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**Economic Commission for Europe****Working Group on Ageing****Twelfth meeting**

Geneva, 18 and 19 November 2019

Item 6 of the provisional agenda

**The WGA work programme for the  
fourth implementation cycle of the  
MIPAA/RIS in 2018-2022****Implementation of the work programme of the Working  
Group on Ageing in 2019****Note by the Secretariat****I. Introduction**

1. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) Working Group on Ageing (WGA) was established in 2008 as an intergovernmental mechanism to facilitate the realization of the ECE Regional Implementation Strategy for the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA/RIS).
2. The WGA work programme for the fourth implementation cycle of the MIPAA/RIS in 2018-2022 was adopted at the eleventh meeting of the Working Group in November 2018 (ECE/WG.1/2018/2). The Lisbon Ministerial Declaration (ECE/AC.30/2017/2/Rev.1), endorsed by 46 member States at the UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing in September 2017 (Lisbon, Portugal), is at the basis of this five-year work programme. The foreseen activities are in line with the ECE Executive Committee (EXCOM) approved programme of work of the Population component of the Housing, Land Management and Population subprogramme for 2018-2019 (ECE/WG.1/2017/5).
3. This document is prepared by the secretariat for the twelfth WGA meeting. It addresses the implementation of the WGA programme of work during the year 2019, including main outputs for the key areas of activity: policy seminars and in-depths discussions; preparation of policy briefs with good practice examples; capacity development; and monitoring implementation of MIPAA/RIS and strengthening the evidence base for policymaking.



## **II. Implementation of the main elements of the work programme for 2019**

### **A. International cooperation, exchange of experience and policy discussion**

#### **1. Policy seminars on ageing**

4. The first Policy Seminar on Ageing that took place on 21 November 2018, focused on the linkages between ageing-related policies and the Sustainable Development Goals. The Policy Seminar was attended by over 50 participants, including representatives from 30 ECE member States, civil society and international organizations. The feedback at the end of the seminar was highly positive and its participants recommended to make policy seminars a regular part of the WGA Work Programme 2018-2022.

5. The Second Policy Seminar on Ageing to be held on 20 November 2019 is on the topic “Informal Care for Persons with Dementia”. The informal care was the second most voted topic in the 2018 consultation with the WGA members on topics for policy seminars. An emphasis on persons with dementia would allow to focus the discussion on a group of informal carers facing specific challenges and consider support measures developed in this field by member States. A unique opportunity for participants this year will be to learn about informal care policy in Switzerland, the dementia action plan and support measures by the canton and city of Geneva, through a dedicated lecture and two site visits in the afternoon. These were arranged in cooperation with the Swiss representative at the WGA and the High School of Social Work in Geneva.

#### **2. Policy briefs**

6. The ECE series of Policy Briefs on Ageing provides information on policies and promotes exchange of good practice examples among member States regarding different areas of MIPAA/RIS. The Policy Briefs integrate a wealth of contributions and experiences from member States. All published Policy Briefs are available on the ECE website.<sup>1</sup>

7. Since the eleventh meeting of the Working Group in November 2018, two Policy Briefs - No. 21 on the topic “Ageism as a barrier to a longer working life” and No. 22 “Challenging roles of informal carers” - were published as planned. The latter brief was drafted together with the experts of the European Centre on Social Welfare Policy and Research in Vienna. It was published ahead of the Second Policy seminar and will be used as a background document informing the discussions along with the many policy examples that were submitted to support its preparation. The German donation to the Ageing fund ensures that these latest issues of Policy Briefs will be available in printed and electronic format.

8. As the WGA contribution to the 25-year regional review of the Beijing Platform for Action on Women’s Empowerment and Gender Equality, a Policy Brief No. 23 on gender equality in ageing societies has been issued. The preparation of this additional policy brief initiated by France was agreed at the Bureau meeting in May 2019. The focal point on ageing for France and his team took the lead in drafting this brief. The preparation of a Policy Brief No. 24 on ageing in urban environments has started in autumn 2019 and its first draft will be presented to the Working Group at its twelfth meeting.

9. Two new issues of Policy Briefs on Ageing are planned for 2020: the first one will focus on older persons in emergency situations while the topic for the second brief will be decided at the twelfth WGA meeting.

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<sup>1</sup> Available from <http://www.unecce.org/population/ageing/policybriefs.html> .

## **B. Guidelines and policy recommendations, advisory services and capacity-building**

### **1. Road maps for mainstreaming ageing**

10. Road Maps for Mainstreaming Ageing, developed in collaboration with member States at their request, provide a guide through which the country in question can enhance implementation of the commitments of MIPAA/RIS taking into account specificities of the country.

