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

Geneva, 20 and 21 November 2014

Report of the Working Group on Ageing on its Seventh Meeting**I. Introduction****A. Attendance**

1. The seventh meeting of the Working Group on Ageing (WGA) was held on 20 and 21 November 2014 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.
2. Representatives of the following member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) participated: Armenia, Austria, Canada, Czech Republic, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and Uzbekistan. The Holy See participated as an observer State and the representative of the Biscay province of Spain was invited by the Secretariat.
3. Representatives of the European Commission Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion (EC DGEMPL), the World Bank, the World Health Organization (WHO), United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and UNFPA Georgia Country Office participated. Representatives of the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research (ECV) in Vienna and Policy Research Institute on Ageing and Ethnicity also participated in the meeting, as did representatives of the following non-governmental organizations (NGOs): European Federation of Older Persons (EURAG), the International Network on the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA), the Red Cross of Serbia, Turkish Association for Retirees (TUED), "Ardager" of Kazakhstan, Central-Asia Gerontology Centre (Tajikistan), International Federation of University Women (IFUW), Ingénierie Sociale, International Longevity Centre – Global Alliance, International Federation of Social Workers, International Association of Gerontology and Geriatrics (IAGG), Vie Montante Internationale.

4. The total number of participants was 53. A full list is available on the meeting website.¹

B. Opening of the meeting and adoption of the agenda

5. The Executive Secretary of UNECE made an opening statement, highlighting the importance of promoting active participation of older persons as an economic, social, cultural and environmental resource- and rights-based approach to ageing. He stressed that there are important synergies between the aims of the WGA work and the ambitious goals of the UN Post-2015 development agenda which puts to the forefront eradication of poverty and inclusive resilient societies. He also emphasized the tasks ahead of the seventh WGA meeting in agreeing on modalities for the third review and appraisal cycle of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and its Regional Implementation Strategy (MIPAA/RIS) and on some specific Working Group's activities until 2017.

6. The Working Group adopted the meeting's agenda as contained in document ECE/WG.1/2014/1 without changes.

II. Election of a new Bureau member

7. Following the departure of Prof. Joseph Troisi as the focal point on ageing of Malta, the Working Group elected a new Bureau member Bjørn Halvorsen, focal point of Norway. Subsequently, the present Bureau is comprised of delegates from the following member States: Austria, Belgium, Georgia, Germany, Norway, Poland, Spain and Turkey. Dirk Jarré, (NGO representative) and Bernd Marin (ECV, Vienna) continue to collaborate with the Bureau as observers. Erika Winkler, the Austrian representative, serves as Chair, and Dorika Seib, the German representative, as Vice-Chair of the Working Group.

8. The Working Group thanked the former representative of Malta in absentia for his many years of dedicated work with the Working Group and wished him success in his future activities.

III. Launch of the World Bank Report “Golden Ageing in Emerging Europe and Central Asia”

9. The representative of the World Bank presented the insights of the regional report “Golden Ageing in Emerging Europe and Central Asia,” which is expected to be published by the World Bank in early 2015. The topics covered in this report range from poverty and wellbeing of the older population to health, long term care and family support issues, though the focus is on higher labour participation, economic growth, and migration issues and the challenges of pursuing a life-course approach on ageing. The report points out that for Emerging Europe and Central Asia, the foremost challenge is to improve the health of their citizens: life expectancy and healthy life years are lagging considerably behind those observed in Western Europe and North America. Increasing possibilities for labour force participation of the older population can compensate for the falling numbers of the working-age population and activate the reserve. The pension plays a significant role in reducing poverty among seniors. There is a lot of room to converge. The main focus is to go from diagnostics to solutions; the key is learning and sharing solutions across the world,

¹ http://www.unece.org/seventh_meeting_of_the_working_group_on_ageing.html

identifying effective policy options, designing new interventions, and involving all stakeholders. The presentation of the World Bank report was followed by an interactive discussion.

