



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
26 July 2022

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Standing Working Group on Ageing

Ministerial Conference on Ageing

Rome, 16-17 June 2022

Report of the Ministerial Conference on Ageing “A Sustainable World for All Ages: Joining Forces for Solidarity and Equal Opportunities Throughout Life”

Summary

In June 2020, the United Nations Economic and Social Council adopted resolution E/RES/2020/8 on Modalities for the fourth review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002 (MIPAA). The resolution requested the regional commissions to continue to facilitate the review and appraisal exercise at the regional level, including by organizing regional review meetings. In response to this resolution, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) organized the fifth UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing as a concluding regional event of the fourth cycle of review and appraisal (2017-2022) of the implementation of MIPAA and its Regional Implementation Strategy (MIPAA/RIS), also marking the 20th anniversary of the adoption of MIPAA/RIS.

The 2022 UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing took place from 16 to 17 June 2022 in Rome, Italy. Delegations from 44 ECE Member States, including 32 ministers and deputy ministers/state secretaries and a number of high-level officials participated at the Conference, and discussed progress made in implementing MIPAA/RIS between 2017 and 2022 with participants from international organizations, the European Commission, non-governmental organizations, scientific researchers and other stakeholders. The Ministerial Conference in Rome adopted the Ministerial Declaration “A Sustainable World for All Ages: Joining Forces for Solidarity and Equal Opportunities Throughout Life”. The proceedings of the Conference are briefly reflected in this report, which includes two annexes: the 2022 Rome Ministerial Declaration and the list of speakers.



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I. Introduction

1. The United Nations Commission for Social Development, in its resolution 42/1 of 13 February 2004, decided to undertake the review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002 (MIPAA) every five years. In resolution E/RES/2020/8, the Economic and Social Council agreed on the modalities for the fourth review and appraisal of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing. The Economic and Social Council decided that the procedure for the fourth review and appraisal of MIPAA would follow the set procedure of the third review and appraisal exercise and requested the regional commissions to continue to facilitate the review and appraisal exercise at the regional level, including through organizing regional review meetings. The Economic and Social Council also requested the Secretary-General to submit a report to the Commission for Social Development at its sixty-first session in 2023, including the conclusions of the fourth review and appraisal exercise, together with the identification of prevalent and emerging issues and related policy options.

2. The fourth review and appraisal in the ECE region culminated in the 2022 UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing that took place in Rome, Italy, from 16 to 17 June 2022. The ministerial segment was held on 17 June.

3. Overall, delegations from 44 ECE member States participated in the Conference. The following member States were represented: Albania, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Canada, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, North Macedonia, Norway, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Türkiye, the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, the United States of America and Uzbekistan. Ministers and deputy ministers/state secretaries from 32 ECE member States attended the Conference. The majority of other delegations was led by high-level officials from specialized government departments and agencies. In addition, representatives of the Holy See attended the Conference as observers.

4. Representatives from the Council of Europe, the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, the European Commission, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs (UN DESA), the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), and the World Health Organization (WHO) participated. In total, eight intergovernmental organizations participated in the Conference. In addition, thanks to the joint Forum of Civil Society and Scientific Research that took place on the day preceding the Ministerial Conference, numerous representatives of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and scientific research took part in the Conference.

A. Opening of the Conference and adoption of the agenda

5. Ms. Elena Bonetti, Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family of Italy, Dr. Zsuzsanna Jakab, Deputy Director-General of WHO, and Ms. Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary of ECE, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. As a part of her opening remarks, Ms. Bonetti also read out the welcome message of Mr. Sergio Mattarella, President of Italy.

6. The Conference elected Ms. Elena Bonetti (Italy) as the Chairperson and Ms. Signe Riisalo, Minister of Social Protection (Estonia), and Ms. Ana Mendes Godinho, Minister for Labour, Solidarity and Social Security (Portugal) as Vice-Chairpersons for both Conference days. Conference participants adopted the agenda.

7. The Secretary to the Conference informed delegations that in paragraph 15 of the draft Ministerial Declaration, there was a technical mistake in the version distributed to member States on 1 June, which had since been corrected and reflected in the copy of the Declaration to be distributed to each delegation on the morning of 17 June.

B. Launch of MIPAA+20 Report and the UNECE Synthesis Report on the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in the UNECE region (2017-2022)

8. 40 member States submitted national reports for the fourth review and appraisal of the Regional Implementation Strategy of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA/RIS), based on the guidelines provided by the ECE secretariat. The secretariat presented a summary of findings from these country reports (ECE/AC.30/2022/3).

9. To mark the 20th anniversary of MIPAA/RIS, the ECE secretariat, upon the request of member States, developed the MIPAA+20 Report, including an analysis of the most important trends affecting population ageing in the region, an overview of progress in implementing MIPAA/RIS since 2002 and an outline of the way forward. A summary of this Report was presented.

C. Member States' interventions on national progress towards the implementation of MIPAA/RIS

10. In preparation for the Ministerial Conference, ECE member States had an opportunity to subscribe for an intervention on their national progress towards the implementation of MIPAA/RIS in the past 5 years. The following countries made their statements: Armenia, Finland, Belarus, Serbia, Austria, Georgia and the Russian Federation (by video message). Countries highlighted recent developments and reforms, but also challenges related to population ageing. Following the country interventions, Azerbaijan asked for the floor and made an intervention.