11. In 2018, the Government of Belarus requested ECE to prepare a Road Map in support of developing national strategy on ageing. The work started in December 2018 and included two field missions to Belarus (in December 2018 and April 2019) during which discussions with government representatives and various stakeholder groups were held to inform the preparation of the Road Map for mainstreaming ageing. A consultant was hired to conduct a media analysis of print, online, radio and TV news content to examine the representation of older persons and coverage of ageing issues in general. The results complemented the desk review conducted by the secretariat.

12. The Road Map includes chapters on all areas of MIPAA/RIS commitments as well as research and data collection, monitoring and evaluation. The chapters provide a general appraisal of the situation, followed by recommendations.

13. The first draft of the Road Map was provided for the consultations with the Government experts and other national and international stakeholders in April 2019. The consultations took place in two stages: holding face-to-face meetings and group discussions during the ECE staff mission to Minsk on 22-26 April 2019 and through exchange of written comments and suggestions in May-June 2019. The progress report on the Road Map development was presented to the WGA Bureau at its meeting in May 2019.

14. The Road Map document was finalized in August 2019 and presented to the Government experts and other stakeholders on 1 October 2019 in Minsk at the Forum on Ageing "Equal opportunities to all generations". The work on the Road Map informed the development of a national strategy on ageing which has been prepared in parallel by the Government. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) supported the preparation of the Road Map in organizing the field missions, both in financial and practical terms, helping the consultations and translating the document into Russian language.

15. In 2019, the Government of Kazakhstan requested ECE to develop a Road Map for its country. The secretariat agreed to commence the work on the Road Map in the last quarter of 2019 with a desk study and the first fact-finding mission while the drafting of the document and consultations on the recommendations will be carried out in the first half of 2020. Funds for the 2019 phase were raised from UNFPA and the ECE Regional programme for technical cooperation.

### **2. Guidelines for mainstreaming ageing**

16. At its eleventh meeting the Working Group on Ageing decided to include the development of guidelines on mainstreaming ageing in its programme of work for 2019-2020 and to establish a Task Force to guide this work. The Task Force on Mainstreaming Ageing was instituted in spring 2019 and includes representatives of the following ECE member States: Austria, Belarus, Canada, Czech Republic, Germany, Ireland, Italy, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Spain. In addition, three NGOs participate: Ardager Kazakhstan, ILC Canada, and Turbota pr litnih v Ukraini from Ukraine. Following the discussion at the WGA Bureau meeting in May 2019, the Task Force agreed on its Terms of Reference and preliminary timeline of its work and held its two conference calls in June and September 2019. The initial work included a stocktaking of national practices and experience gained by members of the Task Force on their own countries with a follow-up request to all WGA members to take part in this exercise during September - November 2019. Based on the country notes and the discussion at the WGA meeting, the Task Force will summarise the lessons learnt, identify good national practices and main thematic areas/modules to be

covered by the guidelines. The drafting of the guidelines is planned for 2020; the document will be prepared by a consultant with support of the Task Force members.

## **C. Monitoring implementation of MIPAA/RIS and strengthening the evidence base for policymaking**

### **1. Active Ageing Index**

17. On 31 August 2019, the third phase of the Active Ageing Index (AAI) aiming to promote and facilitate the use of the AAI for designing and monitoring policies on ageing at national and subnational levels had concluded. During the final stage of the project in 2019 a number of activities were carried out/completed, including: (a) a research study in Italy on AAI results for population subgroups differentiated by sex, level of education, by geographical area (North, Centre, South) and area of residence (urban/rural) as well as by family setting (type of household); (b) pilot studies on AAI at the subnational level in Romania and Spain followed by the national seminars in Bucharest (Romania) on 30 May and in Madrid (Spain) on 26 August 2019 to discuss the observed heterogeneity in terms of active ageing and the extent of realisation of older persons' potential within countries and possible policy responses; (c) an update / revision of the AAI datasets for the European Union countries for five points in time: 2008, 2010, 2012, 2014 and 2016 (2010–2018 AAI); (d) in cooperation with the national focal points and/or research teams, the AAI updates / revisions were also implemented for a number of non-EU countries: North Macedonia, Norway, the Republic of Moldova, Serbia, and Switzerland. All these materials could be accessed on the AAI wiki-space.<sup>2</sup>

18. The 2018 AAI Analytical report was prepared in May 2019 using the revised data for the European Union countries over the period 2008–2016. It was launched at the Stakeholder meeting on the Active Ageing Index on 17 June in Brussels.<sup>3</sup> The meeting was co-organized by the ECE and European Commission's Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion. It gathered about 75 participants representing ministries working on the questions of ageing, national statistical offices, researchers, and NGOs from 36 countries. In addition to the launch of the 2018 Analytical report, the guidelines for application of AAI in different contexts were presented and the interactive panel discussion among the actual users of AAI (policymakers at different levels) was held. Also, the test version of the AAI web-tool was introduced, and the stakeholders were invited to provide comments and suggestions for finalizing this visualization tool.

