

## Commission for Social Development Sixty-third session

### In-person Side Event

#### Social development in ageing societies: advancing in deinstitutionalization of care from a person-centered approach

Tuesday, 11 February 2025, 1:15 – 2:30pm  
Conference Room 12

#### Background

The adoption of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) and the Political Declaration at the 2002 Second World Assembly on Ageing marked a significant milestone in advancing the vision of 'building a society for all ages'. At the Assembly, Member States emphasized the importance of empowering older persons and fostering intergenerational solidarity to achieve cohesive societies. As we build momentum towards the upcoming Second World Summit for Social Development, there is a renewed chance to address the challenges and leverage the opportunities of population ageing through strengthened solidarity, social inclusion, and social cohesion. These themes resonate deeply with the broader aim of ensuring that no one is left behind, particularly in the context of an ageing global population.

Long-term care and support have been a critical area of focus under the implementation of the Madrid Plan of Action. Key recommendations from the Plan in this area include improving the coordination of primary health care, long-term care and support, and social services while encouraging older persons to actively participate in planning and decision-making processes. The Plan highlights the necessity of comprehensive community-based care and support systems to prevent unnecessary institutionalization and promote ageing in place. Additionally, it recognizes the central role family members play in caregiving, emphasizing the need for greater support to ensure this essential work is sustainable and equitable. Women caregivers, in particular, often face economic and social challenges that require targeted policies and resources to address. Strengthening formal and informal care and support systems, alongside adequate caregiver support, is essential to meeting the evolving needs of older persons.

Recent data on long-term care and support systems in Europe highlights regional disparities, challenges, and opportunities. For example, data show that Southern Europe predominantly relies on family caregivers, whereas Northern Europe emphasizes institutional and community-based services. The World Health Organization reports critical gaps in resources, workforce, and accessibility across long-term care and support systems. As ageing populations drive increasing demand, integrated approaches, such as combining formal and informal care, are essential to addressing regional differences and ensuring effective care delivery.

In Spain, IMSERSO has led efforts to shift from a residential care model to a person-centered, community-based approach. The National Strategy for a New Care Model prioritizes prevention, user participation, and fostering cultural change. Its key focus areas include enhancing care coordination, expanding affordable housing options, and advancing community-based models, particularly in rural areas. Programs such as 'Plan Cuidadoras' aim to dignify caregiving work, empower caregivers, and support alternatives to institutionalization. These efforts align with international trends and demonstrate the importance of enabling older persons to live independently and with dignity in their communities.

As the world's population continues to age, sustainable long-term care and support systems are vital for advancing social development. The Second World Summit for Social Development provides an important opportunity to address these issues and ensure meaningful participation of older persons in discussions about the future of social development. While the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action laid a strong foundation for social development, they provided limited focus on the demographic realities of population ageing and the specific needs and contributions of older persons. A new political declaration should reflect these dynamics, building on the principles of the outcomes of the Second World Assembly on Ageing, and integrating ageing societies into global recovery and sustainable development agendas.

## Objectives

This side event, co-organized by IMSERSO, the Permanent Mission of Spain to the United Nations, and UNDESA, in collaboration with WHO, aims to raise awareness about the significance of population ageing and advocate for a person-centered model of long-term care. By framing the discussion within a social development perspective, the event seeks to highlight the importance of this issue in the context of the forthcoming Second World Summit on Social Development. It calls for a cultural shift toward community-based care systems that empower older persons, promote their autonomy, and ensure their inclusion in society. Spain aims to lead this transformative change and foster global dialogue on innovative and sustainable approaches to long-term care.

## Agenda and Speakers

Moderated by **Manuel Veguin Garcia** Head of International Relations, Spanish Institute of Older Persons and Social Services (IMSERSO)

*Opening remarks and presentation on care of older people*

**Mayte Sancho** General Director, Spanish Institute of Older Persons and Social Services (IMSERSO)

*Mainstreaming ageing in the World Summit on Social Development*

**Julia Ferre** Social Affairs Officer, UN Department of Economic and Social Affairs – Programme on Ageing

*The future of long-term care in Europe: challenges and opportunities*

**Adelina Comas Herrera** London School of Economic and Political Science, GOLTC

*Age-friendly cities*

**Werner Obermeyer** Director, WHO Office at the United Nations

*Interactive Dialogue*