D. Keynote address “Priorities for ageing policies in the UNECE Region”

11. In his keynote address, Mr. Alexandre Sidorenko, Senior Advisor at the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research, outlined some key priorities for policies on ageing in the ECE Region. He recalled the three major milestones of international actions on ageing: the first World Assembly on Ageing, which adopted the Vienna International Plan of Action on Ageing; the United Nations Principles for Older persons; and the Second World Assembly on Ageing, which adopted the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA). He pointed out the persisting barriers to the national and international implementation of global plans of action on ageing. He also highlighted new challenges due to various crises, including the COVID-19 pandemic and military conflict in the region. While MIPAA does address the issue of older persons in emergency situations, the sufficiency of its provisions in the current reality can be questioned. Moving forward, and to respond to both the challenges and opportunities presented by ageing societies and increased longevity, he proposed to review, and if needed revise, MIPAA and its Regional Implementation Strategy; establish an agency to coordinate and support ageing-related policies; and adopt an international convention on the rights of older persons.

12. Following the keynote address, the Russian Federation asked for the floor and made an intervention.

E. Expert panel discussions

13. Three expert panels were held on the following topics:

- (a) Promoting active and healthy ageing throughout life;
- (b) Ensuring access to long-term care and support for carers and families;
- (c) Mainstreaming ageing to advance a society for all ages.

14. During the first expert panel on “Promoting active and healthy ageing throughout life”, discussants highlighted the key elements of a life-course approach to active and healthy ageing across multiple sectors. They stressed the active participation and the multiple

contributions of older persons to society as carers or workers, among others. The importance of creating enabling environments allowing choice was also emphasised as essential to foster healthy and active ageing.

15. The first expert panel further addressed the issue of ageism, which has various negative impacts on society. Combating ageism by promoting the positive image of ageing, recognizing the full rights of older persons and improving the accessibility of physical and mental health services was underlined. Solidarity between generations, gender equality and a commitment to human rights throughout life were highlighted as important factors to prevent and avoid the cumulation of inequalities across the life course, and marginalisation and vulnerability in older age.

16. The second expert panel on “Ensuring access to long-term care and support for carers and families” discussed the strategies and progress in ensuring access to high-quality long-term care and palliative care in ageing societies. It examined national strategies and experiences in the provision of long-term care, as well as the support provided to families and informal care givers. Furthermore, the panel addressed the human rights, dignity and autonomy of older persons in long-term care settings, pointing out the challenge of elder abuse in both formal and informal care. The concerns raised and lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic were addressed by several panellists as well.

17. During the second panel, discussants pointed out the serious impacts of COVID-19 on long-term care and the importance of resolving existing structural problems. They called for promoting a quality work environment for care workers, adopting comprehensive policies to support formal and informal care givers, and establishing a well-rounded care system with better coordination mechanism and wider cooperation for responding to urgent crises. Panellists further underlined the need to bring together different stakeholders and generations in the provision of long-term care.

18. The third expert panel on “Mainstreaming ageing to advance a society for all ages” discussed the need for a systematic integration of ageing issues across all policy fields and at multiple levels of government. The essential nature of engaging a broad range of stakeholders was prominently addressed as well.

19. Speakers in this panel shared good practice examples of a whole-of-society approach to policy making in the area of ageing, as well as of monitoring mainstreaming. Panellists also highlighted ageism and related negative social constructs of age as a barrier to mainstreaming ageing.

F. Opening of the ministerial segment

20. The ministerial segment opened on 17 June 2022. Introductory speeches were given by Ms. Elena Bonetti, Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family of Italy, Mr. Benedetto Della Vedova, Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy, Mr. Andrea Orlando, Minister of Labour and Social Policies of Italy, Mr. António Guterres, Secretary-General of the United Nations (message delivered by Ms. Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary of ECE), and Ms. Diene Keita, Deputy Executive Director (Programme) of UNFPA.

G. Presentation of the main elements of the draft Ministerial Declaration

21. The Chairperson of the ECE Standing Working Group on Ageing, Mr. Edmundo Martinho (Portugal), informed the Conference about the drafting and intergovernmental consultation process of the Declaration and presented its elements under three main goals: promoting active and healthy ageing throughout life, ensuring access to long-term care and support for carers and families, and mainstreaming ageing to advance a society for all ages. He pointed out the Declaration’s recognition of the disproportionately negative effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on older persons. He further stressed the strong commitment of the Declaration to ensuring older persons’ full enjoyment of human rights and achieving gender equality. He also highlighted the call included in the final part of the Declaration to update

the Regional Implementation Strategy of MIPAA, and to explore the possibility of also updating MIPAA itself, to adapt ageing policies to economic, social, and digital transitions and emerging challenges.

22. He thanked all national focal points on ageing for their engaged participation in drafting the Declaration. He informed that the Bureau of the Standing Working Group on Ageing met on 16 June to review the draft Declaration and comments received. He reminded delegations that any suggestion of unavoidable further changes needed to be communicated to the ECE Secretariat in writing before noon 17 June.

H. Presentation of the joint declaration of civil society and scientific research

23. The joint declaration of civil society and scientific research was presented by Ms. Heidrun Mollenkopf, AGE Platform Europe, and Mr. Kai Leichsenring, European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research.

