



Challenges of long-term care in the Western Balkans

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The agenda

- 10.00-10.20 Introduction
Kai Leichsenring
- 10.20-10.50 Presentation of the study 'Long-term care of older persons and persons with disabilities in the Western Balkans'
Nataša Todorović and Milutin Vračević
- 10.50-11.20 Comments and discussion

Definitions and terminology

The definition of long-term care (LTC) at EU level

*“Long-term care encompasses a range of **services and support for people who are dependent over a long period of time on help** with their daily living. This need is usually the result of disability caused by frailty and various health problems and therefore may affect **people of all ages**. But the great majority of the recipients of long-term care are older people.”*

SPC/ECS, 2014: 9

Definitions and terminology

The definition of long-term care (LTC) by OECD

*“Long-term care is the care for **people needing support in many facets of living over a prolonged period of time**. Typically, this refers to help with so-called activities of daily living (ADL), such as bathing, dressing, and getting in and out of bed, which are **often performed by family, friends and lower-skilled caregivers or nurses**.”*

Colombo et al., 2011 - OECD

Definitions and terminology

The definition of long-term care (LTC) by the WHO

“Long-term-care systems enable older people, who experience significant declines in capacity, to receive the care and support of others consistent with their basic rights, fundamental freedoms and human dignity. These services can also help reduce the inappropriate use of acute health-care services, help families avoid catastrophic care expenditures and free women – usually the main caregivers – to have broader social roles.”

WHO - <https://www.who.int/ageing/long-term-care/en/>

Definitions and terminology

Emerging long-term care systems

Social care system

Services
Residential care
Providers
Professions
Methods
Legal Framework
Policies

The formal –
informal care
divide

Volunteers

The health-social care divide

Long-term care
linked-in, co-ordinated,
integrated?

