



# Economic and Social Council

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## Economic Commission for Europe

### Working Group on Ageing

#### Fifth meeting

Geneva, 22 and 23 November 2012

## Report of the Working Group on Ageing on its fifth meeting

### I. Introduction

#### A. Attendance

1. The fifth meeting of the Working Group on Ageing (WGA) was held on 22 and 23 November 2012 at the Palais des Nations in Geneva.
2. Representatives from the following 27 member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) participated: Andorra, Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, France, Georgia, Germany, Ireland, Lithuania, Monaco, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovenia, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, United States of America and Uzbekistan. The Holy See participated as an observer State.
3. Representatives from the European Commission Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion as well as from the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research in Vienna (ECV) also participated in the meeting, as did representatives from the following non-governmental organizations (NGOs): European Federation of Older Persons (EURAG), the International Network on the Prevention of Elder Abuse (INPEA) and Red Cross of Serbia. Representatives of the Intergovernmental Organisation International Federation of Red Crescent Societies (IFRC) and World Health Organization (WHO) took also part.
4. The total number of participants was 51. A full list is available on the meeting website.<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=30415>

## **B. Organizational matters**

5. The Director of Statistical Division of UNECE made an opening statement.
6. The Working Group, taking into account the corrigendum, adopted the meeting's agenda as contained in documents ECE/WG.1/2012/1 and ECE/WG.1/2012/1/Corr.1 without additional changes.

## **II. Election of Officers**

7. The Working Group adopted the amendment to the terms of Reference of the WGA as contained in document ECE/WG.1/2012/RD1 (Russian Federation abstained). The Working Group agreed on the composition of the Bureau until the next WGA meeting with delegates of the following member States: Armenia (Vice-Chair), Austria (Chair), Belgium, Canada, Germany, Georgia, Malta, Serbia, Spain. Dirk Jarré, (NGO-representative) and Bernd Marin (European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research Vienna) continue to collaborate with the Bureau as observers.
8. In the absence of the Armenian representative, the Working Group requested the Bureau member from Belgium to undertake the role of Vice-Chair during the fifth WGA meeting.

## **III. Information on the review of UNECE subprogrammes by the Executive Committee**

9. The Working Group took note of the current status of examining the UNECE subprogrammes including the Population component as part of the 2005 UNECE reform review initiated by the Executive Committee in 2011.

## **IV. Report and discussion on the outcome of the regional Ministerial conference held in Vienna in September 2012**

10. The Working Group took note of the outcomes of the Ministerial Conference held in September 2012, in particular the Ministerial Declaration (ECE/AC.30/2012/3) and the Synthesis report on the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in the UNECE region (ECE/AC.30/2012/4). The Vienna Ministerial Declaration, unanimously adopted by 50 Member States, reaffirmed the mandate of WGA and will guide its work programme.
11. A focal point from Germany, on behalf of the Declaration Drafting Group, reported on the drafting and negotiating process for the Ministerial Declaration. The Working Group agreed that the process was open and inclusive, which allowed the final text of declaration to be adopted at the Ministerial Conference without any additional changes.

### **A. Main messages from expert and ministerial panels**

12. The Chair presented an overview on the main outcomes from the discussions during the expert and ministerial panels at the Ministerial Conference. Working Group members who were present at the Conference – focal points on ageing from Ireland, Serbia, Georgia, Estonia, Slovenia, Belgium, Germany, and Norway - shared their views on the Conference and its outcomes. The expert and ministerial panel discussions were generally seen as

highly relevant and focused. The hosting Austrian Ministry and the Secretariat were commended for an excellent organisation and conduct of the conference.

## **B. Results of the Civil Society and Research forums**

13. The coordinator of the Civil Society Forum presented the main outcomes of the discussion held during this event and informed the Working Group about possible follow-up activities initiated during the forum. On behalf of the coordinator of the Research Forum, the Secretariat highlighted major outcomes of this forum. The Secretariat also informed that the reports and official declarations of the two forums are available on the Ministerial Conference website. Working Group members from Norway, Estonia and Georgia stressed the valuable input of NGOs and research community in the policy discourse on ageing.

## **C. Proceedings of the Conference**

14. The Secretariat informed the Working Group about the progress made in preparing the proceedings of the Conference. The UNECE will publish the proceedings of the Ministerial Conference, with the synthesis report, keynote speeches, rapporteurs' summaries, and all three declarations included. Publication is planned for spring 2013. To document the outcome of the Civil Society and Research forums, a separate publication is envisaged with support from the European Commission.