I. High-level panel discussion between ministers and civil society representatives

24. The high-level panel on “Joining forces for solidarity and equal opportunities throughout life: building forward on lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic” noted that the COVID-19 pandemic revealed a range of often longstanding problems related to ageing in areas such as long-term care, age discrimination, or disparities within society. Panellists underlined the significance of coordinating policies affecting older persons across all sectors, and stressed the contribution of different generations in times of crises. They called for improvements to health care system to ensure that we build back better and fairer after the pandemic, as well as for financial investments in the health sector. Several discussants also highlighted the need to take more robust action against loneliness among older persons, and for upholding their human rights.

J. Ministerial roundtables

25. The first ministerial round table highlighted the topic of “ensuring access to long-term care and support for carers and families”. The second ministerial round table focused on the topic “Mainstreaming ageing to advance a society for all ages”.

26. At the beginning of the first ministerial round table, the Chairperson of the Conference, Ms. Elena Bonetti (Italy), invited the Vice-Chairperson, Ms. Signe Riisalo (Estonia), to assume the chairing of the ministerial roundtable on ensuring access to long-term care and support for carers and families. She also informed delegates that due to unforeseen circumstances, she would unfortunately not be able to attend the afternoon sessions of the Ministerial Conference. She invited the second Vice-Chair of the Conference, Ms. Ana Mendes Godinho (Portugal), to assume the chairing of the second Ministerial roundtable and delegated to her the subsequent chairing of the afternoon Plenary Session of the Conference.

27. In her opening of the first ministerial round table, Ms. Signe Riisalo (Estonia), highlighted that while the long-term care systems of countries are different, many of the associated challenges are shared. She pointed out the essential nature of ensuring the affordability of and access to high quality long-term care services, by improving the work environment and conditions of care workers, and by supporting informal care givers. She underlined the role of family carers and the importance of the legal recognition of the activities of informal care givers. She invited the participants to share experience and good practices in the fields of long-term care and support to carers.

28. During the first ministerial round table, ministers and heads of delegations of a number of ECE member States addressed the importance of safeguarding older persons’ human rights and dignity in care. They also highlighted the need to establish holistic and integrated long-

term care systems across different sectors. The challenge related to workforce shortages in the care sector was raised repeatedly, as well as the need for better recognition of the crucial work of both formal and informal carers. The situation of older persons with dementia and their family care givers was singled out, and examples of supporting carers through respite care services, financial support, or training were given. Good practice examples also included innovative community care services, enabling environments for more independent living, and the development of quality standards in the care sector.

29. Before the opening of the second ministerial round table, the Russian Federation made an intervention.

30. The second ministerial round table on “Mainstreaming ageing to advance a society for all ages” was chaired by the Vice-Chairperson of the Conference, Ms. Ana Mendes Godinho (Portugal). In her opening statement, she highlighted the COVID-19 pandemic as a wakeup call to address ageing-related issues across sectors and to bring innovative solutions. She pointed out the importance of effective coordination mechanisms including a range of stakeholders, which is an important enabler of mainstreaming ageing and of ensuring participation in policy making. She also brought participants’ attention to the European Council Conclusions on Mainstreaming Ageing in Public Policies, approved during the Portuguese presidency of the European Council in 2021.

31. During the round table discussion, ministers and heads of delegations emphasized the importance of mainstreaming ageing across sectors and levels of government. They also highlighted the necessity of enhancing international cooperation and coordination to promote concrete and practical measures to respond to the challenges brought about by demographic changes. Furthermore, speakers stressed the importance of research and age-disaggregated data to recognize the diversity of older people and to understand and better address their needs. Among the good practice examples, mainstreaming older persons’ issues in national development strategies, and promoting age-friendly environments, particularly at the local level, were highlighted.

K. Adoption of the Ministerial Declaration

32. Ms. Ana Mendes Godinho (Portugal), Vice-Chairperson of the Conference, chaired the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration. She pointed out that a change of technical nature has been made in paragraphs 6e and 33, where the term “self-determination” was replaced by “individual autonomy” to be consistent with internationally agreed language used in the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. Information about this proposed change has been distributed in printed form to heads of delegations on 17 June during the lunch break. No further amendments have been submitted by delegations. The proposed final text of the Declaration had been distributed to delegations at the beginning of the afternoon Plenary Session.

33. The Vice-Chairperson invited all member States to adopt the final text of the Declaration containing the proposed technical changes in paragraphs 6e and 33. The 2022 Rome Ministerial Declaration “A Sustainable World for All Ages: Joining Forces for Solidarity and Equal Opportunities Throughout Life” was adopted by acclamation. It is included in Annex I of this report.

34. The Vice-Chairperson congratulated the Conference on the success of the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration. She invited Ms. Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary of ECE, to make her closing remarks.

35. Ms. Olga Algayerova congratulated member States on the adoption of the Rome Ministerial Declaration, which is the embodiment of a commitment for closer cooperation to achieve a sustainable world for all ages. She thanked delegations for their continued commitment to the ECE Standing Working Group on Ageing and affirmed the ECE secretariat’s support to assist member States in the follow-up actions related to reaching the goals of the Rome Declaration. She also thanked representatives of civil society and the scientific research community for their contributions.

