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Economic Commission for Europe**Working Group on Ageing****Tenth meeting**

Geneva, 23 and 24 November 2017

Work of the Bureau**Report on the ninth meeting of the Bureau of the Working Group on Ageing****I. Opening of the meeting and adoption of agenda**

1. The Bureau meeting took place on 3-4 April 2017 in Vienna (Austria) and was hosted by the Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection of Austria. The Bureau members from the following member States attended the meeting: Austria, Belarus, Georgia, Germany, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, Spain and Turkey. The representative of Belgium was unable to attend. The director of the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research (European Centre Vienna) represented the scientific community. The president of the European Federation of Older Persons (EURAG) participated on behalf of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Five additional host country representatives took part in the first plenary session of the meeting.

2. Ms. Erika Winkler, Chair of the Working Group on Ageing (WGA), representative of Austria, chaired the meeting with the assistance of the Vice-Chair, Ms. Dorika Seib, representative of Germany.

3. The Chair welcomed the meeting participants on behalf of the host country. The Bureau adopted the agenda of the meeting.

II. Introduction by host country: keynote address and discussion

4. Ms. Edeltraud Glettler, Director-General for European, International and Social Affairs (Austria) provided an overview of Austria's Federal Action Plan for Senior Citizens and its implementation over the past five years. The 14 key areas of the action plan are aligned with the four policy goals of the 2012 Vienna Ministerial Declaration. Examples of policy measures and reforms reported include amendments to the Health and Safety at Work Act in

2013, the Employment 50+ Initiative to facilitate longer working life, a 2014 reform of invalidity pensions that foster rehabilitation instead of early retirement.

5. Two representatives from the Austrian Senior Council, Ms. Marilies Flemming and Ms. Hilde Hawlicek, gave short presentations on the situation of older people in Austria and services provided by civil society organisations, including many opportunities for social and cultural participation and age-friendly tourism.

6. Ms. Susanne Herbek, Senior Citizen's Representative of the City of Vienna, provided an overview of demographic challenges and policy responses by the municipality. Examples provided referred to an annual seniors' month, which includes a week dedicated to dementia in 2017, and contact visits that are made to all Vienna residents over the age of 75 informing them about available services and gathering social-demographic data.

7. The discussion following the presentation focused on the gender division of unpaid care, parental leave policies and measures taken by the Austrian government to reduce the risk of poverty in old age, in particular for women.

III. Report on the ageing-relevant outcomes of the following as they relate to the UNECE Population programme and the Working Group on Ageing

A. The 55th Session of the Commission for Social Development and the 50th Session of the Commission for Population and Development

8. The secretariat reported on the outcomes of the 55th Session of the Commission for Social Development that took place from 1 to 10 February 2017 in New York with the priority theme "Strategies for eradicating poverty to achieve sustainable development for all". Under its agenda item 3(b): "Review of relevant United Nations plans and programmes of action pertaining to the situation of social groups", the Commission discussed the Secretary-General's report on the preliminary assessment of third review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002. The Commission took note of the report's recommendations regarding the global segment of the third review and appraisal cycle. The global review will conclude in 2018 during the 56th Session of the Commission.

9. The secretariat informed the Bureau about its inputs to the Secretary-General report for the 50th Session of the Commission for Population and Development under the theme "Changing population age structures and sustainable development". It is expected that the Commission will take decisions on 1) adjusting a five-year review of progress of the ICPD Programme of Action to a four-year cycle to align it with that of Sustainable Development Goals, and 2) adopting "Sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration" as special theme for the 51th session.

10. The secretariat also informed the Bureau of a meeting of the World Health Organization's Working Group on Metrics and Research Standards on Healthy Ageing (27-31 March 2017) that discussed indicators to measure the key components of healthy ageing.

11. The Vice-Chair reported on the main outcomes of the Seventh working session of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing (12-15 December 2016, New York). She noted that the members of the group agreed to adopt a new approach to advance work by focusing on the content of a potential legal instrument and areas to be addressed in order to allow older persons to fully enjoy their human rights. Two such areas were selected for discussion during the eighth working session of the group: equality and non-discrimination and neglect, violence and abuse.

