

Experiences from the Latvian Roundtable

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SUSTENTO

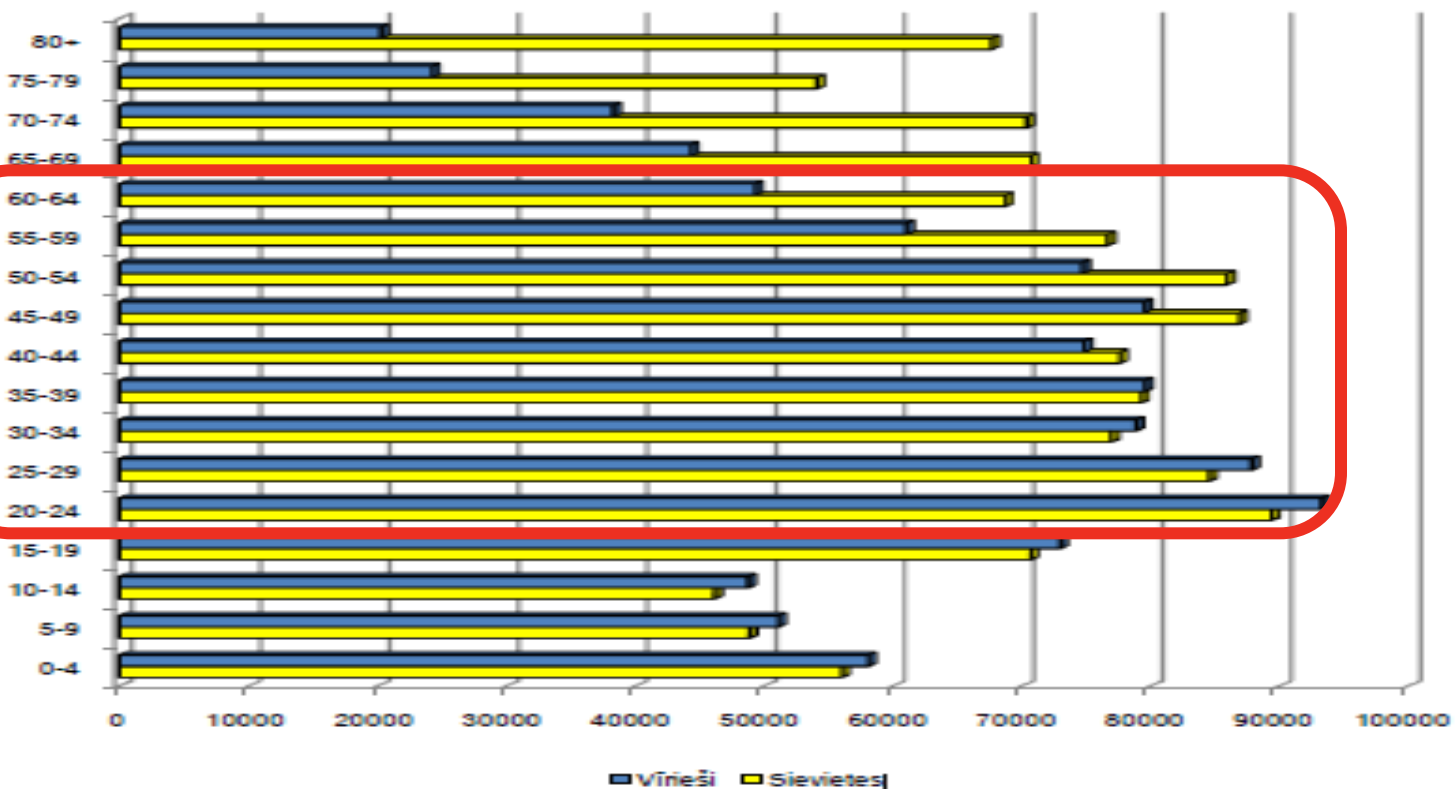


Five Reasons to Develop Telehealth

- 👉 Aging of the population;
- 👉 Increasing chronic diseases;
- 👉 Medical demography;
- 👉 Unequal territorial distribution of health services;
- 👉 Lack of health professionals

