor for Social Policy, Tirana University, Faculty of Social Sciences, Department of Political Sciences
• Prof. Dr. Isuf Kalo, Director, National Centre of Quality, Safety and Accreditation of Health Institutions
• Mr. Andi Seferi, Representative of Sant’Egidio Community
• Mr. Ilia Telo, President, Albanian Association of Demographers
• Mr. Kico Ziso, Manager, Albanian Association of Demographers
• Mr. Reshat Koci, Executive Director, Albanian Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics
• Mr. Alban Ylli, Albanian Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics
• Mr. Shaban Dervishi, Director, Albanian Pensioner’s Association
• Mr. Faik Xhani, Secretary, Albanian Pensioner’s Association
• Ms. Valbona Jaupllari, Executive Director, House of Europe
• Ms. Ermira Pirdeni, Executive Director, Albanian Society for All Ages
• Ms. Bora Panajoti, Albanian Society for All Ages
• Ms. Bukurie Skenderi, Albanian Society for All Ages
• Mr. Kondi Ilia, Albanian Society for All Ages
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<tr>
<td>Mr. Oleg Serezhi</td>
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<td>Social Affairs Officer,</td>
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<td>Technical Cooperation Unit,</td>
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<td>Division for Social Policy and Development,</td>
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<td>Department of Economic and Social Affairs</td>
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<td>Mr. Robert Venne</td>
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<td>Division for Social Policy and Development,</td>
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<td>Department of Economic and Social Affairs</td>
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<td><strong>Mission Dates:</strong> 10 – 13 October, 2011</td>
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<th><strong>Sunday, October 9</strong></th>
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<td>Arrival in Tirana and accommodation in hotel</td>
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<th><strong>Monday, October 10</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>09:00 – 09:45 Meeting with Ms. Denada Dibra, National Focal Point on Ageing, Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities</td>
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<td>10:00 – 11:30 Hearing on ageing issues at the Albanian Parliament</td>
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<td>11:30 – 12:00 Meeting with Parliamentary Commission on Health and Social Issues</td>
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<td>14:30 – 15:15 Meeting with Ms. Evelina Koldashi, General Director, Mr. Ali Emini, Deputy Director and Mr. Hasan Hoxha, Deputy Director, Institute of Social Insurance</td>
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<td>15:30 – 16:30 Meeting with Mr. Mihal Naco, General Director, State Social Services, Ms. Anisa Softa Ruseti, Training Coordinator, State Social Services, Mr. Gezim Tushi, Social Services Expert, State Social Services and Ms. Merita Beqiri, Chief, Sector for Inspection of Standards for Older People</td>
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<tr>
<td>17:00 – 18:00 Visiting Older People’s Home in Tirana and meeting with Dr. Resul Domi, Director, Tirana Aged House, State Social Services</td>
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<th><strong>Tuesday, October 11</strong></th>
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<tr>
<td>09:00 – 10:00 Meeting with Prof. Asc. Merita Xhumari and Prof. Dr. Edmond Dragoti, Tirana University, Faculty of Social Sciences</td>
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<td>10:30 – 11:15 Meeting with Prof. Dr. Isuf Kalo, Director, National Centre of Quality, Safety and Accreditation of Health Institutions and Dr. Errol Como, Focal Point of Geriatric Protocols, Ministry of Health</td>
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<td>11:15 – 12:15 Meeting with Ms. Anila Nepravishta, Deputy Ombudsman, People’s Advocate Office</td>
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<td>12:30 – 13:15 Meeting with Mr. Naun Sinani, Adviser, Health Insurance Institute, Mr. Gazmend Koduzi, Director Primary Care, Health Insurance Institute, and Ms. Laureta Mano, Legal Department, Health Insurance Institute</td>
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<td>16:30 – 18:30 Meeting with Mr. Andi Seferi, Representative of Sant’Egidio Community and visit to Mother Theresa’s sisters community/volunteer center</td>
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<td>19:00 – 21:00 Reception by Albanian NGO representatives concerned with older persons’ issues hosted by the</td>
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