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Covid-19 actions in Slovenia and responses to them,

Oh, my God! Where is the world headed when citizens' rights are becoming just a written letter on paper? On social networks, in the last month, when the pandemic of the coronavirus spread like the plague in the Middle Ages, we can read mostly the sad stories of those who, in one way or another, face the dilemma of how their parents or grandparents will be cared, if they accidentally contract coronavirus, because hospitals do not accept them, and Institutional care in homes can become a "time bomb," due to nursing staff is not trained in patient care and home health care is only a pious wish! The comprehensive care of senior citizens was pushed to the brink of decision for many years and probably stored in a folder labeled "Non Priority!"

The official statement of the leading Health Center in Slovenia, Ljubljana HC is as follows at theirs latest brochure: (We might say that the paper stands everything.)

*There are a large number of unsolicited patients coming to primary care facilities every day. In such cases, triage, which determines patients clinical priority of treatment, is of a great importance. **The Manchester system** was adopted in Slovenia as a national triage scheme. An appropriate triage system is now a professional necessity because, in addition to the "safe" waiting time for a doctor's examination, it also enables greater legal formal protection of contractors, optimization of resources in outpatient clinics and supervision of work. Triage is therefore a process of reducing clinical risk for patients in when, due to the large number of them, the medical staff is not able to treat all patients on an on-going basis. **Its purpose is to provide** correct and on- time care to patients in view of the problems that they are visiting a doctor...*

In the TV Dnevnik, the main News Show of TV Slovenia, the journalist asked a clear question to the State Secretary at the Ministry of Health;

Question: *Older people's homes are becoming a Den of infection. Why are older persons sick people not transferred to hospitals since we have enough space in them?*

The answer. You know, it's not that easy. Medical professionals need to be trusted, and their judgement as to whether or not someone is declined, is all the more so; we don't know what will happen in two, three days ... (?!)

A month ago, the secretary of state was one of the speakers in a team of young doctors who had raised hopes for a different kind of treatment of the older persons, but was snuffed out by politics. There is power in politics! "Le fort c'est moi!" To paraphrase Louis the XIV, The King of France!

The Ministry of Health, led by one prominent member of the party who has an electoral pool among the older persons population of Slovenian citizens, has devoured all the moral and ethical values of the party statute and the Hippocratic Oath, which he undertook when



promoting as a young doctor. **He has even issued a decree stating that Older people's homes must accustomed to the new situation and, in the future, will need to treat the caregivers themselves if they become ill.** Of course, his statement face with outrage from the Community of Social Institutions as well as many other citizens (!?)

The fact is that the main foci of infection are older people's homes, and it is also a fact that the country is creating a suitable climate, that the virus is even more widespread, and that citizens will have to make such and other decisions, dictated by the government. We are not far from declaring a **State of Emergency** and, Goodbye, the rule of law!

In Slovenia, the health and social life of the population is now dictated by the government and its expert group, while in the other part of the world, alpha and omega regarding a health measures are **Institutes of public health.**

Two weeks ago the director of the National Institute of Public Health told for National Television (on the third week of the epidemic) that measures to restrict movement were excessive... the process of replacing him began.

Slovenia has therefore started treating the older persons on the basis of triage, which is inadmissible and constitutes a violation of constitutional and human values. But since we wrote down that the paper could stand everything.

The Slovenian Federation of Pensioners' Associations- ZDUS, has been working hard all the time, and especially in the last few years, to improve the quality of life of older persons. That each of them with their pension could cover the costs of home care and that there would be something left to spend as Pocket Money. However, we have such a situation that older persons are either on the shoulders of the local communities (up to the difference in the cost of care covered by the pensioner's pension) or their care is borne by their children or grandchildren!?

ZDUS has already prepared a Memorandum 2018, which covers all strategies related to the quality of life of older people. After the National Assembly elections, we began to urge policy to approach implementation. All the talks were conducted properly, with promises as would be appropriate for politics, but no solution was in sight.

We receive many letters written by our members to our organization asking the older persons to claim us, as a **national NGO** with more than 200,000 members **to take decisive action** against the arbitrariness of a government, which treats older persons as a second class Citizens! In one of them is written as follows:

*"Decisions taken by the government regarding restrictions on movement are unconstitutional, prohibiting the exit of a local municipality, determining the hour when we are able to go to the store, closing mountain trails...?! /32.art.of the Constitution/ Such prohibiting decision can be reached only in case of **State of Emergency**. So, therefore such decision is unconstitutional because it gives the minister power which he cannot have under the constitution. Freedom of movement in case of natural disasters can only be restricted when the **National Assembly declares a State of Emergency!** Because the National Assembly*



*did not discuss regarding such situation, **He has accepted the Law!** The saddest part is the fact, that we become blindly obeying and following the measures and have voluntarily agreed to the end of all personal freedom. Everyone addresses us. "Stay healthy. What about the sick who are a really vulnerable group!?"*

No one addresses them. Have we already erased them off?

They wrote down, that restraint measures would remain!! That means, the epidemic is about to be over in a month, but the government announced a new outbreak in October!? They also announced that the world would never return to the same rails after the epidemic had ended."

To quote philosopher Slavoj Žižek: "We will have to build a different kind of normality with huge efforts."

In these difficult times, ZDUS will continue its efforts to establish a dialogue with the Government of the Republic of Slovenia, particularly with the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities, the Ministry of Health and the Ministries of Economy and Culture. If we look at the measures taken by the government, we can only conclude that, despite all their actions, the current leadership of Slovenian politics has a sufficient motive to help everyone, the population and the economy.

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