## **V. Concluding the second cycle of review and appraisal of MIPAA/RIS**

15. Representatives from Uzbekistan and Ukraine reported on the achievements and challenges in implementing MIPAA/RIS (Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing and its Regional Implementation Strategy) in their countries during the second cycle.

16. The Secretariat introduced the UNECE Regional Report on the second cycle of MIPAA/RIS as contained in document ECE/AC.30/2012/4. In total 40 national reports were received (Romania, Luxemburg, Latvia and Turkey submitted their reports after the finalization of the Synthesis report). The late reports will not be included in the Synthesis Report but their indicated areas of achievements and challenges will be incorporated into the corresponding overview table. All national reports are posted on the UNECE Population Unit's website.

17. At the 51<sup>st</sup> session of the United Nations Commission for Social Development (UNCSD), UNECE will present the Synthesis Report and the Minister of the host country of the UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing 2012 will report about the outcomes of the conference and the main goals of the 2012 Vienna Ministerial Declaration. Member States are encouraged to be represented at the session by their ministers or other high-level officials.

18. The Secretariat informed the Working Group about a proposal by United Nations Division for Economic and Social Affairs (UNDESA) to organize regional side events at the 51<sup>st</sup> UNCSD session in February 2013. The United Nations Population Fund's (UNFPA) request for UNECE involvement in the preparations of 2013 Global Conference on Ageing was also briefly discussed.

## **VI. The WGA work programme for 2012-2013 and beyond**

### **A. Implementation of the main elements of the WGA work programme in 2012**

19. The Working Group reviewed the implementation of its work programme during 2012 as contained in document ECE/WG.1/2012/4. The report on successful implementation of the main elements of the WGA work programme in 2012 was approved.

20. The Secretariat reported on the two policy briefs published in the course of 2012: (i) on images of older persons and (ii) on active ageing. The Working Group took note of the recent translation and publication of a series of policy briefs in Spanish, German and French thanks to a joint effort of Spain, Austria, Germany and Switzerland.

21. A representative of the Republic of Moldova informed the Working Group on the progress of incorporating the findings and recommendations of the Road Map on mainstreaming ageing into the national documents. The Road Map document was published by UNECE in spring 2012.

22. The Working Group was informed that the Road Map of Armenia was adopted into a government decree.

23. The Secretariat briefly outlined the self-evaluation plan to be carried out in 2013. The two previous Road Map projects will be a subject of the evaluation. For this, the Secretariat requested the Working Group to provide feedback on the process and substance of the Road Map projects in Armenia and the Republic of Moldova with the help of a questionnaire. The responses from the Working Group members as well as from immediate participants in the projects – national experts, government officials, academia and civil society representatives - will form the basis for the self-evaluation report. The draft self-evaluation report will be presented at the WGA Bureau meeting in May 2013.

24. The Working Group took note of the Secretariat's report on the capacity development training workshop held in Haifa (Israel) in March 2012 and of a similar Workshop which is planned for April 2013. The representatives of EURAG and Serbian Red Cross who took part in the 2012 Workshop shared their experience and commended the Workshop organisers for a well-balanced programme which included lectures, visits to various care and support centers and group project work.

25. The Secretariat reported on the current status and developments of the Generations and Gender Programme.

26. The Working Group was also informed on the Secretariat's involvement in the 20 years assessment of the implementation of the programme of International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in the UNECE region. The work is coordinated with the UNFPA which also provides extrabudgetary financing for this activity.

27. The Working Group members from Poland, Austria, France, Germany, Czech Republic, and Denmark reported on the relevant policy developments and important events that were held in 2012.

## **B. Outlining suggestions for the WGA work programme for the third cycle of MIPAA/RIS**

28. The Working Group decided on the modalities of the preparation of the draft Work Programme for the third MIPAA/RIS implementation cycle (2013-2017) based on documents ECE/AC.30/2012/2 and ECE/WG.1/2012/5.

29. The Work programme for the third MIPAA/RIS implementation cycle will be drafted by the extended Bureau with volunteers from the member states and discussed at the 2013 Bureau meeting. Poland expressed interest to participate in the programme drafting; other volunteers were asked to communicate their interest by early 2013 to the Secretariat and the Chair. Inputs from Working Group members (electronic communication) were encouraged.

30. The Working Group discussed and agreed upon the main planned outputs for 2013, including a topic for a Policy brief (Abuse of older persons). Outputs under the other three programme elements include: a planned workshop on Community care for the elderly (April 2013, Israel); reviewing results of Active Ageing Index project for possible use to monitoring MIPAA/RIS, and continuous activities under the generations and gender programme.

31. The Working Group briefly discussed inclusion of new programme elements and/or discontinuation of some current elements in order to better respond to the agreed focus areas for the new work programme.

