

Socijalni rad sa starim ljudima u razdoblju  
štednje i urušavanja socijalne države

Social work with older people during the  
period of austerity measures and  
disintegrating welfare state

Dr. Jana Mali  
Fakultet za socijalni rad  
Univezitet u Ljubljani

# The topic of presentation

- At the beginning of 2012 the realisation of two laws, the law on social welfare incomes and the law on asserting public funds, began.
- Both laws have strong impact on good quality of old age and on social work with older people.
- Research in which we conducted interviews with older people, users of social services and social workers, and investigate the effects of this new social welfare legislation.

# Social work with older people

- In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, the older generation represents a major challenge for social work in terms of concepts, methods and skills required for work with older people.
- Integrated understanding of the individual and his/her needs, and in the assertion of the user as a partner in the helping process in order to foreground their right to choose different kinds of help.

# Social work with older people

- Social workers advocate an active role for older people in the process of help, demonstrating in this way older people's social role and importance.
- Older people are not simply passive users of help, but also co-creators of life during the late stages of their life courses.
- The approach used in social work therefore helps to eliminate prejudices against older people and the idea that they are parasites on social welfare, while drawing attention to the possible new forms of coexistence of various age groups.

- “I also think that it's nonsense that my children must now give money to me so that I can have good life, I don't know how I'd live on this money in a city, in some rented apartment.”



**Tudi živalim ni več lahko!**

- “I spend a lot of money for the rent and medicines, because I have diabetes and other illnesses. Eventually I'm left with little money, and I spend it on food, special food, because of my diabetes. I'd like to buy some new clothes, but I can't afford it. But that doesn't worry me much – old rags will do. What worries me more is food, I like milk very much but I won't be able to afford it.”



- “My husband and I will have to be more economical, because only he has a pension. We need to have money to pay the utility bills. We will turn on heating only when it is very cold. We will save on electricity (radio, washing machine).”



- “It is difficult when you are unable to perform social work for most of the time, that is, to collaborate with people in order to improve their lives. And it is more difficult to work in this way because the legislation increasingly restricts us.”





- “... I find especially annoying recent provisions relating to older, sick and disabled people, because they need help from others but this is not taken into account. The legislation treats in the same way those who are capable of work and those who are not. For them it is more difficult, since they are discriminated against and it's not in accordance with the code.”



- “I went there when I had some question regarding the conditions for acquiring the right. I don't intend to go to CSD any more, because I don't need any help. I don't expect any help from them, because they have too much work with papers and have no time for a conversation.”



# Pitanja za raspravu/Questions

- Kakve su posljedice krize na području grada Dubrovnik?
- Kakve utjecaje ponosi kriza na život starih ljudi, članove njihove obitelji i druge pružatelje skrbi?
- Kakva pitanja i dileme postoje u socijalnom radu sa starim osobama najčešće na području grada Dubrovnik? Kako njih rješavate?
- Primjeri dobre prakse socijalnog rada sa starim ljudima u novim uvjetima!
- What are the consequences of crisis in the area of town Dubrovnik?
- How the crisis influence on older people's life, their family members and other carers?
- What are the most frequent questions or dilemmas in social work with older people in the area of town Dubrovnik? How do you resolve them?
- Examples of good practical social work with older people in new circumstances!