36. She expressed her gratitude to the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of Italy and the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies of Italy for hosting the Ministerial Conference. She also thanked the Italian and ECE teams for organizing the Conference.

37. Ms. Daniela Bas, Director of the Division for Inclusive Social Development, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, delivered a presentation on the topic “From regional to global review of MIPAA in 2023”, outlining further steps leading to the global-level culmination of the fourth review and appraisal of MIPAA at the sixty-first session of the Commission for Social Development in 2023 in New York.

L. Closing of the Conference

38. The Vice-Chairperson invited the ECE Secretariat to outline the main elements of the draft Conference report. No objections were raised from delegations and the decisions of the Conference were adopted.

39. Ms. Lidia Bratanova, Secretary to the Conference, thanked the ECE secretariat and the local organizing team for their work in organizing the Conference. She also thanked all delegations and Conference participants for their contributions, and the Conference Chairperson and Vice-Chairpersons for their support throughout the Conference.

40. On behalf of the host country, Ms. Ilaria Antonini, Head of the Department for family policies of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of Italy, closed the Conference by thanking organizers, participants, partners from civil society and the research community, as well as interpreters

Annex I

2022 ROME MINISTERIAL DECLARATION

“A Sustainable World for All Ages: Joining Forces for Solidarity and Equal Opportunities Throughout Life”

17 June 2022

1. We, the representatives of the member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), gathered at the fifth Ministerial Conference on Ageing from 16 to 17 June 2022 in Rome, Italy, reaffirm our commitment made in the Berlin Ministerial Declaration (2002), and subsequently confirmed by the León (2007), Vienna (2012), and Lisbon (2017) Ministerial Declarations to fulfil the UNECE Regional Implementation Strategy (RIS) of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing, 2002 (MIPAA), and to ensure older persons' full enjoyment of all human rights, indivisible and inherent to all human beings, regardless of age.
2. We celebrate significant longevity gains in the UNECE region over the last decades thanks to medical progress, better living and working conditions, increased welfare, and advances in public health. This enables older persons to stay healthy and active longer and to be more involved in their communities, giving our societies increased opportunities to benefit from their manifold contributions to the economy, society and families as active citizens and volunteers, consumers, care givers, and as sources of experience and knowledge.
3. We recognise that older persons are becoming the fastest-growing segment of the population in the UNECE region, and we need to be more aware of and respond to the heterogeneity of their capacities and the inequalities accumulated over the life course, while respecting that older persons are not a homogeneous group, but diverse in their situations, identities, needs, preferences, and opportunities.
4. We acknowledge the significant progress made in implementing RIS/MIPAA over the past five years in particular towards recognizing the potential of older persons, encouraging longer working lives and the ability to work, and ensuring ageing with dignity. The frameworks on active and healthy ageing, age-friendly environments, and mainstreaming ageing are gaining recognition. We also welcome the growing engagement in ageing policy matters from civil society and public and private stakeholders.
5. We are aware that the implementation of RIS/MIPAA has occurred during times of major demographic, political, social, and economic changes. The last years have been marked by increased pressure on private and public finances as well as on health and social services, together with a growing awareness of the impact of climate change, digital transformation and emergency crises, including pandemics, armed conflicts and disasters. There are still challenges to be addressed and necessary policy improvements to be made to better leverage the potential of older persons, including:
 - (a) further developing sustainable, accessible, and adequate social protection systems covering social security, universal health care and inclusive, quality social services, in particular long-term care services, that help to mitigate cumulative inequalities and prevent old-age poverty and exclusion;
 - (b) focusing on health promotion, including raising awareness of and access to sports, physical activity, healthy nutrition, and other preventive health measures over the life course;

- (c) enhancing the involvement of older persons and their representatives in law- and policymaking at all levels to better reflect their rights and diverse needs and interests;
 - (d) making all environments, including physical, social, technological, and digital environments, more age-friendly and accessible for all, and increasing the availability of adapted housing and assistive devices;
 - (e) recognizing the intersectionality between disability and ageing across different areas of everyday life, and addressing obstacles older persons with disabilities face, including by promoting universal design and adaptations as a prerequisite for age-friendly environments;
 - (f) creating flexible conditions for longer and healthy working lives, ensuring inclusive labour markets and decent work for all ages, preventing and responding to gender inequalities, old-age poverty, and social exclusion;
 - (g) eliminating persistent gender inequalities by addressing the different impacts of demographic change on women and men through dedicated measures, including by mainstreaming gender in all policies and by collecting, using, and analysing sex- and age-disaggregated data;
 - (h) combating ageism and the perpetuation of stereotypes, prejudice and discrimination based on age in all spheres of society;
 - (i) adopting policies that strengthen inter- and intragenerational cooperation and solidarity, considering the needs of both current and future generations;
 - (j) better recognising and supporting the important role of both formal and informal carers, particularly older women, and promoting a distribution of care work that is not gender-based;
 - (k) fully recognising the active participation of older persons and the contributions they make to the functioning of our societies including in emergency and conflict situations.
6. We acknowledge that the COVID-19 pandemic, and the measures taken to fight it, have underscored a range of societal challenges and opportunities. The pandemic has:
- (a) disproportionately affected persons in vulnerable situations, including those belonging to disadvantaged socio-economic groups and those living in institutions, and showed the importance of intra- and intergenerational justice, inclusion, and gender equality;
 - (b) highlighted the vulnerability of many older persons who have been at higher risk of severe illness and mortality, and in some cases have faced difficulties accessing essential services, including testing, vaccination and treatment, and have been exposed to ageism and discriminatory care rationing. Public health measures such as physical distancing, restrictions in nursing homes, and temporary closures of day-care centres for older adults have caused and deepened social isolation of many older persons with serious consequences for their mental and physical health;
 - (c) demonstrated the need to strengthen the capacity, emergency preparedness, and coordination of the health and long-term care sectors, in particular the protection of persons in vulnerable situations, and to develop flexible and innovative models of care across different settings to prevent vulnerability;
 - (d) made clear that difficult public health decisions affecting older persons need to be guided by a commitment to dignity and the right to quality health and social services;
 - (e) highlighted the need to better guarantee the full enjoyment of all human rights by older persons, including being able to speak for themselves and to exercise their right to individual autonomy, participation in decision-making, freedom of movement, and social participation;

