



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
30 August 2016

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Working Group on Ageing

Ninth meeting

Geneva, 21 and 22 November 2016

Item 2 of the provisional agenda

Work of the Bureau

Report on the eighth meeting of the Bureau of the Working Group on Ageing

I. Opening of the meeting and adoption of agenda

1. The Bureau meeting took place on 18-19 May 2016 in Oslo (Norway) and was hosted by the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs of Norway. The Bureau members from the following member States attended the meeting: Austria, Belarus, Belgium, Georgia, Germany, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia, and Spain. The representative of Turkey was unable to attend. The scientific community was represented by an expert from the Webster University Vienna and the new director of the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research (European Centre Vienna). A representative of the European Federation of Older Persons (EURAG) participated on behalf of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). Four additional host country representatives took part in the first plenary session of the meeting.

2. Ms. Erika Winkler, Chair of the Working Group on Ageing (WGA), representative of Austria, chaired the meeting with the assistance of the Vice-Chair, Ms Dorika Seib, representative of Germany.

3. The Chair introduced the new director of the European Center for Welfare Policy and Research (ECV), Mr. Kai Leichsenring, who participated in the Bureau meeting at the invitation of the Chair.

4. On behalf of the host country, the meeting participants were welcomed by Mr Bjørn Halvorsen, the National Focal Point on Ageing of Norway. The Chair thanked the host country and opened the meeting. The Bureau adopted the agenda of the meeting.

GE.16-14981(E)



* 1 6 1 4 9 8 1 *

Please recycle



II. Introduction by host country: keynote address and discussion

5. The meeting was addressed by the former State Secretary in the Ministry of Health and Care of Norway, Ms. Astrid N. Heiberg who gave an overview of the opportunities and challenges of population ageing in Norway. She pointed out the need for measures aimed at enabling longer working lives, encouraging healthy lifestyles and pension reforms to stimulate people to work longer. She stressed that population ageing should not only be viewed from an economic standpoint but also there should be a focus on aspects of health and quality of life.

6. Ms. Aina Strand, Project Manager at the Norwegian Ministry of Health and Care, presented the Norwegian Government's strategy for an age-friendly society. The cross-sectoral strategy is aimed at creating an age-friendly society, in which the opportunities of an ageing society can be realized by changing attitudes, fighting discrimination and enabling older persons to contribute to society and participate in all spheres of life. Bureau members commended the strategy and its integrated approach.

7. Ms. Tora Aasland, former Minister of Higher Education and Research and now member of the National Council for Senior Citizens, presented the work and functioning of the National Council for Senior Citizens. The Council takes on an advisory role to national authorities and works towards a change in the perception of older persons, their role in society and their abilities in working life. Important areas of work are advocacy for a higher and flexible retirement age and the fight against age discrimination.

8. Ms. Kari Østerud, Director of the National Centre for Senior Policies Services, gave a presentation on the role of the Centre for Senior Policy. The main goals of the Centre are to increase the employment rate among older workers, to establish senior policy as an integral part of most companies' Human Resource policies and to raise a greater awareness of senior policy in society and among the individuals. To this end, the Centre works in close cooperation with social partners and the Government, carrying out a number of specialized activities.

9. Mr. Magne Mikal Hustavenes, Specialist Director at the Municipality of Oslo, gave an overview of the activities undertaken to make Oslo an age-friendly city as part of the WHO network of age-friendly cities. In this regard the City of Oslo carries out a number of activities such as mapping age-friendly initiatives and policies and creating a plan of action for the City of Oslo. Current projects include the creation of a dementia and age-friendly district with more flexible transportation and dementia-friendly pharmacies, assessments on how senior centers can be improved and how and where volunteers can best be engaged.

III. Report on the ageing-relevant outcomes of the following as they relate to the UNECE Population programme and the Working Group on Ageing

A. The 54th Session of the Commission for Social Development (3-12 February 2016)

10. The secretariat informed the Bureau about the outcomes of the 54th Session of the Commission for Social Development that took place from 3 to 12 February 2016 in New York. Three resolutions were adopted, among them one on the social issues of youth and one on implementing the convention for persons with disabilities. The priority theme for the next session will be "strategies for eradicating poverty", referring to the first

Sustainable Development Goal and mainly directed at exploring how to fit social and population issues into the 2030 development agenda.

