MEASUREMENT OF WELL-BEING OF OLDER PEOPLE: TOWARDS ENHANCEMENT OF CURRENTLY AVAILABLE INDICATORS

INGA GAIŽAUSKAITĖ, Lithuanian Social Research Centre, Vilnius, Lithuania, inga.gaizauskaite@lstc.lt

In the context of the issues posed by population ageing we are currently carrying out four-year research project "Construction of Wellbeing of Older People: Politics of Empowerment, Indicators of Monitoring and Voice of Older People" (DOTSUT-254 (09.3.3-LMT-K-712-01-0063). Based on global and European measures, Lithuania has very low rankings on a number of aspects of wellbeing of older people (OP). For example, overall AgeWatch index for OP in Lithuania was 43.2 in 2015 and it was below the neighbouring countries (55.2 in Latvia and 64.9 in Estonia) (HelpAge 2015). At the same time, the architects of welfare state (WS) programmes in Lithuania (and, to a certain extent, in Europe, too) do not have a comprehensive and consistent system of indicators that would allow measuring the wellbeing of older people (Labonté et al. 2011; UNECE 2016). In order to improve older people's wellbeing, the project is aimed at theoretical and empirical studies of constructing welfare policies for older people (OP) in modern society on the level of politicians, practitioners and individuals, assessing the existing level of older people's wellbeing and offering innovative indicators for wellbeing monitoring.

The presentation will shortly cover the main reasoning and idea of the overall project. However, further it will focus on one of the tasks of the project, i.e. critical evaluation of the existing indicators for OP's wellbeing monitoring, conceptual justification and methodological approval of indicators that are less developed today. Three topics will be presented for discussion: areas of wellbeing of OP's that need further development of indicators; methodological issues of surveying in populations of older people and obtaining reliable data; preliminary plan of empirical research in the Baltic states.

References

HelpAge, (2015). GAWI – Global AgeWatch Index. Available: http://www.helpage.org/global-agewatch/

Labonté, R. Abdullahel, H., Kauffmann, X. E. (2011). Indicators of Social Exclusion and Inclusion: A Critical and Comparative Analysis of the Literature. *Exchange Working Papers*, 2 (8).

UNECE. (2016). Recommendations on Ageing-related Statistics. Prepared by the Task Force on Ageing-related Statistics. New York and Geneva: United Nations. Available: http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=44983