32. Under the initiative of the Chair, four subgroups were formed to exchange the experience, share good practices and undertake some more in-depth work under each of the four goals highlighted in the 2012 Vienna Ministerial Declaration, namely Promoting longer working life, Participation, non-discrimination and social inclusion, Dignity, health and independence and Intergenerational solidarity. The subgroup members will continue working among themselves during the year while during the next WGA meeting, there will be a half-day session dedicated to the work in the subgroups. The subgroups will be expected to report on the outcome of their discussions at the plenary session.

33. It was agreed that the Secretariat will circulate a list of subgroup members and on behalf of the Chair will issue a call to all focal points who were not present at the meeting to join one of the subgroups.

## **VII Financing of the Work Programme**

34. The Secretariat provided information on the financing of the work programme and identified areas that require further contributions.

35. The Secretariat acknowledged contributions made by member States in the past year, in particular the contribution to the Trust Fund received from Estonia and the contribution made by Austria hosting the Ministerial Conference. The Secretariat also thanked Belgium for hosting the Bureau meeting and Israel for hosting a capacity development workshop.

36. The Serbian representative reconfirmed the invitation to hold the Bureau meeting in Serbia in May 2013. The Secretariat acknowledged Turkey's proposal to host the next Ministerial Conference.

37. Working Group members were invited to explore with their Ministries the possibilities for making contributions to the UNECE Trust Fund on Ageing, to support the Working Group's activities

## **VIII. Report on the work of the UN Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing for the purpose of strengthening the protection of the human rights of older persons**

38. The representative of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights reported on the current status of the discussions of the UN Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWGA) for the purpose of strengthening the protection of the human rights of older persons and introduced the High Commissioner's report on this item.

39. The Working Group took note of the presented information and the High Commissioner's report based on documents E/2012/51 and E/2012/51/Corr.1.

40. In the follow-up discussion, Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, Poland, Belgium, Portugal, Netherlands, Ireland, Germany, and United States stated their official position by expressing reservations towards new international legal instruments dedicated to the human rights of older persons.

41. Austria, France, Serbia and Georgia expressed their openness to the on-going discussion at the OEWG in New York.

42. All countries stressed a need for a more focussed attention to the implementation of the existing normative instruments in this area.

## **IX. Other business, summary and conclusions of the annual session**

43. The Chair, with the assistance of the Secretariat, summarised the decisions taken at the annual session of the WGA. The decisions were presented on the screen for final formulation and explicit agreement by the Working Group members. The list of decisions is presented in Annex 1 of this Report.

44. The next Bureau meeting will be held on 21-22/05/2013 in Belgrade, Serbia.

45. The 6th meeting of the WGA will be held on 25-26/11/2013 in Geneva, Switzerland. Should a member State wish to host the annual session outside Geneva, the Working Group will consider this possibility.

## **X. Special session on monitoring MIPAA/RIS and Active Ageing Index project**

46. The special session was chaired by the representative of Belgium, the acting Vice-Chair for the fifth WGA meeting.

### **A. Monitoring MIPAA/RIS implementation: lessons learned and next steps**

47. A representative from the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research in Vienna reported on the progress made in updating the indicators for monitoring MIPAA/RIS and maintaining the Monitoring RIS website. Resourcing the website was noted as a concern with regard to the further work. It was mentioned by the Working Group that the important task of the website is to provide comparative data sets that may be used by UNECE Member States to report on the implementation of the third cycle of

MIPAA/RIS. Working Group members were encouraged to review and propose improvements for the further development of the Monitoring RIS website.

## **B. Incorporating the Active Ageing Index for monitoring MIPAA/RIS**

48. The coordinator of the Active Ageing Index (AAI) project presented the conceptual choices, methodology and the preliminary results of Active Ageing Index in 27 European Union countries. The AAI measures older people's activity in paid employment, unpaid activities, being independent and autonomous and their capacity for active and healthy ageing. Contextual analysis explaining the reasons behind cross-national differences will be part of the further research of the AAI. The use of the current four domains in aggregating the AAI was acknowledged by Working Group members.

## **C. Active Ageing Index project: extension beyond EU countries**

49. The Secretariat presented the preliminary findings from the pilot study of AAI in Georgia with the objective to extend the coverage of the AAI and to examine the feasibility of producing AAI in a country outside the European Union area. Based on the findings from the pilot study, a report on the AAI in Georgia will be prepared.

50. Representatives from Georgia reported on the national experience in participating in the pilot exercise.

51. Following the discussion on the AAI, members of the Working Group were invited to consider whether indicators used for computing the AAI could be used to monitor the implementation of MIPAA/RIS during the third cycle and beyond. Estonia and Poland noted the potential in using the AAI. A representative of Switzerland expressed interest to develop AAI for Switzerland.