B. The 49th Session of the Commission for Population and Development(11-15 April 2016)

11. The secretariat informed the Bureau of the discussions and decisions at this year's session of the Commission on Population and Development under the theme "strengthening the demographic evidence base for post-2015 development agenda" with a focus on the indicators for the sustainable development goals.

12. During the 70th session, the United Nations General Assembly has not adopted any resolution regarding the third review and appraisal cycle of MIPAA. Therefore, there will be no report of the UN Secretary-General on this topic to the 71st General Assembly session. Nevertheless, in August, ECE has to submit a short report on MIPAA review and appraisal developments and activities in the region for the report to the Commission for Social Development in February 2017.

C. The 84th meeting of the Executive Committee of ECE (10 May 2016)

13. The Chair reported on the meeting of the Executive Committee of ECE in May where the programme of work of the Population component of the Housing, Land Management and Population sub-programme for 2016-2017 was decided upon. The work programme was approved by the Executive Committee with no reservations. The Chair proposed to the Bureau to work towards upgrading the status of the Working Group on Ageing to a committee at its 10th anniversary in 2018.

14. The secretariat informed participants that the global strategy and Plan of Action on health and ageing developed by the World Health Organization is to be adopted in the following week by the World Health Assembly. Part of the strategy is to establish evidence and partnerships necessary to support a Decade of Healthy Ageing from 2020 to 2030.

IV. Progress on implementation of the WGA work programme for 2015

A. Road Maps

1. Georgia: Plan of Action

15. Ms. Ketevan Goginashvili, the focal point for ageing from Georgia, reported on the progress in implementing the recommendations provided in the Road Map for Mainstreaming Ageing in Georgia which was prepared in 2014 and published in early-2015. A multi-sectoral working group consisting of representatives of the Parliament of Georgia, the government, nongovernmental organizations and experts was set up to develop the Action plan on Ageing 2016-2018. The policy framework will be adopted by Parliament on 22 May. The Action Plan consists of 13 priority areas for which specific aims and objectives are set, identifying for each element the responsible entities, the funding source and indicators for monitoring. A first draft was discussed on 22 April and the Action Plan is expected to be adopted end of June.

2. Armenia: Evaluation exercise

16. The secretariat gave a presentation on the evaluation exercise carried out to assess the progress in the implementation of the Road Map for Mainstreaming Ageing in Armenia. An evaluation specialist was contracted to prepare the framework and carry out the evaluation. The consultant undertook a desk review of available material and data sources, developed a questionnaire which was disseminated as an online survey to relevant stakeholders in Armenia and took part in an evaluation mission to Armenia. Working group members from the Republic of Moldova and Sweden participated in the evaluation mission. During the field mission, interviews and focus group discussions with key informants were conducted, among them representatives of ministries, nongovernmental organizations, service providers, social partners and municipal authorities. All findings of the evaluation will be included in the evaluation report which is expected to be published by the end of July.

B. Policy Briefs

1. Policy brief 17 (migration and older age) – final draft

17. The secretariat gave an overview of the previously circulated final draft of the policy brief on migration and older age, summarizing the latest changes to the draft. Bureau members discussed the presented draft and provided comments. It was agreed to add a paragraph highlighting the impacts of out-migration on the source countries.

18. An additional good practice example will be expected from the representative of Germany while the representative of Austria will revise the text for the earlier submitted good practice and the representative of Spain will check the Spanish example. As a general rule also for future policy briefs, it was agreed that good practice examples which were not submitted by national focal points should be sent to them for approval. Final comments may be provided to the secretariat within one week of the meeting.

2. Policy Brief 18 (older persons in rural and remote areas) – initial outline

19. The secretariat delivered a presentation summarizing the previously-circulated annotated outline of the policy brief on older persons in rural and remote areas. The Bureau discussed the content and provided detailed feedback on the proposal. It was suggested to introduce a chapter on who are the implementing actors, differentiating between national, regional and local level. Other suggestions included to highlight the role of new technologies and new ways to organize things; to add the aspect of intragenerational care; to add emergency care in remote areas as a special element, and to broach the issue of social innovation in rural areas and new social ties between stakeholders.

20. It was generally agreed that there should be a focus on depopulated areas considering that supply gaps of services and barriers to access them are of particular relevance in this context. Bureau members agreed to send any additional feedback on the annotated outline to the secretariat by the end of May.