Identity - Policies - Structures -
Functions - Processes -
Resources/Funding

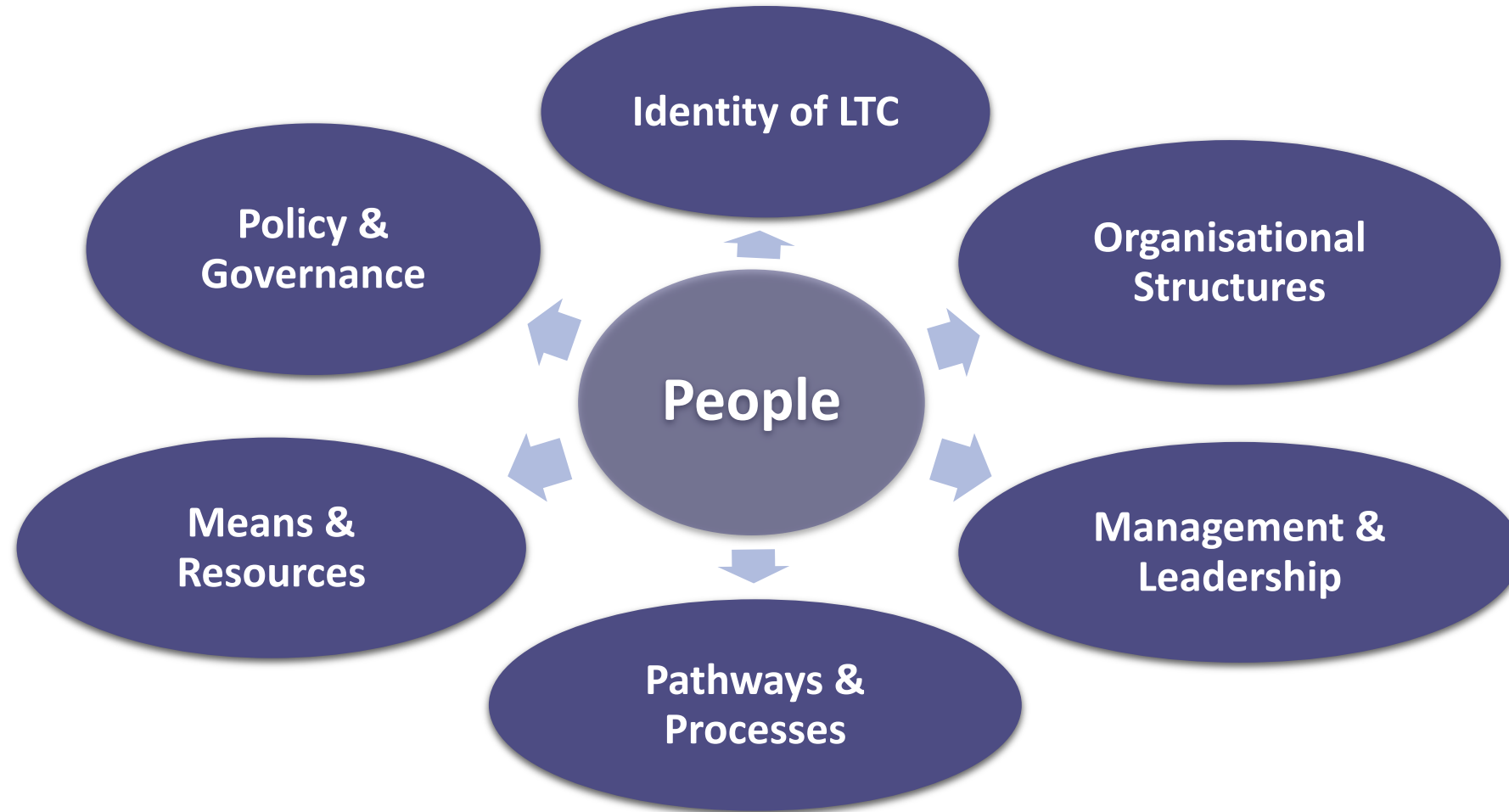
Users

Informal carers:
family, friends ...

Health care system

Hospitals - Services
Providers
Professions
Primary Care & GPs -
Methods
Legal Framework
Policies

Strategies to shape the elements of an integrated long-term care system



The European Pillar of Social Rights and the EU Care Strategy

European Pillar of Social Rights

Principle 18: Long-term care

Everyone has the right to affordable long-term care services of good quality, in particular home-care and community-based services.

- Addressing long-term care at a European level



Almost 90% of the formal care workforce are women

7.7 million

women do not work because of unpaid care responsibilities

Investing in care can generate an additional

13.6 million

jobs in the EU by 2030



In 2019, only 27% of children at risk of poverty and social exclusion were enrolled in early childhood education and care compared to 35% for the general population of children

Around 1/3

of households with long-term care needs do not use home care services because they cannot afford them