IV. Brief on the outcomes of ageing-related events

10. The Chair informed WGA members about the 52nd session of the Commission for Social Development (CSD) that took place in February 2014. The underlying theme of the session was “Promoting empowerment of people in achieving poverty eradication, social integration and full employment and decent work for all” while the discussion on social drivers of sustainable development emerged as a defining element for the post-2015 development agenda. The session also adopted a draft resolution on the further implementation of the MIPAA, 2002 (E/CN.5/2014/L.3), which stresses the importance of integrating ageing and older persons in all UN programmes on a regular basis and encourages member States to narrow gaps between policy and practice. It also calls for the Secretary-General’s report on the modalities of the third review and appraisal of the Madrid Plan of Action to be submitted in 2015. In August 2014, the Secretariat of CSD in preparation of the SG report requested member States to suggest overall themes for the third review and appraisal cycle. In response to this request, the WGA Bureau put forward two proposals: ‘Empowerment of people of all ages to accomplish active ageing over the life course’, and ‘Contribution to the global and sustainable improvement of older people’s wellbeing’.

11. The Secretary of WGA reported on the 47th session of the Commission on Population and Development (CPD) held in April 2014. The session focused on the assessment of the status of implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). The CPD agreed on a resolution (E/CN.9/2014/L.7) in which governments were called on recognizing the links between ICPD priorities and sustainable development. The resolution also provided a clear mandate for the follow-up on the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action in each region according to their specific regional outcome documents. Furthermore, on 22 September 2014 UN General Assembly held a special High-level session dedicated to the Assessment of the Status of Implementation of the Programme of Action of ICPD.

12. The WGA participants were informed about the appointment by the Human Rights Council (HCR, resolution 24/20) of Rosita Kornfeld-Matte (Chile) as Independent Expert on the Enjoyment of All Human Rights by Older Persons and about the HCR Social Forum in May 2014 which was dedicated to ageing. The Chair also drew participants’ attention to the recent debates at the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWGA) in New York (30 July- 1 August 2014). The representative of EC DG EMPL reported that apart from the thematic discussions at the OEWG, there is on-going debate about the possibility of a new human rights convention for protection and promotion of the rights of older persons. DG EMPL representative also presented a new project on monitoring human rights of older persons in long-term care, which is funded by the European Commission and will be carried out by the European Network of National Human Rights Institutions (ENNHRI). WGA members from Sweden, Canada and Switzerland made statements in which they referred to a polarization of country positions on the option to have a convention of human rights of older persons and reiterated that existing human rights mechanisms should be strengthened instead of creating new ones, while representatives of NGOs pointed out that the opinion of civil society, who are in favour of such convention, must be taken into account and discussions should continue.

13. The Chair briefed about the WGA Bureau initiatives to provide constructive input on ageing matters within the process of open-coordination on Sustainable Development

Goals. The Bureau document “To incorporate the demographic change, ageing and older persons in the post 2015 sustainable development goals” was forwarded to the Secretariat of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals as well as to a number of governments. The Austrian Ministry for Foreign Affairs included that proposal in its comment to the draft Council conclusions of EU ‘A transformative post 2015 agenda’. The Secretary of WGA briefly informed participants about the current status and the planned timeline for defining and adopting SDGs in 2015.

14. Among other WGA-relevant matters, the UNCTAD representative presented the global entrepreneurship week event and the Empretec entrepreneurship training programme which also targets older people, including those from countries in the UNECE region. The WHO representative updated on two activities related to ageing: an interactive web-based platform “Age-friendly world”, proposing a repository of related information resources and the preparation of the first world report on health of older people to be published in 2015.

V. Report on the outcomes of the sixth meeting of the Bureau of the Working Group on Ageing

15. The Vice-chair of the Bureau gave an account of the discussions at the sixth Bureau meeting, held in Malta on 8-9 May of 2014, referring to the meeting report (document ECE/WG.1/2014/3).