52. The Vice-Chair thanked the participants and closed the meeting.

## Annex I

### List of the decisions taken at the Fifth meeting of the Working Group on Ageing - Chair's summary

#### Agenda items 1-3:

- Agenda adopted without additional changes.
- Amendments to the terms of Reference of the Working Group on Ageing adopted (Russian Federation abstained)
- The Working Group agreed on the composition of the Bureau until the next WGA meeting:
  - Armenia (Vice-Chair), Austria (Chair), Belgium, Canada, Germany, Georgia, Malta, Serbia, Spain and Dirk Jarré (NGO-representative) and Bernd Marin (European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research Vienna).
  - The Bureau member from Belgium acts as the Vice-Chair of the fifth WGA meeting.
- The Working group took note of the current status of the EXCOM review of UNECE 2005 Reform.

#### Agenda item 4:

- Report on the UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing (Vienna, September 2012):
  - The success of the Conference attested by the WGA members (high participation, relevance of the topics, high-level engagement, prominent role of the NGO and research community).
  - Critical remarks: expert panels focused more on the technical aspects and somewhat shied away from bringing in “hot” topics of abuse, rights, etc.; ministerial panels could be more interactive.
  - The Vienna Ministerial Declaration unanimously adopted by 50 Member States reaffirmed the mandate of WGA and will guide the work programme of the Group.
  - UNECE will publish the proceedings of the Ministerial Conference, with the synthesis report, keynote speeches, reporters’ summaries, and all three declarations included (spring 2013)
  - Proceedings of the NGO and Research forums will be published with support by the European Commission.

#### Agenda items 5 and 6:

- Concluding the second cycle of review and appraisal of MIPAA/RIS:
  - In total 40 reports received - Latvia and Turkey submitted reports recently. The late reports will not be included in the Synthesis Report but areas of achievements and challenges will be incorporated into the final overview table.
  - UNECE will present the Synthesis Report and results of the Ministerial Conference at the 51st session of the UN Commission for Social Development. Higher representation at this session by Member States is encouraged
- The WGA work programme for 2012-2013 and beyond
  - Report on successful implementation of the main elements of the WGA work programme in 2012 was approved.
  - Main planned outputs for 2013 were agreed including a topic for a Policy brief -“Abuse of older persons”.
  - Work programme for the for the third MIPAA/RIS implementation cycle will be drafted by the extended Bureau (volunteers from Member States) and discussed at the 2013 Bureau meeting.
  - Inputs from WGA members (electronic communication) were encouraged.
- 4 groups were formed to agree on focus (within the respective goal of the Declaration) for the next year’s interactive discussion at the WGA meeting

- Group 1: Promoting Longer working life  
Leader –to be nominated, rapporteur- Ms. Kasia Jurczak, priority theme: Age friendly working conditions; age-management strategies (involving corporations/businesses)
- Group 2: Participation, non-discrimination and social inclusion  
Leader –Ms. Dorika Seib, rapporteur- Mr. Dirk Jarré , priority theme: Reducing material deprivation and facilitating the access to resources and empowering older people
- Group 3: Dignity, health and independence  
Leader - Mr. Ronan Toomey , rapporteur – to be nominated; priority theme: Abuse of older persons
- Group 4: Intergenerational solidarity  
Leader – to be nominated, rapporteur- Mr. Dirk Moens, priority theme: Strengthening intergenerational dialogue
- Group 2: proposed a well-structured way to advance work within the group and inform all WGA members on the results of internal discussion/exchange of experience

Agenda item 8:

- The Working group took note of the report on the current status of the discussions at the UN Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing (OEWGA)
  - Sweden, Denmark, Switzerland, Poland, Belgium, Portugal, Netherlands, Ireland, Germany, and United States stated their official position by expressing reservations towards new international legal instruments dedicated to the human rights of older persons
  - Austria, France, Serbia and Georgia expressed their openness to the on-going discussion at the OEWG in New York
  - All countries stressed a need for a more focussed attention to the implementation of the existing normative instruments in this area

Agenda items 7 and 9:

- The Working group took note of the report on the financing of the work programme.
- Approved list of main decisions of the 5th meeting of the WGA
- Date and place of the next Bureau meeting
  - 21-22 May 2013, Belgrade (Serbia)
- Date and place of the 6th meeting of the Working Group on Ageing
  - 25-26 November 2013, Geneva
  - If some Member State would propose to host the annual session outside Geneva, WGA would be open to consider this possibility