- (f) underscored the importance of solid and inclusive welfare systems and solidarity in mitigating the economic and social consequences of crises;
 - (g) demonstrated the strong engagement by civil society, volunteers of all ages, local communities, and families to improve the situation for older persons and others in need;
 - (h) demonstrated older persons' contribution to our societies, exemplified by retired health and care personnel who returned to duty on a voluntary basis and supported the functioning of health and social care systems;
 - (i) emphasized the importance of multilateral cooperation, including through sharing of good practices, experiences, knowledge, and data.
7. The near future will be characterised by the reshaping of our societies based on the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic. As we recommit ourselves to RIS/MIPAA, which has for the last 20 years provided a framework for addressing the cross-sectoral and multidimensional issues of ageing, we stress the need to ensure the full enjoyment of human rights by older persons. We also acknowledge the importance of implementing ageing-related policies in fulfilling the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and its aim of 'leaving no one behind' as well as the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030) and its vision of 'a world in which all persons can live long, healthy lives'. We see that new challenges such as the ongoing digital transformation and climate change are rapidly transforming our societies. Informed by the lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic and achievements so far, we consider discussing adjustments to the international framework for ageing-related policies to address such challenges.
8. We commit ourselves to engage in initiatives for the exchange of information and good practices, for regional cooperation and capacity enhancement on ageing among UNECE member States and all relevant stakeholders, including older persons and their organizations.
9. We aspire to realize a sustainable world for all ages and to join forces for solidarity and equal opportunities throughout life. We are determined to work in a truly collaborative and multilateral partnership to achieve the following policy goals by 2027:

I. Promoting active and healthy ageing throughout life

We commit to promoting active and healthy ageing throughout life by:

- 10. *adopting* concrete policy measures aimed at ensuring the full enjoyment of human rights by older persons, enabling individuals to seize opportunities for active and healthy ageing throughout the life course, unleashing the potential for expanding healthy life years while considering the diverse situations of older persons, gender differences, and combating inequalities to enable everyone to take part in and contribute to all spheres of life;
- 11. *involving* older persons and their organizations in a constructive and meaningful way in the law- and policymaking processes at all levels to ensure that their rights, needs, and interests are taken into account in policies, programmes, and laws that affect them;
- 12. *mainstreaming* gender in policies that promote active and healthy ageing, taking into account the diverse needs and situations of all individuals over the life course;
- 13. *facilitating* older persons' participation in social, cultural, and civic life, and promoting lifelong learning;
- 14. *investing* in strategies and activities and *involving* all actors of society to promote a healthy lifestyle over the life course by encouraging and facilitating physical activity, healthy nutrition, and preventive health interventions, and strengthening mental health and well-being, especially among older persons;
- 15. *investing* in the creation of more age-friendly environments by implementing innovative housing solutions, smart urban and rural planning, appropriate recreational infrastructure, and accessible