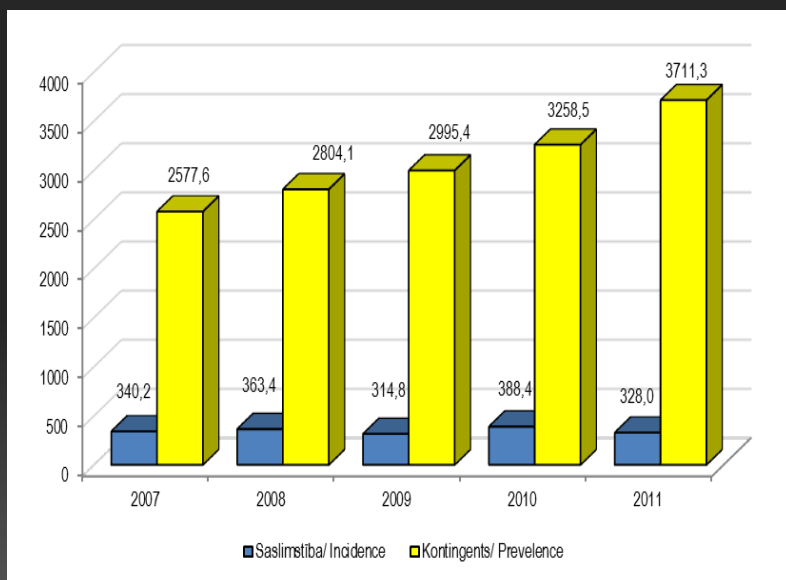
Aging of the population

1.2. attēls IEDZĪVOTĀJU DZIMUMA UN VECUMA STRUKTŪRA LATVIJĀ, 2010. GADA SĀKUMĀ²
Chart 1.2. POPULATION BY AGE AND SEX IN LATVIA AT THE BEGINNING OF 2010²



Chronic disease increase

PREVALECE AND INCIDENCE OF DIABETES
MELLITUS 2008-2011; PER 100,000
POPULATION¹



Diseases of the circulatory system 2007 - 2011



Medical demography

Health care professionals in the age structure

Age	< 35 years	36 – 45 years	46 – 55 years	56 – 65 years	> or = 66 years
%	11,2	22,2	31,9	19,8	14,9

Lack of health professionals *

Doctors (/100 000 pop.)

Latvia – 311

(y 2009: 272)

EU – 324

Estonia - 335

Lithuania - 370

Nurses (/100 000 pop.)

Latvia – 534

(y 2009: 507)

