

DESCRIPTION FOR THE GENERAL PUBLIC

In the mainstream of information about the Polish society one can distinguish information about the ageing of Poland's population. One of the main reason of this phenomenon is the average human lifespan of Poles that is increasing, but also the number of children being born that is much lower in comparison with ones recorded couple of decades ago. Additionally, numerous age groups, the so called first wave of baby boomers, started to reach retirement age which is the reason for a significant increase in the share of the elderly in the total population.

Population forecasts indicate the change in relation between the number of people in productive age and the number of people who left labour market because of age. Researchers usually study the consequences of this phenomenon in the context of its impact on economy (e.g. stability of pension systems or health care), however the change of the above mentioned relation applies not only to the number of producers and consumers, but also to the number of potential caregivers and people in need of care.

There are studies showing that physical abilities of both men and women are gradually diminishing with age and the most important reason for using care is the bad health status and the low level of fitness. It is also known that the institutional care supply is already fulfilling just a very small fraction of older peoples' care needs in Poland. Meeting these needs is realized mainly by care provided by the family network's members. However, based on the research available the supply of this type care is predicted to decrease mainly due to changes in the family model.

There are relatively few studies in the Polish literature dealing with the future demand for care among older people with limited independence. This project attempts to contribute to the field by performing a study that includes changes of the population age structure, changes of health status and changes of the family model and living arrangements. The aim of the project is to prepare projections of future demand for care among people aged 65 years and over in Poland. Including in the projection the information about the elderly's family situation, which allows for evaluation of potential care resources within family networks, is supposed to allow the estimation of future demand for formal care (provided by public or private institutions) and informal care (provided mainly by family members).

This study is a strictly quantitative study and is using many data sources. By taking advantage of survey data the changes of the health status and family situation (living arrangements) of seniors will be analyzed. Integration of the above results with population projections by age and sex will allow for preparing results including health status and the family situation of old-aged people. On the basis of that there will be possibility to obtain answers to the following questions: what is the scale of the demand for care because of limited independence due to health reasons? What will be the minimal demand for formal care in the future, that is the share of people in need of formal care because of family situation?