- public transport and mobility services; through the meaningful participation by older persons in this process, strengthening their autonomy and independence and enabling them to age safely in a place of their choice, while recognizing the value of the intergenerational approach to improve the lives of people of all ages, in line with WHO guidance on age-friendly environments;
16. *adopting* concrete measures to combat loneliness and social isolation among older persons, including by supporting initiatives in local communities and by civil society, stimulating increased social engagement, participation, and intergenerational solidarity, encouraging volunteering and social innovation, and enhancing digital skills;
 17. *promoting* a positive culture and image of ageing by making the diversity among older persons an asset and by highlighting the manifold contributions of older persons to society;
 18. *protecting* older persons against ageism and all forms of discrimination in all areas by adopting or strengthening the implementation of laws and other instruments at the local, national, or international level, by modifying existing instruments based on discriminatory or stereotypical attitudes or practices, by establishing educational and awareness-raising programmes and campaigns, and fostering intergenerational activities, dialogue, and support;
 19. *improving* the protection of older persons, particularly women and persons with disabilities, including mental impairments, or in situations of dependency, from all forms of violence and abuse, whether it is physical, psychological, sexual, gender-based, or economic, as well as from neglect;
 20. *acknowledging* that violence is a criminal act which can take place at home, in institutions, shared housing, or the community, posing significant public health concerns and reducing the victim's potential for active and healthy ageing; *making sure* that national domestic violence legislation addresses all forms of violence against older persons and provides relevant support services, adequate complaint mechanisms, and equal access to justice for older victims of violence;
 21. *promoting and facilitating* the participation of older persons in the labour market to achieve longer working lives as a vital part of a sustainable and inclusive economy, social participation, financial security, and well-being of older persons;
 22. *improving* active labour market policies that respond to an ageing workforce including tailored support for older jobseekers and encouraging employers to use age-management practices, promote intergenerational dialogue in the workplace, enhance skills development and family-friendly working arrangements, and to provide healthy, safe, and accessible workplaces that prevent work-related accidents and occupational diseases;
 23. *developing* sustainable, inclusive, and equitable pension schemes and improving pension systems' coverage; *establishing* adequate pension entitlements that account for periods of unpaid care over the life course and prevent old-age poverty;
 24. *facilitating and investing* in formal and informal learning opportunities for older persons beyond professional education to strengthen their potential for a fulfilled life in old age while also improving participation in lifelong learning among the adult population;
 25. *promoting* user-friendly digitalisation, *enhancing* digital skills and literacy to enable older persons to participate in an increasingly digital world, while also *ensuring* the right to access to information, participation, and services through access to digital devices and the Internet, and to suitable offline or other secure alternatives in user-friendly and accessible formats;
 26. *supporting* innovation for the silver economy and *valuing* the continued production and purchasing capacity of older persons and their contribution to social and economic activities by encouraging designers, businesses, and public enterprises to provide smarter digital, financial, and other services; *developing* more age-friendly products and services by involving older persons in their design and development;

27. *encouraging* the establishment of independent bodies, for example, ombudspersons, at national, subnational, and local levels that can mediate the rights, needs and interests of older persons in all areas of society.

II. Ensuring access to long-term care and support for carers and families

We commit to ensuring access to long-term care and support for carers and families by:

28. *applying* a person-centred and age-friendly approach to care, *ensuring* the greatest degree of independence, autonomy, and dignity through universal and equal access to health, social, and long-term care services, built on the principles of prevention, early intervention, and integrated care, including support for families, paying attention to accumulated disadvantages across the life course;
29. *continuing* to promote sustainable investments in all health and care services, in particular to develop and continuously improve long-term care systems in cooperation with local authorities and other relevant stakeholders;
30. *improving* the terms of employment and working conditions of health and social care workers, including adequate staffing and occupational health and safety, access to education and training along with other dimensions of decent work;
31. *building* on the lessons learned during the COVID-19 pandemic to respond to older persons' rights, needs, and preferences regarding their personal freedom, privacy, autonomy and self-determination, including in health crises and other emergency situations;
32. *taking appropriate measures* to prepare for the anticipated increase in demand for long-term care services through comprehensive strategic planning for sufficient capacities both in quantitative and qualitative terms, based on equitable and sustainable financing. This will entail ensuring the availability of an appropriately qualified health and care workforce, improving management in care facilities, and cooperating with all relevant stakeholders, including national, subnational, and local authorities; health, social, and long-term care providers; academia; civil society; as well as older persons and their representatives;
33. *prioritising and investing* in skills and competence development and continuous training of health and social care workers in geriatric, gerontological, and digital skills to meet the evolving needs for quality and innovation in care; *investing* in research and innovation to provide knowledge-based training and practices in health and social care, including awareness-raising and training on ageism, and older persons' right to privacy and individual autonomy;
34. *recognizing and supporting* the continued role of informal and family care as an important part of care provision by providing advice, relief, and social protection, taking measures to help balance paid work, care, and private life, and strengthening intergenerational solidarity as well as a more equal distribution of care work between women and men;
35. *ensuring* the high quality of health, social, and long-term care services based on quality management, monitoring, auditing, and continuous improvement by involving care workers, informal carers, older persons, and other relevant stakeholders; *assuring* that services are provided in dialogue with care receivers and that there is a system of assessment in place for those who consider they are not receiving the services to which they are entitled;
36. *expanding protection* from neglect and abuse in all care settings through the adoption and effective implementation of protection mechanisms, including measures for prevention, complaints, and intervention;
37. *developing, regularly updating, and implementing* national and subnational plans to address dementia and the provision of quality health, social, and long-term care services to ensure participation, dignity, and quality of life for persons with cognitive and mental impairments, as well as support for their family and informal carers;

38. *addressing* the growing need for adequate palliative care services through their integration into the continuum of care and support, and *ensuring* an end of life with dignity.

