Aging in Bulgaria
Key Takeaways from TDD on Aging cities

• Policy at national level formulated – strategies, guidance documents
• Integrated policy including: infrastructure, housing, social, healthcare, lifelong learning
• Institutional framework established: cooperation, collaboration, coordination
• Municipalities (local level) empowered for implementation of the national policy; enabling tools: identified at local level
• Re-thinking of city planning to take account of aging;
• Participatory approach, including on implementation: example: PPPs
Key implications for Bulgaria: Some facts:

- Population: 7 364 570
- Sofia (capital city): 1 291 591 (17%)
- Population in cities: 5 339 001 (72,5%)
- Population in rural areas: 2 025 589 (27,4%)
- 1/4 of the rural population: 65+ y.
Key trends:

• Economic transformation: transition from planned to market economy;
• Emigration: mostly young people: to EU, US, Canada
• Low birth rate: consequence of economic decline in the 90s
• Concentration of the population in the cities
• Aging population: mainly in rural areas
• Depopulation of some areas: abandoned villages, vacant houses
• Increased pressure on the pension, social and healthcare system: already evident
Current policy response:

- National demographic strategy of Republic of Bulgaria - 2012-2030;
- National concept for promotion of active aging: 2012-2030;
- National inter-sectorial program for promotion of active aging: 2016-2030;
- Strategy on lifelong learning;
- Adapted law for spatial planning, including specific requirements for accessibility of people with disabilities;
- National housing strategy: under preparation;
- National strategy for deinstitutionalization of the care for elderly people and people with disabilities.
Implementation structure and tools

• CoM: Deputy Prime Minister responsible for demographic policy
• National Council on Demographic policy, led by the DPM: stakeholders coordination platform;
• Central and regional structures of Social assistance directorates under Ministry of Labor and Social policy
• Role of the local authorities.
Key objectives focusing on aged population:

- Promoting active working life for older people;
- Ensuring financial stability of the pension system and reduction of poverty among retired individuals;
- Ensuring access to education, promoting lifelong learning and prequalification of older people;
- Ensuring access to health services and promoting life in good health condition;
- Developing of long-term care and promoting access to social services
- Decentralization of the social care system: local authorities, regional bodies on the social assistance service: personal social assistants;
- Promoting volunteering;
- Financing from national and municipal budgets;
- EU funds.
Current and past WB relevant activities

- Mitigating the economic impact of an aging population: options for Bulgaria
- A roof over our heads – Housing in Bulgaria
- Bulgaria - Housing sector assessment: final report
- World Bank report long-term care and ageing: case studies - Bulgaria, Croatia, Latvia, and Poland
- 10 avenues to foster smart, sustainable, and inclusive growth
- Drivers of convergence in eleven eastern European countries
- Bulgaria - Making a difference in an European Union member state
- How can Bulgaria improve its education system?
- Skills for work in Bulgaria: the relationship between cognitive and socioemotional skills and labor market outcomes
Support needed from World Bank, TDLC, etc.

• Mid and long term assessment of the impact of implementation of the national strategies and policy documents;

• Support to the elaboration of the post 2020 integrated urban development plans, to take account of the issues related to aging;

• Support to identification of investment opportunities and growth potential of Bulgaria’s lagging regions (northwest);

• Support to implementation of the housing strategy with respect to social housing.