

COMPARISON OF THE DRAFT ELEMENTS FOR THE POLITICAL DECLARATION OF THE 2007 UNECE MINISTERIAL CONFERENCE ON AGEING AND THE MIPAA/RIS

Note by the UNECE secretariat
for the First Meeting of the Preparatory Committee
for the 2007 UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing

1. This note compares the draft elements for the political declaration of the 2007 UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing ([ECE/AC.30/PC.1/2007/L.3](#), denoted below as “Elements for 2007”) and the UNECE Regional Implementation Strategy (RIS) for the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) adopted at the Berlin Ministerial Conference in 2002 ([ECE/AC.23/2002/2/Rev.6](#)). It draws attention, first, to those elements that are developed further or modified compared to the corresponding statements in the RIS, and second, to newly introduced elements. Overall, the 2007 political declaration is expected to reaffirm commitments of Member States to the RIS and to the Berlin Ministerial Declaration (Elements for 2007 para. 8). It aims at facilitating discussions on the political declaration in the Preparatory Committee for the 2007 UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing.

I. ELEMENTS DEVELOPED FURTHER FROM THE CORRESPONDING STATEMENTS IN THE MIPAA/RIS

2. A strategic approach in the RIS is involving civil society in implementing ageing related policies (in particular, in RIS paras. 9 and 14). The elements for the 2007 declaration additionally specify the need to ensure that citizens are fully informed about new initiatives and reforms (Elements for 2007 para. 12).

3. Referring to the “bottom-up approach” as a promising tool for monitoring, the draft elements for the 2007 declaration propose, “*to further promote this approach and make use of it not only for monitoring, but also for increasing participation and involvement of citizens of all ages.*” Furthermore, they call to promote “*real empowerment, which can only be achieved through involvement of civil society in decision-making processes and in governance and management processes*” (Elements for 2007 para.17).

4. While the RIS recognizes age discrimination as a part of social exclusion and calls for the “*promotion and protection of human rights*” (RIS para. 8), the draft elements for 2007 additionally point at “*age discrimination and abuse*” that are “*considered part of poverty and social exclusion*” (Elements for 2007 para. 20).

5. Care is one of the main aspects in the RIS Commitment 7. The draft elements for the 2007 declaration bring in additional aspects: “*Care should not only be aimed at maintaining the functioning of older persons, but at activating, promoting, and optimising the functioning of human beings. A new approach needs to be promoted focussing on fostering and training the cognitive, physical, and sensory capacities of older persons.*” (Elements for 2007 para. 26)

6. Regarding wellbeing and health of older persons (another main aspect in RIS Commitment 7), the draft elements for 2007 make explicit reference to policies that aim at prolonging life, to those prolonging life free of disability in particular (Elements for 2007 para. 28).

II. ELEMENTS NOT EXPLICITLY INCLUDED IN MIPAA/RIS¹

7. The presentation of draft elements for the 2007 declaration emphasizes the need for improving policy advice and providing member states with the necessary tools and/or capacities to implement their commitments. *“The practice of monitoring, evaluating and following up on the policy actions has to be promoted”* (para.19).¹
8. As basis for all initiatives, the draft elements for 2007 call for a *“systematic approach to policymaking and programme development... aiming at coherence of the different stages of a project cycle (data collection, situation analysis, impact analysis, planning, implementation, monitoring, assessment).”* (paras. 10 and 11)
9. Concerns of minorities are included in the draft elements for the 2007 declaration: *“The special needs and rights of vulnerable populations, such as ethnic, linguistic, and racial minority elderly, of rural elderly, and of the oldest-old, need particular consideration in policies and programs.”* (para. 21) *“The United Nations Principles for Older Persons should be seen as the fundamental document for the rights of older persons.”* (para. 20)
10. The need to consider the importance of customs and traditions and their intergenerational transmission sustaining the societal role of older persons and in maintaining social cohesion is referred to in the Elements for 2007 (para. 37).
11. Compiling data and policy-relevant indicators for monitoring the RIS is important for the follow-up process. By including it into the 2007 draft, its central role in the review and appraisal of the MIPAA/RIS is acknowledged (para. 38).
12. The draft elements for the 2007 declaration make explicit reference to the need for research (para. 39).
13. Capacity development is highlighted as *“a vital element for the successful implementation of the Strategy and the Plan of Action. There is an obvious need to strengthen the capacities of national and local authorities to design, develop and implement programmes that would help societies adapt to ageing. International cooperation should ensure that countries in transition are able to benefit from the experience and knowledge of others.”* (para. 44)
14. To ensure effective follow-up and implementation to the decisions of the 2007 Ministerial Conference, the draft elements call for voluntary contributions from UNECE member States and from the international donor community (para. 47), while recognising the contributions from Austria (para. 45) and Spain (para. 46) to the follow-up to MIPAA/RIS.
15. The draft elements for the 2007 declaration explicitly refer to the central role of the UNECE secretariat in the international coordination of the follow-up to the 2007 Ministerial Conference (para. 43) and suggest establishing an intergovernmental body in the UNECE that would oversee this work (para. 48).

¹ References to paragraph numbers throughout this section apply to the draft elements for the 2007 political declaration ([ECE/AC.30/PC.1/2007/L.3](#)).