



# Economic and Social Council

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## Economic Commission for Europe

### Working Group on Ageing

#### Tenth meeting

Geneva, 23-24 November 2017

Item 7 of the provisional agenda

**Implementation of the WGA work programme in 2017 and planned outputs for 2018**

### **Implementation of the Work Programme of the Working Group on Ageing in 2017**

#### **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 implementation of the ECE Regional Strategy for the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAS/RIS).
2. The Vienna Ministerial Declaration (ECE/AC.30/2012/3), adopted by 50 member States at the UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing in September 2012 (Vienna, Austria), reaffirmed the mandate of the Working Group and provided guidance to its work programme for the third MIPAA/RIS implementation cycle. Consequently, at its sixty-second meeting on 11 July 2013, the ECE Executive Committee renewed the Working Group's mandate through the end of 2017 (ECE/EX/2013/L.7) and at its seventy-fourth session on 17 December 2014 approved the revised terms of reference of the WGA (ECE/EX/18).
3. Taking into account the goals and measures outlined by the Vienna Ministerial Declaration, the Working Group, at its sixth meeting on 25-26 November 2013, agreed upon main elements of its programme of work for 2014–2017 (ECE/WG.1/2013/2). Subsequently, the biennial programme of work for 2016-2017 was approved by the ECE Executive Committee at its 84<sup>th</sup> meeting in May 2016.
4. This document is prepared by the secretariat for the tenth WGA meeting. It addresses the implementation of the programme of work in 2017, including the conclusion

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of the third cycle of review and appraisal of MIPAA/RIS, organization of the fourth Ministerial Conference in September 2017, and main outputs for the key areas of activity: policy briefs with good practice examples; capacity development; monitoring implementation of MIPAA/RIS and strengthening the evidence base for policymaking.

## **II. Implementation of the main elements of the work programme for 2017**

### **A. Concluding the third cycle of the review and appraisal of MIPAA/RIS implementation and organization of the 2017 Ministerial Conference**

#### **1. Third cycle of review and appraisal of MIPAA/RIS implementation in the ECE region**

5. The third cycle of review and appraisal of MIPAA/RIS was concluded with the Ministerial Conference under the title ‘A Sustainable Society for All Ages: Realizing the potential of living longer’. At the Ministerial Conference, the Synthesis report on the implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing in the ECE region was launched, summarizing major trends from the 45 national reports received by the secretariat between October 2016 and the end of July 2017. The Synthesis report includes an extensive statistical annex containing demographic data, and data on 22 active ageing indicators for majority of ECE member States. The extracts from the Synthesis report are available as an official document ((ECE/AC.30/2017/3). This document was also provided as an input to the United Nations Secretary-General report to the 56<sup>th</sup> session of the Commission for Social Development. The complete Synthesis report will be published as part of the Ministerial Conference proceedings.

#### **2. ECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing, Lisbon, 2017**

6. Hosted by the Government of Portugal, the fourth ECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing took place on 21-22 September 2017. It was preceded by a non-governmental organizations (NGO) forum and a research forum on 20 September 2017. Delegates from 45 ECE member States and 5 countries from other regions participated in the Conference. ECE secretariat

7. During the preparatory process of this Conference, a Declaration Drafting Group was convened by the Bureau of the Working Group to prepare a draft text of the ministerial declaration for adoption by member States as the outcome document of the Conference. The Declaration Drafting Group consisted of representatives from Germany (the chairperson), Belgium, Norway, and Austria, with the assistance of the NGO representative. The Group facilitated a participatory process and, to the extent possible, incorporated contributions from ECE member States and NGOs.

8. The first draft of the declaration was extensively discussed and amended at the Bureau meeting in April 2017. Then two rounds of full-scale electronic consultations with the member States to reach a general preliminary agreement on the text were organized by the secretariat and the Chair of the Declaration Drafting Group between May and August 2017. The preliminary agreed text of the Ministerial Declaration was tabled at the Conference.

9. Organization of the NGO and research forums were led, respectively, by the NGO preparatory committee and the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research in Vienna (ECV) with the involvement of several institutes and organizations.

10. A poster exhibition showcasing good practice examples and innovative approaches in implementing MIPAA/RIS as well as five other side events were organized under the auspices of the Conference. Among them, the breakfast talk on combatting ageism was held together with the World Health Organisation and a lunch panel on ‘Equity for all ages: lessons from the region’ with the Regional Office of the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA); a lunch panel on the Active Ageing Index and the presentation on better statistics for ageing were organized by the ECE secretariat.

## **B. Policy Briefs with good practice examples**

11. The ECE series of Policy Briefs on Ageing provide information on policies and promote 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>

12. Since the ninth meeting of the Working Group on Ageing in November 2016, two additional Policy Briefs on the topics ‘Older persons in rural and remote areas’ and ‘Realizing the potential of living longer’ were published. The initial draft of the latter brief was prepared by the WGA Bureau members representing Norway, ECV and NGOs. The German donation to the Ageing fund ensured that both latest issues of Policy Brief are available in printed as well as electronic version.