III. Mainstreaming ageing to advance a society for all ages

We commit to mainstream ageing in all policies to create a society for all ages by:

39. *developing* or *strengthening*, where existent, a national strategic framework or process for mainstreaming ageing to support the systematic consideration and integration of both individual and population ageing aspects into all policies at local, subnational, national and international levels, including through the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other relevant international policy frameworks;
40. *enhancing* age- and gender-sensitive research and sex-, age- and disability-disaggregated data collection on population ageing and the diverse situations of older persons to inform evidence-based policies, monitoring, and evaluation;
41. *building* a mainstreaming approach that is human rights-based, life-course-oriented, evidence-based, gender-responsive and equitable, and that considers ageing from both a societal and individual perspective, and reflects and recognizes multiple and intersecting forms of discrimination and the diverse needs, preferences and opportunities among older persons;
42. *coordinating* ageing-related policies across all levels of government through establishing or strengthening of inter-institutional coordination mechanisms to ensure systematic mainstreaming of the ageing dimension in all public policies;
43. *building* capacity on mainstreaming ageing by developing methodologies for age- and gender-sensitive analysis and impact assessments of new laws and policies;
44. *developing* a participatory stakeholder engagement approach in a whole-of-government and whole-of-society effort to ensure that older persons and organizations that represent them are listened to and actively involved in meaningful cross-sectoral dialogue and collaboration on ageing between all relevant actors in the public and private sector, academia, social partners, and civil society;
45. *strengthening* the protection of older persons' full enjoyment of human rights, including by addressing the challenges underscored by emergency and conflict situations and the COVID-19 pandemic and enhancing international cooperation in this regard.

IV. Final remarks

46. Bearing in mind the discussions, suggestions, and recommendations collected during this fifth Ministerial Conference on Ageing, we recognize and appreciate the important role of the UNECE Standing Working Group on Ageing as the main intergovernmental body fostering regional dialogue, cooperation, and capacity-building on ageing. We will continue to contribute to its activities and to further strengthen the Standing Working Group on Ageing and its secretariat.
47. We acknowledge the important role and value of RIS/MIPAA in developing and promoting for the past 20 years ageing-related policies geared towards a society for all ages and for the benefit and well-being of older persons, at both national and regional levels. We entrust the Standing Working Group on Ageing with the task of updating RIS and exploring the possibility of also updating MIPAA to adapt ageing-related policy responses to economic, social, and digital transitions and emerging challenges, and developing further instruments to support them.
48. We appreciate the role that the UNECE Secretariat and other stakeholders will play in assisting member States in the implementation of RIS/MIPAA and the goals of the 2022 Rome Ministerial Declaration through, inter alia, support for developing and updating national strategies on ageing,

strengthening capacities for mainstreaming ageing, and building on the lessons learned from COVID-19.

49. We recognize the importance of population ageing as a global trend that needs to be addressed in international frameworks and initiatives and we support the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and global and regional initiatives such as the United Nations Decade of Healthy Ageing (2021-2030), the Global Campaign to Combat Ageism, the Decade of Demographic Resilience (2022-2031), and the activities of the United Nations Open-ended Working Group on Ageing, among others.
50. We express our sincere gratitude to Italy for hosting the fifth UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing in June 2022.

Annex II

List of speakers

Thursday, 16 June 2022

Plenary session

- Chairperson: **Ms. Elena Bonetti**, Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family of Italy
- Vice-chairperson: **Ms. Signe Riisalo**, Minister of Social Protection of Estonia
Ms. Ana Mendes Godinho, Minister for Labour, Solidarity and Social Security of Portugal
- Speakers: **Dr. Zsuzsanna Jakab**, Deputy Director-General of WHO (video message)
Ms. Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary of ECE
Ms. Lisa Warth, Population Unit, ECE
- Message by: **Mr. Sergio Mattarella**, President of Italy
- Interventions: **Mr. Narek Mkrtychyan**, Minister of Labour and Social Affairs of Armenia
Ms. Taru Koivisto, Deputy Director General, Ministry of Social Affairs and Health of Finland
Ms. Maryna Artsiomenka, Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Protection of Belarus
Ms. Darija Kisić Tepavčević, Minister of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs of Serbia
Mr. Johannes Rauch, Federal Minister of Social Affairs, Health, Care and Consumer Protection of Austria
Mr. Zurab Azarashvili, Minister of Internally Displaced Persons from the Occupied Territories, Labour, Health and Social Affairs of Georgia
Ms. Olga Batalina, First Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Protection of the Russian Federation (video message)
- Keynote Speaker: **Mr. Alexandre Sidorenko**, Senior Advisor, European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research

Expert panel I

Promoting active and healthy ageing throughout life

- Moderator: **Ms. Norah Keating**, Director, Global Social Issues on Ageing, International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics
- Panellists: **Ms. Elena Bonetti**, Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family of Italy
Ms. Christie Morreale, Vice-President of the Walloon Government, Minister for Employment, Training, Health, Social Action, Equal Opportunities and Women's Rights
Mr. Dan Juvan, State Secretary of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of Slovenia
Mr. Kiran Rabheru, Chair of the Steering Group of the Global Alliance for the Rights of Older People (GAROP)
Dr. Arno Elmer, Managing Director, BeHome, Germany

Expert panel II

Ensuring access to long-term care and support for carers and families

- Moderator: **Ms. Francesca Colombo**, Head of the Health Division, OECD
- Panellists: **Mr. Ernst van Koesveld**, Vice-minister for Long Term Care at the Ministry of Health, Welfare and Sport of the Netherlands
Mons. Vincenzo Paglia, President of the Commission for the Reform of Healthcare and Socio-medical assistance for the Older Population of Italy
Ms. Claudia Mahler, UN Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons
Ms. Maria Petkova, Director, Tulip Foundation, Bulgaria
Mr. Stecy Yghemonos, Director, Eurocarers

