

UNITED NATIONS



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THE SECRETARY-GENERAL

MESSAGE – UNECE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON AGEING

17 June 2022

Excellencies,

Thank you for coming together to focus on the policy dimensions of ageing in our societies.

At heart, this challenge is rooted in good news.

More people in more places are living longer than ever before.

Europe is a centre of this demographic change.

Today, one in six people across the region are over the age of 65 – by 2050, that figure will be one in four.

Our task is to address the challenges of longevity – and unleash its potentials.

We must promote the social, economic, and political inclusion of all people at all ages.

This is a core pledge of the Sustainable Development Goals and the guiding ambition of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing.

Yet 20 years since Madrid, we still see deep inequalities in people's experiences in later life.

Older people are particularly vulnerable to a range of challenges including the COVID-19 pandemic, the worsening climate crisis, proliferating conflicts and growing poverty.

Dear Friends,

We risk sliding backwards.

This is unacceptable.

I count on the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe's Working Group on Ageing to pioneer solutions.

Lifelong learning, strong social protection, accessible quality long-term health care, bridging the digital divide, and intergenerational support are essential.

Together, let's build more resilient, inclusive, and age-friendly societies for all.

Thank you.
