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The “Neoumanist” Association for Education (NAE) is a non-governmental organisation registered with the Ministry of Justice of Republic of Moldova in November 2000. It provides support for the elderly and people with disabilities in the Strășeni district.

**In 2013, we were the recipients of the United Nations Award Promoting Human Rights for our work in caring for the elderly and championing their rights.**

## MISSION

Improving the quality of life of the most vulnerable groups of society (elderly, people with disabilities, women) through providing basic necessities and medical, social and spiritual assistance.

- We partner with local and state governments to identify needs within the community.
- We involve the community in program implementation to raise awareness and address the issues facing these groups of society.
- We believe that the best assistance is that which enables people to develop themselves.
- We help individuals better utilize the resources available for meeting their basic needs and for gaining greater economic, social and spiritual fulfilment.

## VISION

A world of equality and a decent life for all human beings regardless of race, creed, gender, age or social status.

## OUR GOALS

- Improve the quality of life for the most vulnerable groups of society: the elderly, women and people with disabilities
- Support vulnerable persons attain satisfactory and decent standards of living
- Increase and improve community interactions

Share good practice and experience with government agencies and other NGOs in Moldova to establish similar projects

## PROJECTS:

1. Day Care Center – 2003-present / helping 280 elderly/month.
2. Home for Elderly-2005-present/ 20 elderly
3. Home Care Team Nr.1 (17 villages of the Straseni District)- 2006-present/ 40 elderly/month
4. Home Care in Straseni- 2012-2016/ 30 elderly/month
5. Home Care Team Nr.2 (13 villages of Straseni District)- 2017/ 40 elderly/month

## **Information for the Committee on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights**

### **On the extent to which the economic and social rights of elderly people are protected and fulfilled in Republic of Moldova**

#### **Issues related to the specific provisions of the Covenant (arts. 6-15)**

During the last four years, the Ministry of Labour, Social Protection and Family, as well as Ministry of Health, have collaborated with NGO's in elaborating the Framework-Regulation for organization and operation of the Centre for elderly persons' placement and minimum quality standards" No. 569 of dated July 29, 2013, Framework-Regulation of the Social Homecare Service and minimum quality standards.

Together with the National Homecare Network, we have organized round tables and meetings with Ministries' representatives and National Health Insurance Company, in order to analyse and lobby for different legislative changes and as well to raise the price for the medical Homecare services .

#### **Article 6**

##### **Paragraph 1 — Right to work**

##### **Retired persons have restricted opportunities to get employed**

Starting with 2013, the Ministry of Social Protection proposed amendments to the Labour Code, which allowed employers not to extend the employment contract with pensioners. If they insist on staying in the labour market, they are forced to give up their pension.

The pensioners are constraint to work as their pension is very small not covering even the basic needs.

In the Republic of Moldova, the minimum pension is 860 lei, about 40 EUR. The average pension for retirement at 01.01.2016 amounted to 1191.8 lei, about 56 EUR. In the rural areas the pension level it is a lot lower than the average in urban areas.

In the same time, National Bureau of Statistics informs that in the first semester of 2016 minimum of subsistence constituted in average 1813,7 lei (about 86 EUR) per month/ per person, increasing in comparison with the first semester of 2015 by 5,2%.

In 2017 the Parliament passed amendments to the Labour Code by which the employers will be able to stop the contracts with the person one he/she will reach the retirement age. By those provisions the elderly are in fact prohibited to get a job after retirement.

#### **Article 9, paragraphs 93, 94**

##### **Republic of Moldova marked by an unfair social insurance system**

Used Sources: National Bureau of Statistics, Human development Report, World Bank Statistics

<http://www.statistica.md/newsview.php?l=ro&idc=168&id=5343>

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<http://www.statistica.md/category.php?l=ro&idc=103>

<http://www.mec.gov.md/ro/content/analiza-indicatorilor-saraciei>

[http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2015\\_human\\_development\\_report.pdf](http://hdr.undp.org/sites/default/files/2015_human_development_report.pdf)

<http://data.worldbank.org/country/moldova?view=chart>

According to the National Bureau of Statistics, at the beginning of 2016 in Republic of Moldova were registered 592,6 thousand persons aged 60 years and over, representing 16,7% of the total resident population of the country. About 60% of the total number of elderly people are women and 58% live in rural areas. Every third person is aged between 60-64 years and 13,3% are people who are more than 80 years old.

For 1,000 inhabitants aged 60 and over, there are approximately 50 deceased persons on average each year, the elderly mortality rate being higher in the rural area (58 deaths per 1000 population versus 39 urban deaths) and for men (58 deaths per 1000 population to 45 deaths for women of that age).

Under Law 156 on the Pension System, article 41. Retirement ages: From 1 July 2019, the standard retirement age will be 63 years for men and, from 1 July 2028, the standard retirement age for women will reach the same age. (till 2017- the retirement age for women was 57 years and for men 62).

Considering that, the average life expectancy in the Republic of Moldova in 2016 constituted 72,2 years, including 68,1 years for men and 76,1 years for women, retired persons will not beneficiate of pensions and other social security services more than 13,1 years. This, despite the fact that the contribution period is 35 years. This fact annuls the state's argument related to the lack of resources in what concerns social protection of elderly.

According to European statistic, life expectancy for EU in 2016, reached 83.3 years for women, and 77.9 years for men this is justifying the increase of retirement age in the European countries.

### **The allowance for the cold period of the year not covering the basic needs of elderly in terms of heating up their houses**

The allowance during winter period 2016-2017, was 315 lei/ approximately 15 euro. As we mentioned above, the average pension in 2016 was 56 euro. As an average during the winter period, an elderly has around 70 EUR for facing the basic needs.