Expert panel III*Mainstreaming ageing to advance a society for all ages*

- Moderator: **Mr. Edmundo Martinho**, Chair of the ECE Standing Working Group on Ageing
- Panellists: **Ms. Mary Butler**, Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People of Ireland
Ms. Annette Gibbons, Associate Deputy Minister of Employment and Social Development Canada
Ms. Nathalie Barthoulot, Minister of the Canton of Jura, President of the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Social Affairs (CDAS)
Ms. Liat Ayalon, Professor at the School of Social Work, Bar Ilan University, Israel
Ms. Tatiana Sorocan, Country Director for HelpAge International Moldova
- Rapporteur: **Mr. Kai Leichsenring**, Executive Director, European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research

Friday, 17 June 2022

Ministerial segment: plenary session

- Speakers: **Ms. Elena Bonetti**, Minister for Equal Opportunities and Family of Italy
Mr. Benedetto Della Vedova, Undersecretary of State at the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and International Cooperation of Italy
Mr. Andrea Orlando, Minister of Labour and Social Policies of Italy
Ms. Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary of ECE
Ms. Diene Keita, Deputy Executive Director (Programme) of UNFPA
Mr. Edmundo Martinho, Chair of the ECE Standing Working Group on Ageing
Ms. Heidrun Mollenkopf, AGE Platform Europe
Mr. Kai Leichsenring, European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research
- Message by: **Mr. António Guterres**, Secretary-General of the United Nations

High-level panel discussion between ministers and civil society representatives

Joining forces for solidarity and equal opportunities throughout life: building forward on lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic

- Moderator: **Dr. Debra Whitman**, Executive Vice President and Chief Public Policy Officer, AARP, United States of America
- Panellists: **Ms. Dubravka Šuica**, Vice-President of the European Commission for Democracy and Demography (video message)
Dr. Natasha Azzopardi Muscat, Director of the Division of Country Health Policies and Systems, WHO Regional Office for Europe
Mr. Pierpaolo Sileri, Undersecretary of State for Health of Italy
Ms. Lisa Paus, Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth of Germany
Mr. Maciej Kucharczyk, Secretary General, AGE Platform Europe
Ms. María Rodríguez Alcázar, Board Member, European Youth Forum

First ministerial roundtable

Ensuring access to long-term care and support for carers and families

- Moderator: **Ms. Signe RIISALO**, Minister of Social Protection of Estonia
- Interventions: **Mr. Edwin Walker**, Deputy Assistant Secretary for Aging, Administration for Community Living, United States Department of Health and Human Services
Mr. Jo'Etienne Abela, Minister for Active Ageing of Malta
Ms. Nathalie Barthoulot, Minister of the Canton of Jura, President of the Swiss Conference of Cantonal Ministers of Social Affairs (CDAS)
Ms. Derya Yanik, Minister of Family and Social Services of Türkiye
Ms. Mary Butler, Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People of Ireland
Ms. Lisa Paus, Federal Minister for Family Affairs, Senior Citizens, Women and Youth of Germany
Mr. Luis Alberto Barriga Martín, General Director of IMSERSO, Spain
Ms. Virginie Lasserre, General Director for Social Cohesion at the Ministry for Solidarity and Health of France
Mr. Georgios Stamatis, Secretary General for Social Solidarity and Fight Against Poverty, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of Greece
- Rapporteur: **Ms. Amal Abou Rafeh**, Chief of the Programme on Ageing Section, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Second ministerial roundtable

Mainstreaming ageing to advance a society for all ages

- Moderator: **Ms. Ana Mendes GODINHO**, Minister for Labour, Solidarity and Social Security of Portugal
- Interventions: **Mr. Marcel Spatari**, Minister of Labor and Social Protection of the Republic of Moldova
Ms. Darija Kisić Tepavčević, Minister of Labour, Employment, Veteran and Social Affairs of Serbia
Mr. Guy Opperman, Minister for Pensions and Financial Inclusion of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
Mr. Anar Aliyev, Deputy Minister of Labour and Social Protection of Population of the Republic of Azerbaijan
Ms. Justina Jakštienė, Vice-Minister of Social Security and Labour of the Republic of Lithuania

Ms. Zhyldyz Polotova, Deputy Minister of Labour, Social Security and Migration of the Kyrgyz Republic

Ms. Virginie Lasserre, General Director for Social Cohesion at the Ministry for Solidarity and Health of France

Ms. Mary Butler, Minister of State for Mental Health and Older People of Ireland

Mr. Georgios Stamatis, Secretary General for Social Solidarity and Fight Against Poverty, Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of Greece

Mr. Abdulaziz Khaydarov, Executive Director of Off-Budget Pension Fund under the Ministry Finance of the Republic of Uzbekistan

Rapporteur: **Ms. Marta Diavolova**, Deputy Regional Director a.i., UNFPA Eastern Europe and Central Asia Regional Office

Adoption of the Ministerial Declaration

Speakers: **Ms. Ana Mendes GODINHO**, Minister for Labour, Solidarity and Social Security of Portugal

Ms. Olga Algayerova, Executive Secretary of ECE

Ms. Daniela Bas, Director of Division for Inclusive Social Development, United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs

Closing

Speakers: **Ms. Lisa Warth**, Population Unit, ECE

Ms. Lidia Bratanova, Director of the Statistical Division, ECE

Ms. Ilaria Antonini, Head of the Department for family policies of the Presidency of the Council of Ministers of Italy
