

Decisions taken at the third quarter session of the Bureau of the Standing Working Group on Ageing on 8 October 2021

The third quarter session of the Bureau took place on 8 October 2021 and was held online. The Bureau members from the following member States participated in the meeting: Austria, France, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Slovenia, and Spain. Mr. Kai Leichsenring, European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research (European Centre Vienna), and Ms. Heidrun Mollenkopf, AGE Platform Europe, participated on behalf of research and non-governmental organizations (NGOs), respectively. In addition, a team of three representatives of Italy, host country of the 2022 Ministerial Conference, took part in the meeting. The session was chaired by the Chair of the Standing Working Group on Ageing, Mr. Edmundo Martinho (Portugal).

- Bureau members briefly reported on their countries' progress in developing national MIPAA/RIS review reports and on the related stakeholder participation process.
- The Draft Provisional Agenda for the UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing (16-17 June 2022, Rome) was presented, discussed, and provisionally agreed upon. Some potential speakers for the thematic panels were suggested and interpretation during the Conference was discussed, however, no final decision has been made yet. Members of the Bureau expressed support for the suggestion to change the title of the High-level panel discussion between ministers and civil society to reflect the theme of the Conference – 'Joining forces for solidarity and equal opportunities throughout life' - and include direct reference to the COVID-19 pandemic.
- The Draft Provisional Agenda for the joint Civil Society and Scientific Research Forum (15 June 2022, Rome) was presented and discussed. It was suggested that the theme of the Forum should reflect the ongoing COVID-19 health crisis and the theme of the Conference, but not to replicate it entirely. The number of attendees and the venue of the Forum were discussed. The representatives of the host country informed that the Forum will be held in the same venue as the Conference ensuring the seating capacity of 400 persons, although only about 120 of Forum attendees may participate at the Ministerial Conference as well.
- The date of the Briefing for representatives of Permanent Missions on preparations for the Ministerial Conference will be confirmed by the host country (Italy). Two dates were suggested during the meeting (25 and 26 October 2021).
- The Declaration Drafting Group presented the comments received on the draft text of the Ministerial Declaration. The comments were reviewed in detail and discussed by the Bureau members. Most comments were incorporated to the draft text accordingly. The Declaration Drafting Group will update the draft by the end of October and share it with the members of the Standing Working Group on Ageing for further discussions at the annual meeting on 22-23 November 2021.
- The secretariat shared the initial reflections on the format and core elements of the MIPAA+20 report. The Bureau supported the proposal.
- The Bureau expressed its full support for the Population Unit's Work Programme for 2022 and the key components of its programme of work for 2023 as presented in the documents ECE/WG.1/2021/5 and ECE/WG.1/2021/INF, respectively. The Bureau expressed at the same time a concern whether the Secretariat of the SWGA is accorded sufficient resources to fulfill their mandate and the implementation of the Work Programme.