For heating a regular apartment of 53 m<sup>2</sup>, the monthly cost can reach over 50 EUR. It means that almost all the pension is spent to cover the heating bill. Of course there are other bills, such as electricity, telephone, in urban areas, water and canalization. Plus costs of medications and food, the elderly are meeting very big financial lack for facing the winter period (in Moldova the heating season starts in November and finishes in April).

In the rural areas, where the pensions are even smaller, the elderly are heating their houses with wood and coal. Depending on how cold the winter is, a household needs 3-5 m<sup>3</sup> of wood and approximately a ton (1000kg) of coal. The prices for 2017: 1 m<sup>3</sup> of wood: 510 lei- 25,5 EUR (without transportation); 1000kg of coal: 4300 lei- 215 EUR.

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**All of these costs are way over an elderly available budget. Most of our project's beneficiaries are not heating their houses and apartments, unless the foreign donors are not helping them.**

## **Article 11 Paragraph 1 — Right to continuous improvement of the living level**

### **Republic of Moldova registers a continuous regress in ensuring the highest living level**

Although the pension it has been indexed every year, the indexation is so small, that this does not lead to improving of the living level. Elderly are a vulnerable group of society in terms of exposure to poverty risk. The poverty rate for this population was 12.8% above the national average.

According to official data of the National Bureau of Statistics, in 2015, the absolute poverty rate was 9.6%. The absolute poverty line per month averaged 1378.9 lei per person. A person is considered poor if average monthly expenses are less than the poverty threshold.

Year after year, the situation for elderly didn't change. More and more elderly are asking to be helped by NGO's. Neoumanist Association has waiting lists for all the implemented projects.

Elderly in Moldova continue to pass an everyday Survival Test. It is a cruel test, especially for elderly from rural areas.

Elders of Moldova continue to receive pensions below the subsistence minimum. Most of the elderly in Moldova can be considered poor, because the average monthly expenses are less than the poverty threshold (as it is mentioned in the statistics above).

All the prices went up: For example Electricity raised up with 21 % (2015: we paid 1,90/kw, 2016: 2,30/kw). Prices for food went up, for example the price for oil raised with 25 %, butter with 23%, oat for porridge- with 51%, eggs- with 36%. This situation makes even more difficult for elderly to face the expenses.

## **Article 11 Paragraph 2 — Measures to ensure access to water and sanitation services**

### **People outside of the capital city have low access to water and sanitation services**

Even though republic of Moldova has a National Strategy for Regional Development, a lot of district's villages and even cities face the lack of water supply and canalization system.

In 2016 more than 816 thousand people had access to centralized sewerage services, accounting for 23.0% of the total population. In the urban area, more than 784.5 thousand persons had access to centralized sewerage services, accounting for 51.7% of the urban population of the country, and from rural areas 31.6 thousand persons benefited from sewerage services, representing 2.0% of the country's rural population.

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Currently in the country there are water supply system of 48 municipalities and towns, and 647 rural localities, representing 41.4% of the country's localities. Neoumanist Association is providing services in the District of Straseni, 21 km from the Chisinau, the capital of Moldova. For many years the water system wasn't working. Even those who live in flats (with 9 floors) didn't have running water; they brought water from the outside fountains. In the beginning of 2000s, Straseni faced an increased number of Hepatitis, because of the lack of running water, bad canalization system and bad quality of water within outside fountains.

This situation can repeat, because of the fact that 12 km of pipes coming from Micauti region to Straseni, are very old and every day, there are several pipe accidents, which can lead to stopping the water supply to Straseni and villages around- 40.000 of household consumers.

The pipes are old and after the accidents, the bad metals from them are going to the water system and coming to final consumers.

The local authorities have elaborated a technical plan of changing the pipes; the costs are equal to the local annual budget, that's why they have appeal to the National Funds, where the request have been rejected. In this case Staseni can remain in the nearest future with no running water, again.

## **Article 12 Paragraph 1 — Physical and mental health of the population**

### **Elderly are facing a regress in the enjoyment of their right to health**

According to our internal statistic the health of elderly people is worsening every year. This is especially relevant for rural areas. The family doctors have especially appointed hours when they go to the villages. Because of the large numbers of patients they do not have time for proper consultations for elderly. Most of the elderly have no physical capacity, due to the age to come to the District polyclinics to make laboratory and medical checks.

Another problem is the increasing number of elderly with Dementia, Alzheimer and other psycho-neurological problems. Most of the elderly are not correctly diagnosed and relatives are not prepared and have no abilities to take care of them at home. Neoumanist is receiving almost every day calls from relatives who are asking where to place an elderly with Alzheimer or other psycho-neurological problem. There are no special centres nor services of any kind for them in Moldova.

Advanced age causes many health problems, including a greater risk of chronic long-term illness. According to the Household Budget Survey data, about 69% of elderly people suffer from chronic diseases, the highest prevalence being recorded for diseases of the circulatory system (48.1%), diseases of the osteoarticular system (15.8%), endocrine diseases, Nutrition and metabolism (9.6%) and diseases of the digestive system (7.8%).

About two-thirds of elders appreciate their health status as satisfactory, every third considers them bad or very bad, and 5.7% of elderly people have declared health as good. Rural elderly (64.4%) more often declare a satisfactory state of health than those in the urban environment (62.8%), while bad or very bad health is more commonly reported by the elderly in the urban environment (32.1% compared to 29.5% in rural areas).

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