C. Second capacity-building workshop on data gaps for active ageing indicators

21. The secretariat gave a presentation summarizing the preparations for a second workshop on data gaps for active ageing indicators that form the basis of the statistical

annex to national reports on MIPAA implementation. The workshop target audience are national focal points on ageing and representatives of the national statistical offices of Eastern European, Caucasus, Central Asian and Western Balkans countries. It will be held on 23 and 24 June in Minsk and hosted by the National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Belarus. The workshop will review the progress in preparing the statistical annexes and provide consultations on the specific indicators as per requests from the participant countries. The workshop is organized thanks to the financial support of the UNFPA's Regional Office for Eastern Europe and Central Asia, and the Swedish contribution to the Ageing fund.

D. Active Ageing Index: conclusion of the second phase, programme of work for the third phase (May 2016 – April 2019)

22. The secretariat delivered a presentation summarizing the progress and achievements of the Active Ageing Index (AAI) project during its second phase and the foreseen activities for the third phase. In particular, the secretariat reported on the results of the AAI pilot studies for Serbia and Turkey: for both countries data for most indicators are regularly calculated (at least starting from 2013); currently available data made it possible to calculate all the indicators for 2014 AAI, using only two alternative variables for Serbia, and data for earlier years for three indicators for Turkey.

23. The secretariat stressed the importance of adapting AAI to the subnational level, the level where ageing-related policies are most often formed and implemented and therefore where monitoring is of high importance. An overview was given of a pilot study of AAI at local level in Germany — the first pilot study at this level. The pilot study was carried out by a research team from the Technical University of Dortmund. The index was calculated for 30 territorial entities in Germany based on the secondary data sources. The preliminary results were presented at the Peer Review in Berlin on 14–15 April 2016. The final report will be available from the wiki-space devoted to AAI in the coming months.

24. Plans for the third phase of the AAI project were presented. It includes extending the geographical coverage of AAI beyond the European Union; calculating 2016 and 2018 AAI; further fine-tuning of the methodology; implementing some specific analysis of AAI results; carrying out pilot studies on national and subnational levels; holding national/subregional seminars; organising an international research seminar; and improving the visualisation of AAI.

E. Other programme elements

25. The representative of Slovenia, Mr. Aleš Kenda, informed the Bureau of an international conference on the human rights of older persons, which was organized by the Slovenian Ministry of Foreign Affairs and held in Brdo on 11 and 12 April 2016. Among the participants were representatives of the OECD, European Commission, deputy ministers and the Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons. The conference offered an opportunity to exchange best practices and improve cooperation among stakeholders.

26. The Chair reported on the inaugural IFA Copenhagen Summit convened by the International Federation on Ageing and DaneAge which took place on 17-19 April 2016 in Copenhagen. Denmark promotes a transition from passive to active care and recently passed a law on reablement. Participants discussed effective implementation of reablement policy but also the question of whether or not older persons should have the option to refuse activating treatments and trainings.

27. The secretariat summarized the outcomes and discussions of the Ministerial Conference of nine countries in South East Europe which took place in Sofia on 12 and 13 May. Participating ministers came mainly from ministries of labour and social affairs. The secretariat will share the declaration which was adopted at the conference. One focus of the conference was to find solutions to the accelerated ageing of societies due to emigration and circular migration. The secretariat proposed to nominate one of the delegates to speak at the WGA meeting in November.

28. At the interagency meeting of UNECE and other international organizations working in the area of ageing, the representative of the International Social Security Association (ISSA) informed participants of the upcoming ISSA Megatrends report on demographic trends and their impact on social security. This report as well as a new study from the ILO could be presented at the next WGA meeting in November.

V. Third cycle of MIPAA/RIS Review and Appraisal

A. The process of national reporting and synthesis report

29. The secretariat reminded Bureau members that national reports should be submitted by the end of October. The format of the synthesis report was discussed and the Bureau agreed that it should be structured along the four goals of the Vienna Ministerial Declaration. The Bureau decided to include a table mapping the major challenges and achievements for each country. For this the secretariat will approach countries and ask them to identify the three main areas where achievements have been made and the three main areas where challenges remain.