## **C. Capacity development**

13. In May 2017, the secretariat together with the Italian partners from INRCA organized a national seminar ‘Active Ageing Index in Italy: Use and Policy Implications’. Seminar participants reviewed the Active Ageing Index (AAI) results for Italy at national and regional levels and discussed the AAI potential as a tool for monitoring ageing-related policies as well as for furthering the concept of active ageing.

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

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

14. The external evaluator completed an evaluation exercise of the second phase of the AAI project (2014-2016) in February 2017. The evaluation report and its recommendations were carefully examined by the secretariat. The report is available in electronic version on the ECE website.<sup>2</sup>

15. The third phase of the AAI project (AAI-III) was launched in May 2016 and will continue through April 2019.<sup>3</sup> Under this phase the following activities were implemented in 2017: (a) two parallel research studies on criteria-specific analysis of AAI results by institutional consultants in Germany and Poland. Both research teams focused on comparison and analysis of AAI results for different groups of population distinguished by

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<sup>1</sup> Available from [http://www.unece.org/pau/age/policy\\_briefs/welcome.html](http://www.unece.org/pau/age/policy_briefs/welcome.html).

<sup>2</sup> The report is available from  
[http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/age/Active\\_Ageing\\_Index/FINAL\\_REPORT\\_AAI\\_PROJ\\_ECT\\_II\\_13\\_March\\_2017.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/pau/age/Active_Ageing_Index/FINAL_REPORT_AAI_PROJ_ECT_II_13_March_2017.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> <https://statswiki.unece.org/display-AAI/Active+Ageing+Index+Home>

criteria of educational attainment, socio-economic status, and area of residence (urban or rural); (b) a contract with the Southampton University for a longer-term research-related consultancy was signed with the initial task to complete the 2016 AAI computation by the end of 2017; (c) the seventh AAI Expert Group meeting organized on 12-13 October in Brussels, Belgium. The results of the two research studies as well as the 2016 AAI results will be made available on the AAI wiki-space.

## **2. The Generations and Gender Programme (GGP)**

16. The secretariat has continued to act as a clearinghouse for data administration of GGP and as a coordinator of the network of National Focal Points – the GGP Council of Partners. In this capacity, the ECE Secretariat has co-organized one Council of Partners meeting since the last WGA session: on 5 July 2017 in Berlin, Germany back-to-back with the fourth GGP User conference (6-7-July). As the co-ordinator of the GGP Council of Partners, the ECE secretariat serves an important bridging function between those responsible for programme management and development and those in charge of its implementation at the national level.

17. A new round of GGP surveys is planned for 2019. In the meantime, two additional ECE countries – Belarus and Kazakhstan – joined the programme. Belarus is currently fielding the GGP survey with support of the UNFPA local office and experts of the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute (NIDI).

18. 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> GGP is among the leading data sources for policy-relevant research on demographic trends and processes in the ECE region. In collaboration with its scientific partner NIDI, ECE promotes the use of evidence from GGP data as a basis for policymaking. The Secretariat has also maintained and updated the bibliography of GGP-based research.<sup>5</sup> The bibliography currently has references to more than 1,200 GGP-based publications.

## **3. Other programme elements**

19. In May 2017, ECE together with the UNFPA Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia initiated a project on ‘Enhanced integration of population dynamics into development planning: follow up to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in the UNECE region’. The UN agency to agency contribution agreement was signed in September 2017. The project implementation period extends through the end of December 2018 and will support the regional follow-up on ICPD implementation. The project foresees a number of activities including convening an Expert Group to consolidate information on existing statistical indicators and reporting mechanisms (MIPAA, SDGs, etc.). The first face-to-face Expert Group meeting will take place late in 2017. Once defined, the regional ICPD monitoring framework will help assess the progress on ICPD implementation in the ECE region and contribute to the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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

<sup>5</sup> Available from <http://www.ggp-i.org/form/publications/>.

### III. Conclusions

20. The preparation of the Synthesis report for the third review and appraisal cycle of MIPAA/RIS and organization of the 2017 Ministerial Conference on Ageing were at the centre of the activities of the ECE secretariat and the WGA in 2017. The WGA has produced substantive outputs and has provided a framework for networking among national focal points to exchange information and share experiences. Under its guidance, 45 member States submitted national reports on MIPAA/RIS implementation. A number of national reports attest that involvement in the intergovernmental bodies such as WGA provided additional impetus for some ECE member States to adjust their national policy frameworks in response to MIPAA/RIS and the Vienna Ministerial Declaration goals.

21. The substantive financial and in-kind contributions in support of the WGA in 2017 – hosting of the Ministerial Conference in Lisbon by Portugal, the Bureau meeting in Vienna by Austria, as well as Germany’s donation to the Ageing fund and others – ensured a successful conclusion of the third cycle of MIPAA/RIS review and appraisal and facilitated the implementation of other activities foreseen in the WGA programme of work for 2017. The extra-budgetary funding received under the joint management project with the European Commission’s Directorate General for Employment, Social Affairs and Inclusion provided necessary resources to continue work on AAI and promote its use for policymaking and monitoring the impact of active ageing policy actions.

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