

Regional differences and trends of life expectancy, self-perceived health, reported activity limitations and chronic morbidity in Latvia during 2005-2014

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Keywords: self-perceived health, activity limitations, chronic morbidity, healthy life expectancy

Abstract. During the last 10 years life expectancy from birth both for males and females in Latvia has increased. In 2014 compared to the year 2005, life expectancy for females was 3 years longer and for males the improvement amounted 4.1 years. The gap between genders during these years have not changed significantly and remained one of the biggest in Europe. In 2014 it amounted 10.2 years. Life expectancy at age 65 for males and females has improved by 1.5 and 1.8 years respectively compared to the year 2005. Despite the apparent improvement of the indicator, keeping in mind population aging issue special attention should be paid to the quality of life and in particular to the healthy life expectancy at pre-retirement and retirement ages. The decrease of the relative share of years spent without activity limitations to total life expectancy at age 65 for both genders emphasizes the necessity and importance of the study of mentioned indicators to evaluate the real society benefits from increasing life expectancy.

Unlike other countries in Latvia life expectancy in recent years is calculated only for males and females, while information on the indicator by area and region is missing. Previous studies has shown that differences between Latvian regions in terms of life expectancy and healthy life expectancy exist. The current study aims to analyze regional differences and development trends of life expectancies and healthy life expectancies based on self-perceived health, activity limitations and chronic morbidity in Latvia during 2005-2014 as well as point out most problematic regions of the country.