**Background**

The demographic picture of Croatia shows two trends: decreasing population and population ageing. As a consequence of these trends, the increasing social and economic burdens are placed on the National Budget. The EU-funded project “Zaželi-program zapošljavanja žena” emerged as a temporary and partial solution for the aforementioned problems. This review aims to present the contribution of the project to women empowerment and social/health care of old people in Croatia.

**Material & Methods**

- The review was performed using the data obtained from governmental reports on this project, Croatian Bureau of Statistics, Croatian Employment Service, as well as from the European Social Funds website.

**Results**

- Number of registered unemployed women aged 50 or more decreased by 29% in the period from 2017 to 2019.
- Social care for 12000 old and helpless people located in rural and remote areas of Croatia was provided.
- All women employed, most having just primary or secondary education, were provided with additional education and different kinds of training: “gerontodomacija”, cooking classes, driver’s license, first aid courses, occupational safety and health courses, basic computer skills and IT literacy etc.

![Graph showing population of Croatia 2001-2031](image)

The population of Croatia according to gender and age in 2031 (projection) and a comparison with the year 2001 (according to Nejašmić and Mišetić, 2004)

**Conclusion**

- “Zaželi-program zapošljavanja žena” project had a significant impact on the decline in the unemployment rate of women older than 50 years of age in Croatia.
- Additional education and training made women more competent and skilled which could also help them in finding future employment.
- More than 10000 elderly people in need received social, physical as well as psychological care.