30. The 22 active ageing indicators will form the statistical annex for the national reports. The indicators are available for all EU countries and four other countries (Canada, Iceland, Norway, Switzerland). The secretariat will send pre-filled statistical annexes to the countries for which AAI data is available. Countries for which no AAI data is available have to submit their own statistical annexes.

31. Bureau members accepted the request of the NGO representative to send a few questions to all national focal points on how they celebrate the International Day of Older Persons on 1 October.

B. Planning for 2017 Ministerial Conference – concept note and organizational matters: schedule, possible agenda, panellists etc.

32. The representative of Slovenia informed the Bureau that Slovenia will not host the Ministerial Conference in 2017. The representative of Portugal reported that Portugal is still considering hosting the Ministerial Conference and that a final decision will be made by the end of June/early July. It was discussed how to raise the funding for the conference and it was agreed that different options of financial support would be explored, in particular for the NGO and research forums.

33. The Chair summarized the pre-circulated concept note on the structure of the Ministerial Conference including the schedule, agenda and possible panellists. Bureau members discussed the draft concept note and commented on it. Bureau members agreed to have mixed panels including experts, policymakers and NGO representatives. Panels should consist of 5 panellists, including moderators, and rapporteurs.

34. With regard to the communication strategy, Bureau members agreed to have a brief description of one paragraph per panel in the annotated agenda and have a more catching wording for external communication to raise interest about the conference.

35. Bureau members brainstormed the title for the third thematic area and decided it to be “ageing in (with) dignity”.

C. Drafting of the declaration for the Ministerial Conference

36. The Vice Chair presented the pre-circulated draft declaration for the Ministerial Conference and Bureau members were invited to comment on it. It was noted that the length of the different themes should be more balanced. The third theme should correspond to the third thematic area of the conference and be titled “ageing in (with) dignity” correspondingly.

37. It was agreed that the secretariat will clean up and edit the draft and provide a few bullet points on aspects to be covered in theme III. Bureau members are asked to provide comments on the edited draft and input for theme III by 10 June. The Vice Chair will incorporate the suggestions in a revised draft which will be the basis for discussion at a teleconference of the Bureau subgroup concerned with the declaration draft. The teleconference will take place in the last week of June and the secretariat will assist in fixing a convenient date.

D. Planning for research and non-governmental organization (NGO) forums

38. The NGO representative noted that there should be the possibility for government officials to join discussions at both forums. He proposed to attach the documentation of past forums to the conference invitation. The Director of ECV, in turn, suggested aiming for contrasting views and research findings presented at the research forum that would inspire a better informed discussion.

39. The Bureau agreed that organizing committees should be formed for the NGO and research forums with several institutes or organizations involved. The representative of the NGOs and the Director of ECV declared their readiness to chair the respective organizing committees and to make a proposal for participating institutes and organizations. The planning for the poster session will be led by the secretariat and the hosting country (if any) and may require forming a small evaluation committee for the poster selection.

VI. Membership of the Working Group and its Bureau

40. Turkey’s Bureau membership was discussed in connection with their inactivity and non-participation at the last two WGA meetings and at this Bureau meeting. The Bureau agreed to propose at the next WGA meeting to replace Turkey with a new Bureau member.

41. The Bureau agreed to propose at the next WGA meeting to elect the director of the European Center for Social Welfare Policy and Research, Mr. Kai Leichsenring, as the new representative of the research community. This nomination will then be subject to approval by the WGA.

VII. Draft agenda of the ninth meeting of the Working Group on Ageing (21-22 November 2016)

42. The Bureau agreed on a proposed provisional agenda for the ninth meeting of WGA to be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on 21-22 November 2016 with the following amendment:

Include an item on the economic dimension of ageing provided that an expert consultant can be identified in time who can prepare a paper on the above topic and present it at the next WGA meeting. Bureau members are asked to send suggestions for a possible expert. The representative of NGOs will draft a short abstract for the paper.

VIII. Other business

43. No additional matters were raised.

IX. Summary and closing of the meeting

44. The Chair summarized the main elements of the discussions and reviewed all decisions and action points, and thanked the host country representatives.

45. A brief ad-hoc meeting of the Bureau will be held in the morning of 21 November 2016 (the opening day of the ninth WGA meeting).

46. The ninth Bureau meeting will take place in spring (March or April) 2017.