VI. Implementation of the WGA work programme in 2014

16. The Working Group reviewed the implementation of its work programme during 2014 as contained in document ECE/WG.1/2014/4. The report on successful implementation of the main elements of the WGA work programme in 2014 was approved.

A. Discussion groups

17. The Chair of the WGA reported on four discussion groups initiated at the sixth WGA meeting and their ways of working and communicating. The representatives of Italy, Germany, the Netherlands and Slovenia as well as EURAG – leaders or rapporteurs of the discussion groups – shared their experiences. It was agreed that WGA members can rotate within discussion groups during the WGA session, based on their interest. The WGA decided to continue working in discussion groups in particular during the assigned time of the annual session and discussed how the work of the groups could be vitalized in between sessions.

B. Policy Brief on ‘Innovative and empowering strategies for care’

18. The Secretariat presented the draft Policy Brief on “Innovative and empowering strategies for care”. The WGA members approved the Brief and provided a few additional comments for consideration. The representative of EC DGEMPL suggested to bring out the human rights aspect more strongly in the text. The Brief will be published in early 2015. Working Group members were invited to consider translating the Policy Brief into their national languages and sharing the translated briefs with the Secretariat.

C. Road Map on Ageing in Georgia

19. The representative of Georgia reported to WGA on activities carried out in support of drawing up the Road Map on mainstreaming ageing. Georgia is working towards adoption of the Road Map and will prepare an Action Plan for its implementation. The UNFPA Georgia office representative spoke about the challenges and opportunities facing the country's ageing population. The Secretariat presented the main findings and recommendations of the Road Map for Georgia. The work on the Road Map for Georgia has been finalized and the document will be published in early 2015. The Secretariat also informed about the essay contest for seniors on "Ageing in Georgia" carried out in spring 2014 alongside the main project activities and invited meeting participants to join the Vernissage of the exhibition "Take care of time: Ageing in Georgia seen through the eyes of its older citizens" on display at the Palais des Nations until 28 November.

20. The representative of the Republic of Moldova reported that in 2014 the government has adopted the Road Map with its Plan of Action for a period of 2014-2016 this year. The Armenian representative shared her country experience with the implementation of the Road Map and its Action Plan adopted by government in 2012 and confirmed the readiness for more exchanges of ideas and lessons learned. The NGO representative from Tajikistan (Director of the Central Asia Gerontology Centre) informed about the stakeholders' interest in preparing a Road Map to mainstream ageing in Tajikistan. The Secretariat clarified that UNECE engages in preparation of a Road Map only at the request of the country's government.

D. Monitoring MIPAA/RIS: potential use of the Active Ageing Index

21. The Secretariat provided information on the progress of the second phase of the Active Ageing Index (AAI) project. As of November 2014, the most recent AAI results are available for all EU countries, including Croatia, and data have been collected for Canada, Iceland, Norway, and Switzerland. Pilot studies in Serbia and Turkey commenced. Progress is made also in computing AAI for retrospective years in order to observe trends over time.

22. The representative of the Biscay province in Spain, and the WGA members from Poland and Latvia reported on initiatives to use the AAI results in defining active ageing policies at national and sub-national levels and its potential use as a baseline to monitor implementation of ageing-related policies. In this respect, the representative of Slovenia presented the Active and Healthy Ageing Project which will be at the basis of a new national Strategy of Quality Ageing. The WGA members greeted with interest the experience of the Spain's Biscay province government in adjusting the AAI methodology to produce a sub-national/local level index and applying it for monitoring policy implications. The Polish representative reported that the AAI results computed at the regional level help to identify region-specific challenges and to focus on local policy measures addressing them. The representative of the Republic of Moldova requested UNECE support in the application AAI methodology to produce national index.