B. Proposal to upgrade the Working Group on Ageing to a Sectoral Committee on Population – the way forward

12. The Bureau members discussed possible ways of action to follow up on the proposal put forward at the ninth WGA meeting in November 2016. A concern was raised that the member States might not see the change of status of the Working Group as entirely cost-free. The secretariat reminded that the resource-neutral impact on the existing regular budget was explicitly stated in the Note by the Bureau distributed to Working Group members in preparation of its ninth meeting. After discussion, it was agreed that the Chair will issue a letter urging the Working Group members / National focal points on ageing to seek an opinion on the matter also from the ministries of foreign affairs before the Ministerial Conference in Lisbon.

IV. Progress on implementation of the WGA work programme for 2017

A. Policy Brief “Realizing the Potential of Living Longer”

13. The Bureau discussed the first draft of the policy brief prepared by Bjørn Halvorsen, National Focal Point on Ageing of Norway, with inputs from Aina Strand (Norway), Kai Leichsenring (European Centre Vienna), Dirk Jarre (EURAG), Erika Winkler (Austria) and the secretariat.

14. The discussion emphasized that the policy brief should stimulate rethinking ageing, highlighting the potentials of older persons. It was said that it should provide a positive perspective on the opportunities of longer life while staying realistic, acknowledging that not all older people will be able to be in good health and active throughout their later years. To maximize opportunities in later life, policies should take a life-course perspective, targeting younger as well as older people, combating inequalities throughout life.

15. The question was raised whether to publish the paper as an Issue Brief and background document for the Ministerial Conference, which would give more liberty in terms of length and format, but would limit dissemination possibilities. The Bureau, after considering the options, decided to publish the paper in a format of a policy brief as previously planned to maximize the outreach.

16. It was agreed that the secretariat would provide further guidance on the format requirements for the policy brief to the drafting group. The representative of the research community, Mr. Kai Leichsenring, volunteered to take the lead in preparing the second draft and share it with the drafting group for comments by the end of May. As per usual procedure, the WGA members will be invited to contribute good practice examples relevant to the topic. The secretariat will finalize the draft and share it with the Bureau and Working Group for comments before publication.

B. Brief report on other programme elements

17. The secretariat reported on the ongoing and foreseen activities under the Active Ageing Index (AAI) project. In particular, the Bureau was informed of two parallel research studies on criteria-specific analysis of AAI results by institutional consultants in Germany and Poland. Both research teams will focus on comparison and analysis of AAI results for different groups of population distinguished by criteria of educational attainment, socio-economic status, and area of residence (urban or rural). A contract with the Southampton

University for a longer-term consultancy is expected to be signed in the upcoming weeks. The secretariat drew attention of the Bureau to a national seminar that will take place on 11 May 2017 in Ancona, Italy, and discuss AAI results for Italy at national and regional levels and its potential as a tool for monitoring ageing-related policies as well as for furthering the concept of active ageing. The results of an external evaluation of the second phase of the AAI project were also communicated to the Bureau members.¹

18. The secretariat briefed the Bureau on the recent developments in the Generations and Gender Programme (GGP). In 2017, the Programme received a grant of approximately 2 million euros under the European Commission's Horizon 2020 Research and Innovation framework (ESFRI Emerging Project) aimed at improving GGP management, plan technological and data development, and initiate centralization of its operations. The next round of the surveys is planned to start in 2019. The 14th meeting of the GGP Council of Partners, with UNECE serving as secretariat, and GGP 4th User Conference will take place respectively on 5 and 6-7 July 2017 in Berlin.

19. Regarding capacity-building activities, the secretariat did not receive any new official requests for development of a Road map for mainstreaming ageing. In December 2016, the staff of the Permanent mission of Israel in Geneva discussed with the secretariat further cooperation in the area of population ageing, including a possibility of conducting an evaluation of existing ageing-related policies in the country. The secretariat will revert to it before the tenth WGA meeting. Representative of Belarus stated that she would follow up on a previously discussed possibility to develop a Road map for Belarus.

V. Third cycle of MIPAA/RIS Review and Appraisal

A. The process of national reporting and synthesis report

20. The secretariat gave a status update on the regional review and appraisal of the implementation of MIPAA/RIS and outlined major trends in implementation based on the analysis of 37 country reports received. The presentation highlighted themes most frequently addressed by national reports under each of the four goals of the Vienna Declaration, and where countries saw their main achievements and future priorities across the ten commitments of the regional implementation strategy. A statistical annex complements the regional synthesis report, drawing on data submitted by countries, data collected through the Active Ageing Index project, and other data sources such as data submitted for capacity-building workshops on active ageing indicators, Eurostat and United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs.

