

# UNECE Ministerial Conference will discuss strategies to foster Active Ageing

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The UNECE Ministerial Conference “Ensuring a society for all ages: promoting quality of life and active ageing” will take place from 18 to 20 September 2012 in Vienna, Austria. The Conference will mark the 30th anniversary of the first World Assembly on Ageing, which also took place in Vienna in 1982. It will review progress made in implementing the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) and its Regional Implementation Strategy (RIS), both adopted in 2002, and define the post-2012 agenda on ageing.

Some 450 participants, including 34 Ministers, Deputy Ministers or State Secretaries, and high-level officials from UNECE member States as well as representatives of European and international organizations, scientists, older persons and non-governmental organizations representing them will take part in the debates.

Sven Alkalaj, UNECE Executive Secretary and Rudolf Hundstorfer, Austrian Federal Minister for Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection will open the Conference, and Heinz Fischer, Federal President of the Republic of Austria will greet the participants of the High-level segment. Renowned scientists will also be involved, including, among others, Prof. Susanne Iwarsson (Lund University, Sweden), Olga Mikhailova (Saint Petersburg Institute of Bioregulation and Gerontology, Russian Federation) and Prof. Ursula Lehr (Chairperson of BAGSO, the German Federal Head Organization of Senior Citizens’ Organizations, Germany).

The Conference will open on 18 September 2012 with an NGO and a Scientific Forum. On 19 September the programme will feature a plenary session followed by expert panels on the following topics:

- Promoting longer working life and maintaining work ability
- Participation, non-discrimination and social inclusion of older persons
- Creating an enabling environment for health independence and ageing in dignity

On 20 September 2012, a Panel discussion between Ministers and civil society representatives will be dedicated to Stimulating intergenerational dialogue and solidarity between the generations: a shared responsibility. Ministerial panels on Ensuring a Society for All Ages: Promoting Quality of Life and Active Ageing will take up different aspects from the expert panels and culminate in a plenary session expected to lead to the adoption of the Ministerial Declaration. This outcome document shall highlight the future priorities for the third implementation cycle of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and its Regional Implementation Strategy (2013 – 2017). Declarations from the NGO and the Scientific Forums will be taken into consideration for the Ministerial Declaration. A good practice exhibition will be on display throughout the conference, illustrating ageing-related policy and practice throughout the region.

## Active ageing

The Conference coincides with the 2012 European Year for Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations. The Conference underlines the importance of investing in policy-frameworks that enable individuals to be active throughout their life-course and until old age. Active ageing and solidarity between generations represent important opportunities. Therefore active ageing has been prominent on the agenda of the UNECE work on ageing in the region, encouraging member States to exchange experiences on good practices and to agree on new and promising strategies and approaches.

The Ministerial Conference is jointly organized by UNECE and Austria’s Federal Ministry of Labour, Social Affairs and Consumer Protection.