The WHO approaching long-term care

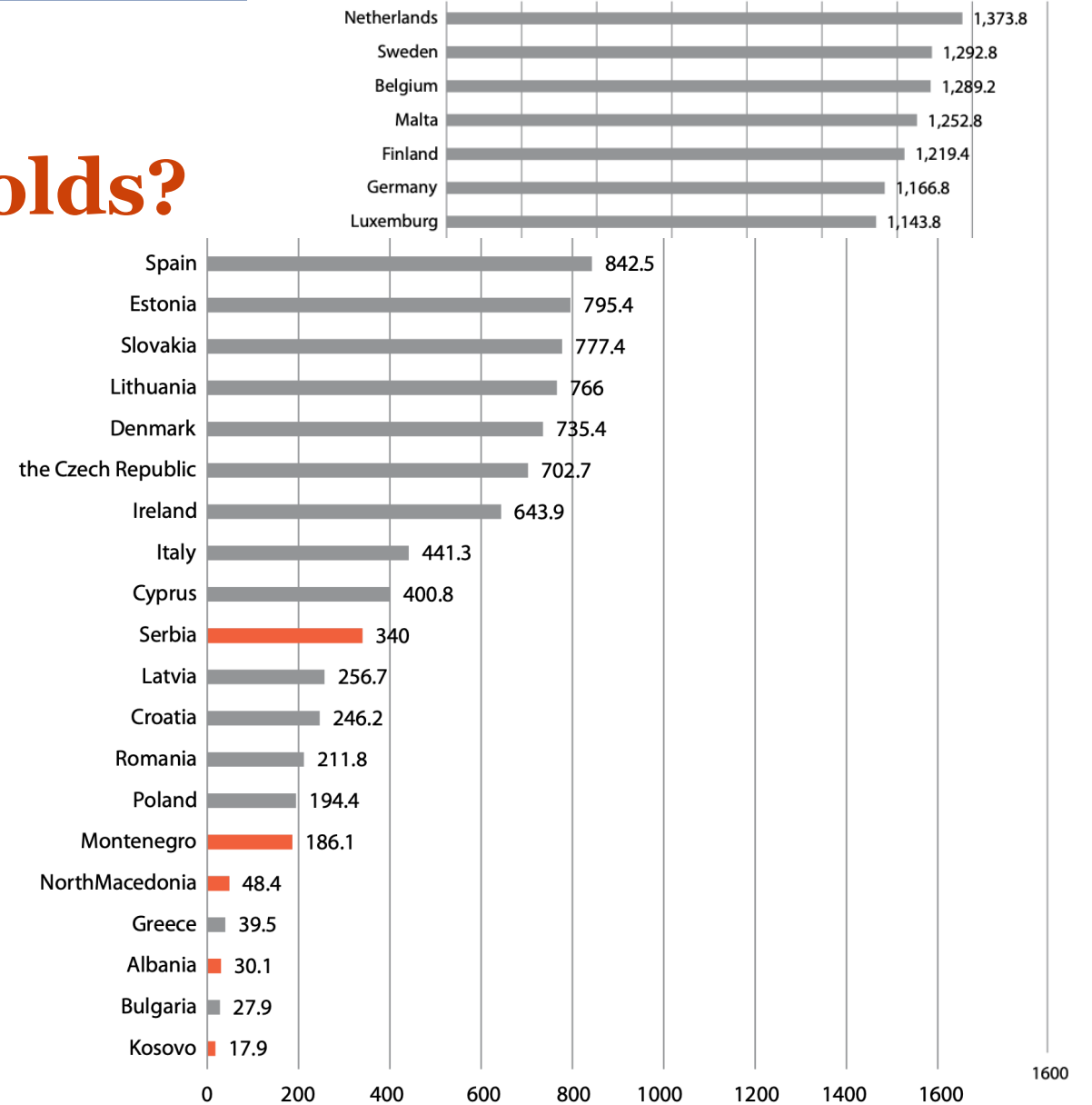
- First World report on ageing and health (2015)
- Global strategy and plan of action on ageing and health (2016)
 - New conceptual model of healthy ageing
- United Nations 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development
- Major reforms to health and long-term care systems prioritizing interventions that optimize older people's physical and mental capacities over their life course:
 - More integration within the health system and between health and social-care services needed
- Agreement with EU Commission 2023

The EU Accession countries and long-term care

- Rapid ageing ahead: rising longevity, but with increasing care needs
- Brain drain and care drain – workforce shortage
- Rudimentary LTC service structure
- De-institutionalisation programmes
- Reliance on informal care, i.e. the family, i.e. women
 - Reluctance of policymakers to invest in LTC structures and governance
 - Dependency on third party funding

The way ahead: Towards which thresholds?

Number of places in care homes per
100,000 inhabitants



Source: Eurostat; Dakič et al., 2023

The speakers

Nataša Todorović and Milutin Vračević

Red Cross Serbia

- Education: Master of Public Health and PhD candidate (Belgrade University, Medical School)
- Research focus: effects of demographic ageing, in particular on elder abuse and different aspects of care (long-term care systems, informal caregivers)
- Active in advocacy for an improved quality of life of older persons
- Representatives at the International Network for the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA) and the Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People (GAROP)
- Awards: International Rosalie S. Wolf Award in Elder Abuse Prevention (INPEA, 2018)
- Co-authors of multiple scientific papers and publications