E. Generations and Gender

23. The Secretariat provided an overview about its activities with regards to the Generations and Gender Programme (GGP), about availability of harmonized micro-data from the first and second wave surveys in additional countries and the on-line bibliography on GGP-based research outputs with 1000 bibliographic entries recorded.

VII. Country experiences

24. Representatives of Malta and Poland presented their active ageing policies and first achievements in their implementation. Malta has adopted a national strategic policy on active ageing 2014-2020 with three main themes: active participation in the labour market, participation in society, and independent living. The strategic policy provides 75 recommendations and reaches out to all stakeholders. Malta's Government set up a dedicated Active Ageing Unit to guide and follow up on the implementation of the strategy.

25. Poland started focusing on the active ageing policy following on many initiatives of the 2012 European Year on Active Ageing and Solidarity between Generations, including the launch of AAI. Recently, the Polish Government introduced the Long-term senior policy strategy (2014-2020) addressing five important areas: health and independent living; professional activity of people over age 50; educational, social and cultural activity of senior citizens; silver economy; and intergenerational relations. A special government programme on social participation of senior citizens for 2014-2020 was launched with an annual budget of EUR 10 million. The Council for Senior Policy consisting of NGOs, social partners, government experts from central, regional and local levels was instituted.

VIII. Main elements of the WGA work programme for 2015

A. Developing guidelines for the national reports on the third cycle of MIPAA/RIS implementation and preparations for the Ministerial Conference in 2017

26. The WGA Bureau started preparations for the third review and appraisal cycle of MIPAA/RIS implementation during 2014 with the drafting of the guidelines for the national reporting on MIPAA/RIS implementation between 2013 and 2017. The Chair made a brief introduction on a draft for the guidelines, stressing that following Austria's proposal the guidelines are split into two parts: the one for national focal points and the other for other stakeholders. In structuring national reports, the Bureau also suggested to follow the four main goals of the Vienna Ministerial Declaration. This approach might help to simplify the reporting and also to ensure to the extent possible a comparative structure of reports. The Chair's introduction was followed by a brief plenary discussion. It was agreed that in their group work the four discussion groups will specifically address the option of splitting the guidelines, the length and the timeline for national reporting.

27. Due to the absence of the representative of Turkey – the host of the next Ministerial Conference – the discussion on a tentative date, title and possible thematic structure of the conference was postponed. However, the discussion groups were encouraged to address these elements when they convene.

Work in discussion groups

28. The four discussion groups convened for a session of one hour and forty minutes amongst themselves to review the draft guidelines for national reporting from the perspective of the respective group's topic. They also discussed a potential use of the AAI indicators for preparing a statistical annex to the report. The rapporteur of each group then briefly reported to the plenary on the outcome of their discussion and provided the Chair with a short written report outlining the group's suggestions.

29. The discussion groups overall agreed with the proposed structure of the guidelines and suggested an average report length between 12-20 pages, with some common indicators (preferably based on AAI), respecting the bottom-up approach and specifying the

methodology used in the report for the best practice examples. One group suggested that goals should be expanded to include regional/international/bilateral cooperation and suggested topics for the next Ministerial meeting in Istanbul, such as Society for all: harnessing and empowering the capacity of older persons in society. The October 2016 deadline for the national report submission was generally accepted; it was also agreed that the Chair, with help from other Bureau members and the Secretariat, will review the draft guidelines taking into account the written suggestions provided by the discussion groups. The draft will be circulated to the WGA members for further comments and finalized by the Bureau. The guidelines will be disseminated to the countries after the Bureau meeting in May 2015.

B. Other programme elements

30. The WGA Vice-Chair introduced other main elements of the WGA work programme for 2015 as outlined in the room document ECE/WG.1/2014/5RD. The proposed elements are based on the Programme of Work of the Working Group for 2014-2017 and outputs listed in the biennial 2014-2015 work programme of the Population Unit both agreed upon at the sixth meeting of the WGA.