21. Several country reports are still in preparation and expected by the end of April. These will be included in the analysis and the synthesis report will be completed by the end of May. It will be shared with the Working Group on Ageing for comments before the launch. An extended Executive Summary of the report will be published as a background document for the Ministerial Conference.

¹ The report is available from
[http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/age/Active_Ageing_Index/FINAL_REPORT_AAI_PROJ
ECT_II_13_March_2017.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/age/Active_Ageing_Index/FINAL_REPORT_AAI_PROJECT_II_13_March_2017.pdf)

B. Preparations of 2017 Ministerial Conference – organizational matters

22. Representatives of Portugal presented to the Bureau the current state of affairs in the Conference organization process, particularly regarding the venue, funding and communication matters. They acknowledged financial support from the European Commission, participation in the organization of the Lisbon City Council, Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Ministry of Health. The presenters also noted the financial support for participants of NGO forum and research forum provided respectively by Santa Casa de Misericórdia of Lisbon and Fundação INATEL. The Vice-Chair, on behalf of the Working Group on Ageing, thanked the host country for the undertaken work and good progress in the Conference organisation.

23. The Bureau members discussed at length the programme of the Ministerial Conference focussing on potential speakers and panellists taking into account additional proposals by the host country and the secretariat. The importance of ensuring geographical and gender balance among the speakers, as well as representation of major stakeholder groups in expert panels was stressed by the secretariat. The representative of the civil society stated that he would consult the committee for NGO forum preparation regarding potential speakers from NGO community. The Bureau was invited to submit additional proposals by 18 April. The secretariat will revise the list of speakers accordingly and will start issuing invitations on behalf of the Conference organizers.

24. The secretariat informed the Bureau that the call for proposals for the poster exhibition at the Ministerial Conference was issued in March and invited members of the Bureau to take part in a poster evaluation committee to review and select posters for the exhibition. Representatives from Georgia and Spain volunteered to be part of the committee, and the NGOs agreed to identify their representative shortly. The evaluation committee will be led by the UNECE secretariat. The deadline for submission of poster proposals is on 30 May and the selection process will be completed by the end of June.

C. Drafting of the declaration for the Ministerial Conference

25. The Bureau reviewed a new draft of the declaration that reflected the comments received by members of the Working Group on Ageing at its last meeting in November as well as comments received from member States since then. The Bureau adopted a number of further amendments and agreed on a draft declaration text to be sent for official consultation with member States.

26. The Bureau decided generally to address older persons/older people in the declaration and to refer to older women and men in those paragraphs where the distinction was pertinent. A suggestion to systematically refer to older women and men throughout the text was not embraced by the Bureau.

D. Planning for research and non-governmental organization (NGO) forums

27. The representative of the research community informed that a Scientific Committee was set up to prepare the UNECE Regional Research Forum on Ageing and shared a concept note outlining the objectives and draft programme of the forum. The Bureau noted a strong focus on speakers from the European Union and recommended inviting speakers from other parts of the UNECE region. Possible speakers from Georgia and Canada were proposed.

28. The representative of the civil society informed the Bureau about the preparations for the NGO forum. He thanked the Santa Casa de Misericórdia of Lisbon for their support in

forum organisation as well as in raising funding for participants and expressed his appreciation of the fact that the simultaneous interpretation will be available for the NGO forum for the same languages as for the Ministerial Conference. The preparatory committee consisting of representatives of seven NGOs is meeting for the first time in the afternoon of 4 April and on 5 April (in Vienna); their second meeting is planned for June in Lisbon. The representative of the civil society will continue informing the Bureau and the secretariat of the preparation progress and outcomes of the meetings.

VI. Draft agenda of the tenth meeting of the Working Group on Ageing (23-24 November 2017)

29. The Bureau was invited to comment on the suggested draft of the provisional agenda. On the item 2 of the draft agenda, the secretariat stated that the call for the candidates for new members of the Bureau will be launched prior to the Ministerial Conference. The Bureau membership will return to eight countries. The representative of the civil society will consult the NGO coordination group for them to decide on their representative. Regarding the item 8 of the draft agenda, the secretariat asked the Bureau to send their suggestions, if any, for possible additional elements of the work programme.

VII. Other business

30. No additional matters were raised.

VIII. Summary and closing of the meeting

31. The secretariat summarized the main elements of the discussions and reviewed all decisions and action points. The Vice-Chair and the secretariat thanked the host country representatives. The Chair closed the meeting.