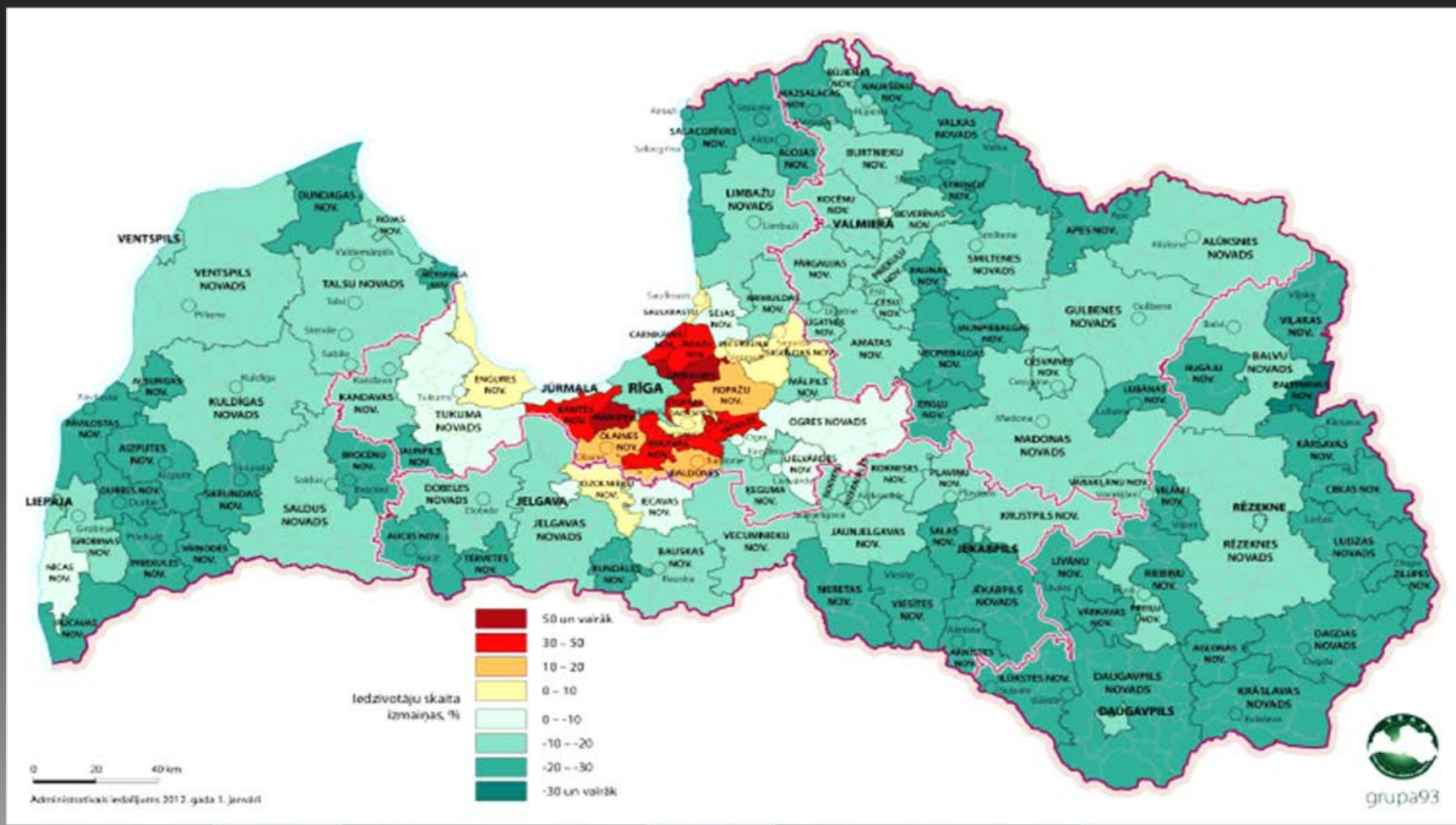
EU – 775

Estonia – 640

Lithuania - 711

**In y 2008, Latvian health care
needed 300 doctors and 5500
nurses, when compared to
average EU figures**

Health Services unequal territorial distribution





Roundtable discussion, Riga

Participants

- Companies which can provide technical support for telehealth services;
- Telehealth service provider in Latvia;
- Ministry of Health;
- Parliamentary Secretary;
- Patient Organisations;
- Health professionals

Discussion on project findings

What do Latvian users know about Telehealth?

Telehealth is almost absolutely unknown in Latvia and Latvian users see it more as fairytale or fantasy than opportunity of the real life



Discussion on project findings

What do Latvian Ministry of Health think about Telehealth?

More than 70% of all GPs in Latvia are more than 50 years old. Many of them are not able to use any kind of IT technologies necessary for telehealth.

The premises of the GP often have not any facilities, technologies needed for telehealth, so it is very difficult to even introduce the idea of telehealth.

Discussion on project findings

What do Latvian patients think about Telehealth?

Even if Latvian patients do not have enough information about telehealth services and possibility to use them in their everyday life, they still would be happy to try these services

They believe that telehealth could make their lives more comfortable and easier

Discussion on project findings

Main potential barriers for telehealth in Latvia

Lack of the state reimbursement model that gives possibility to develop telehealth services in Latvia

Latvian hospitals, health care centres and doctors' private practices do not have common software to enable the use of data connectivity on the patient's situation.

Latvian patients are also concerned about affordability of telehealth services which could increase health inequalities.

Discussion on recommendations

- ✓ **Maximize** the **information** provided on telehealth in Latvian;
- ✓ **Design** and **implement** the **terms** which would be integrated well in the language;
- ✓ **Involve users** in the **beginning** of the telehealth **development** process;
- ✓ **Provide adequate training** for patient organisations, taking into account the specific situation of Latvia;
- ✓ **Develop National strategy** and **action plan** on telehealth.

Results

In Latvia the implementation would cost 14-19 million, and would require the maintenance of 2-3 million*. Savings in medical care system are estimated at 30 million lats (it could be reachable in a period of 3-4 years), while the benefits from the reduction of mortality could be around 35-38 million per year. This is a significant argument to start more active discussions with Latvian Ministry of Health and also the government in general.

* **Uldis Osis** Corresponding Member Latvian Academy of Sciences

Results

The introduction of e-health services in Latvia would be an excellent basis for further development of telehealth services. However, it is important to remember that both patients and health professionals must be prepared to use them.

Results

During the discussion we were able to achieve a first agreement with the Ministry of Health on the possibility to include telehealth services in the health care system. This means that all health care-related legislation will be supplemented to enable the possibility for health professionals to provide telehealth services as part of their daily practice. It could be the first step to the new discussion with the MoH to reimburse at least part of these services.

Thanks for attention 😊

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