31. The Secretariat specified that the Policy Brief no. 16 will be on the topic 'Ensuring dignity and non-discrimination of persons with dementia'. In relation to this policy brief topic, the representative of Italy reported on the event "Dementia in Europe: a challenge for our common future" that took place on 14 November 2014 in Rome under the Italian Presidency of the Council of European Union.

32. The Secretariat informed that the outline preparations for following policy brief issue could start late in 2015 if the discussion groups come up with a consensus topic before the eighth WGA meeting. There were some topics proposed by the discussion groups during the sixth meeting addressing labour market and migration issues related to ageing. In addition, the Czech representative suggested dedicating one policy brief to older people in rural areas. The Secretariat will issue a call for additional topic proposals in January 2015 and based on the proposed list the leaders of discussion groups will facilitate the exchange among their members to agree on the consensus topic. The outline then could be discussed by the groups during the session in November 2015.

33. The Road Map for Georgia will be published in early 2015 and the Secretariat will be supporting the preparation of the Action Plan for it. Among other capacity building activities, the Secretariat, jointly with the European Commission and respective national focal points, will organise at least one national workshop on the potential use of the Active Ageing Index for monitoring outcomes of policies on ageing.

IX. Overview of activities of the Task Force on Ageing-Related Statistics

34. The Secretariat provided an overview of the activities of the Task Force on Ageing-related Statistics, including the outcomes of its meeting on 18-19 November. The objective of the Task Force is to improve the availability, accessibility and comparability of statistical data in support of ageing-related policymaking in the framework of the MIPAA/RIS. The Task Force brings together statisticians, policymakers and researchers. Uniting users and producers in one task force is challenging but has a potential for a positive outcome of practical guidance to statisticians, making more and better data available for policymakers. The statistics on ageing are currently mapped by the Task Force under the topics of the four goals of the 2012 Vienna ministerial Declaration and initially

count 84 indicators. At the last meeting, the Task Force presented the four concept notes and currently is working on streamlining them and preparing a consolidated report to be released in early 2015.

X. Financing of the work programme

35. The Secretariat acknowledged contributions made by member States in the past year, in particular the contributions to the Trust Fund on Ageing: EUR 43,000 received in December 2013 from Germany in support of Policy Briefs preparations and USD 3,000 received in February 2014 from Norway for a general work programme support. Malta's hosting of the sixth Bureau meeting in May 2014 was also acknowledged. For 2015, Sweden pledges EUR 50,000 in support of the WGA work programme and there are some preliminary commitments by a few other countries. The second tranche of financing was received for the ongoing joint-management UNECE and European Commission project on AAI: in total the European Commission contribution should amount to EUR 360,000 over the October 2013-December 2015 period. The possibility to raise additional funds for activities within the active ageing framework in 2016-2017 will be discussed with the European Commission before the end of 2015.

XI. Other business, summary and conclusions of the annual session

A. Cultural side events related to the WGA work

36. At the start of the afternoon session of 20 November, the journalist Nicky Chadwick presented a short video on the dance group of senior women from England "Magic Movers" performing at the Palais des Nations on the 1st October 2014, the International Day of Older Persons. The group was invited by UNECE to celebrate the role the older people play in building this society and inspire others to enjoy life at any stage through move and dance.

37. From 10 to 28 November 2014, at the Palais des Nations UNECE together with the Cultural activities programme of the UN Office in Geneva (UNOG) organized an exhibition "Take care of time: ageing in Georgia seen through the eyes of its older citizens". The vernissage of the exhibition took place on 21 November to coincide with the WGA session and most of the WGA members attended the event. The UNOG acting Director Michael Møller, UNECE Executive Secretary Christian Friis Bach, the Ambassador of Georgia Shalva Tsiskarashvili and the representative of the UNFPA Georgia office Lela Bakradze addressed the vernissage participants.

