

## United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)

**Statement by**  
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Executive Secretary

To

### **The Commission on Population and Development Forty-ninth Session, 11-15 April 2016**

Mrs. Chair,  
Excellencies,  
Distinguished Delegates and Colleagues,

I thank you for the opportunity to address the Commission

The 56 countries in the UNECE region are home to 17% of the world's population. We host some of the world's richest countries, as well as some with a relatively low level of income. Like many others regions, it is experiencing a **fundamental transformation from population growth to ageing**. In fact, UNECE with less than 20 percent of the world's population our region has nearly one-third of the world's population aged 65 and above. There is a continued transformation **in the structure and functions of families**. And the region face **increasing and complex migration flows**. The UNECE region therefore encapsulates many of the global challenges in building inclusive, sustainable and prosperous societies.

UNECE helps member States implement the SDGs by translating them into norms, standards and conventions. We develop policy and statistical recommendations and capacity, we host the work on modernization of statistical production including the use of big data. We undertake performance reviews and studies, all in partnership with the private sector and civil society.

We also play a significant role in the field of population and development in our region. This includes following up on the implementation of the ICPD and Beijing Programmes of Action. We host the UNECE Working Group on Ageing, which leads activities on the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in the region and we help our countries to develop active ageing policies and an active ageing index to turn an ageing population into a potential rather than a challenge. This helps our member States to respond to the demographic and population challenges facing them.

UNECE also has a long tradition and comparative advantage in advancing the generation and analysis of demographic data. A few references to this are included in the Secretary-General's report to this session, for example the **advanced register-based population statistics** or the **longitudinal survey under the Generations and Gender Programme**.

Our current statistical work in this field focuses on population and housing censuses, population projections and on the measurement of population ageing, migration, gender issues, poverty and human capital. For instance:

- i. The Conference of European Statisticians, which we host, has developed recommendations for the 2020 Round of Population and Housing Censuses.

- ii. We have a gender statistics database and have also launched indicators for measuring gender equality.
- iii. We have launched a task force to collect good practices on how to communicate the uncertainty of population projections to users.
- iv. We also coordinate methodological work on integrating the multiple data sources to measure migration.

To achieve the transformative goals of Agenda 2030, demographic data must address the disparities within and across countries, it must be disaggregated by age group, sex and location and we must focus on improving the availability and analysis of quality data at all levels. Here I can point again to our Generations and Gender Programme, and to the joint UNECE/EU Active Ageing Index project.

When it comes to delivering for the Agenda 2030, partnerships are of high importance. UNECE has a close collaboration with UNDESA, UNFPA – note least the regional UNFPA office - the World Bank, EU, EFTA and OECD on the issues of population and development.

And we work closely with the other regional commissions, where UNECE this year act as the coordinator. The Regional Commissions are the leading UN bodies in their regions in certain areas of ICPD implementation, and have a great potential to leverage their vast intergovernmental expert networks in support of the work of the CPD. We look forward to a continued strong cooperation with you.

I wish you successful deliberations and look forward to the outcomes of the session.

Thank you.