19. Even though the third phase of the AAI project has been completed, in the run-up to the fourth review and appraisal of MIPAA/RIS the plans for the 2020 AAI and 2022 AAI computations are under consideration as well as further expert support for non-EU countries aiming to compute the AAI for policy monitoring purposes.

### **2. The Generations and Gender Programme**

20. The secretariat has continued to act as a clearinghouse for data administration of the Generations and Gender Programme (GGP) and as a coordinator of the network of National Focal Points – the GGP Council of Partners. In this capacity, the ECE secretariat co-organized a meeting of the Council of Partners on 23 October 2019 in Paris, France, back-to-back with the fourth GGP User Conference (24–25 October 2019). As the co-ordinator of the GGP Council of Partners, the ECE secretariat performs a bridging function between those responsible for programme management and development and those in charge of its implementation at the national level.

21. The ECE handles data submissions by national teams and processes applications by scientists and experts who wish to use GGP data for their research.<sup>4</sup> The GGP is among the leading data sources for policy-relevant research on demographic trends and processes in the

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.unece.org/population/aai.html>

<sup>3</sup> For more information on the Stakeholder meeting see <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=51438>.

<sup>4</sup> Data can be accessed by registered users at [www.ggp-i.org](http://www.ggp-i.org).

ECE region. The data and research findings from the GGP have been used for computing AAI indicators in some contexts and supported/instigated some policy measures addressing low fertility and intergenerational equity concerns.

### 3. Other programme elements and related activities

22. The WGA members from Austria, France and Germany presented their national policy examples related to intergenerational learning and digital empowerment during the Roundtable on SDG 4 “Learning without Limits” at the 2019 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (21-22 March 2019, Geneva). These policy examples have also been used to inform discussions during the Focus Area on Education, Training and Lifelong Learning and Capacity-Building at the 10th session of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing in New York.

23. Under the leadership of France, Germany and Italy, a side event on ageing and gender equality was organised on 29 October 2019 in Geneva during the Beijing+25 Regional Review Meeting (29-30 October 2019). The discussion centred on challenges and possible policy solutions presented in the Policy Brief No. 23.

24. The ECE secretariat supported the UNFPA Eastern Europe and Central Asia Regional Office in organizing two important subregional meetings in 2019: Conference on Population Dynamics and Evidence-based Population Policies in the Eastern Europe and Central Asia Region (14 June in Tbilisi, Georgia) and Conference on Population Dynamics, Human Capital and Sustainable Development in South-East Europe (21-22 October in Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina). The Lisbon Ministerial Conference call to recognize the potential of living longer and the MIPAA/RIS implementation were addressed at both events.

## III. Conclusions

25. The 2017 Lisbon Ministerial Declaration provided an important framework of reference to streamline activities in implementing and monitoring MIPAA/RIS in the ECE region. The key role of the Working Group on Ageing as the facilitator of MIPAA/RIS implementation in the region has been once more confirmed by the extension of its mandate to the end of 2022 and the decision of the Commission of ECE, at its sixty-eighth session on 10 April 2019, to support the change of the name of the Working Group on Ageing to “Standing Working Group on Ageing” and adoption of the revised terms of reference (pending ECOSOC approval at the 2020 session). The WGA has produced substantive outputs and has provided a framework for networking among national focal points to exchange information and share experiences.

26. The recent financial and in-kind contributions in support of the WGA – Germany’s donation to the Ageing fund in December 2018, hosting of the eleventh Bureau meeting in Lisbon by Portugal, expert contributions in developing policy briefs by France and European Centre on Welfare Policy and Research in Vienna, translation of the briefs by Portugal and Germany, and others – facilitated the implementation of activities foreseen in the WGA programme of work for 2019. The extra-budgetary funding received under the joint project with the European Commission’s Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion provided necessary resources to complete the foreseen work on the AAI and promote its use for policymaking and monitoring the impact of active ageing policy actions.