B. Summary and conclusions of the annual session

38. The Chair provided a summary of main discussions and decisions taken at the seventh annual session of the WGA. The summary points were projected on the screen for comments/agreement by the Working Group members. The list of these summary points is presented in Annex I to this report.

39. The next Bureau meeting, as agreed during the ad-hoc Bureau meeting on 20 November, will be held on 7-8 May 2015 in Gdansk, Poland. The Chair thanked Poland for proposing to host this meeting.

40. The eighth meeting of the Working Group will be held on 19-20 November 2015 in Geneva, Switzerland.

41. The Chair thanked the participants and the Secretariat and closed the meeting.

Annex I

Conclusions and decisions taken at the seventh meeting of the Working Group on Ageing — Chair's summary

Agenda items 1–2

- Agenda adopted without changes.
- The Working Group elected the representative of Norway to the Bureau. The present Bureau is comprised of representatives of Austria (Chair), Belgium, Germany (Vice-Chair), Georgia, Norway, Poland, Spain, Turkey; Dirk Jarré (NGO representative) and Bernd Marin (ECV) as observers.

Agenda item 3

- The Working Group took note of the forthcoming World Bank Report “Golden Ageing in Emerging Europe and Central Asia,” covering topics from poverty to wellbeing, long term care to issues in labour participation, economic growth, migration and life-course approach to ageing.

Agenda item 4

- WGA members took note of the reports on outcomes of the 52nd session of the Commission for Social Development and the 47th session of the Commission on the Population and Development and on progress on determining the post-2015 SDGs and an opportunity to influence the agenda to include issues of ageing.
- On Open-ended Working Group on Ageing in New York (OEWGA) WGA members and observers from NGOs made reference to polarization of country positions regarding a need of a convention. Statements by Sweden, Canada and Switzerland.

Agenda items 5 and 6

- WGA took note of the Bureau report on its sixth meeting in May 2014.
- WGA acknowledged the successful implementation of the WGA work programme for 2014 and took note of and approved as relevant:
 - reports of discussion groups;
 - Policy Brief on Innovative and empowering strategies for care;
 - finalization of the Road Map on Ageing in Georgia;
 - potential use of AAI for monitoring MIPAA/RIS;
 - experiences in using AAI at sub-national level (i.e. Biscay province of Spain, Poland); and
 - activities related to the Generations and Gender Programme.

Agenda item 7

- WGA took note of new strategic active ageing policies put forward by Malta and Poland.

Agenda item 8

- WGA took note of the Bureau proposal on the draft guidelines for the national reports for the third cycle of the MIPAA/RIS implementation and decided to convene the discussion groups to review the proposed draft.
- Discussion on a title and possible thematic structure of the next Ministerial Conference was postponed due to the absence of the representative of Turkey.
- Discussion Groups overall agreed on the draft guidelines including the October 2016 deadline for the national report submission and made some suggestions. The Bureau together with the Secretariat will finalise the guidelines by May 2015.

- WGA agreed on main elements of the work programme for 2015, including:
 - work in discussion groups;
 - preparation of a policy brief on ‘Ensuring dignity and non-discrimination of persons with dementia’;
 - publication of the Road Map for Georgia; support in developing an Action plan;
 - national workshop on use of AAI;
 - continuation of the AAI project and activities under the Generations and Gender Programme.

Agenda item 9

- WGA took note of information received about the work progress of the Task Force on Ageing-related Statistics and its meeting on 18-19 November 2014.

Agenda item 10

- WGA was informed about country contributions to the UNECE Trust fund on Ageing received since the sixth meeting (Germany and Norway) and a pledge made by Sweden for 2015.

Agenda item 11

- The WGA approved Chair’s conclusions and main decisions from its seventh meeting.
- Date and place of the next Bureau meeting:
 - 7-8 May 2015, Gdansk (Poland).
- Date and place of the eighth WGA meeting:
 - 19-20 November 2015, Geneva.