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Working Group on Ageing

Eleventh meeting

Geneva, 19 and 20 November 2018

Work of the Bureau

Report on the tenth 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 14-15 May 2018 in Ljubljana (Slovenia) and was hosted by the Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of Slovenia. The Bureau members from the following member States attended the meeting: Belarus, Czech Republic, France, Italy, Norway, Portugal, Slovenia. The representative of Israel was unable to attend. The director of the European Centre for Social Welfare Policy and Research (European Centre Vienna), Mr. Kai Leichsenring, represented the scientific community. Ms. Gertraud Dayé, International Longevity Centre, participated on behalf of non-governmental organizations (NGOs). The Chair of the Consultation Group on the follow-up to Paragraph 38 of the Lisbon Ministerial Declaration (Consultation Group), Ms. Erika Winkler (Austria) also participated. Four additional host country representatives took part in the first plenary session of the meeting.

2. Mr. Edmundo Martinho, Chair of the Working Group on Ageing (WGA), representative of Portugal, chaired the meeting with the assistance of the Vice-Chair, Ms. Aina Strand, representative of Norway.

3. Mr. Aleš Kenda, Bureau member from Slovenia, welcomed the meeting participants on behalf of the host country. The Bureau adopted the agenda of the meeting without modifications.

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II. Introduction by host country: keynote address and discussion

4. Ms. Martina Vuk, State Secretary, Ministry of Labour, Family, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities (Slovenia) provided an overview of Slovenia's Active Ageing Policy.¹ The Strategy, adopted in 2017, is built on four pillars: employment; independent, healthy and safe living for all generations; participation in society; and environments enabling an active life throughout the life course. The Active Ageing Index is at the centre of monitoring framework for the strategy. She further provided examples of policies undertaken, spoke about the role of public services in combating poverty, and help provided to NGOs delivering valuable services and support to older persons. She also mentioned that development of a long-term care system in Slovenia is a high priority.

5. Ms. Jožica Puhar, Member Expert Council, Association of Pensioners' Associations of Slovenia, former Minister of Labour Family and Social Affairs, outlined some of the key challenges faced by older persons in Slovenia, including ageism, a growing risk of poverty, lack of long-term care services, and the need to receive a decent pension to be able to access needed services. She presented a number of programmes developed by the Association of Pensioners' Associations in the areas of health promotion, social protection and housing, rights of older people, information and communication technologies, lifelong learning, cultural activities and self-help.

6. Ms. Štefka Zlobec, President, Slovenian Association for Help with Dementia – Spominčica, Alzheimer Slovenia gave a presentation on the situation of older people with dementia in Slovenia and services provided by her organization to help them and their carers, including helplines, magazines and other print publications providing information. She further shared the good practice of establishing “dementia-friendly spots” across the country to which people with dementia can come when they are lost, but that also provide information and support to key actors in the community such as carers, shop attendants, the police, bankers, etc. to make them more sensitive to the needs of people with dementia and how best to address them.

7. Ms. Tanja Hodnik, Undersecretary, Chief of Department, Municipality of Ljubljana, provided an overview of demographic challenges and policy responses by the municipality. Examples of activities provided included family assistance at home, daily activity centres for older persons, accessible transport services that are offered free of charge, and extensive cultural programme and educational opportunities for older persons.

8. The discussion following the presentations focused on intergenerational support and the respective responsibilities of parents and adult children to provide care for each other as well as on the financing of municipal programmes.

III. Brief on the main outcomes of the WGA Chair's meeting with the UNECE EXCOM (30 January 2018): Population component's work programme and mandate extension for the Working Group

9. The Bureau was informed by the Chair about the adoption of the programme of work and renewal of the mandate of the WGA for five years until 2022 by the UNECE Executive Committee at its meeting on 30 January 2018.

¹ The Slovene Active Ageing Strategy has been translated into English and is available online: http://www.umar.gov.si/fileadmin/user_upload/publikacije/kratke_analize/Strategija_dolgozive_druzbe/UMAR_SDD_ang.pdf

10. The Chair further informed Bureau members that the Russian Federation had requested to be a full member of the Consultation Group on the follow-up to Paragraph 38 of the Lisbon Ministerial Declaration and has since joined the Group.

IV. Proposal to upgrade the Working Group on Ageing to a Standing Committee on Population Issues

A. Consultation Group's report on progress made in response to the paragraph 38 of the Lisbon Ministerial Declaration

11. The Chair of the Consultation Group informed the Bureau about progress in the consultations. Several member States have reaffirmed their support for the proposal, others have requested further clarification on resource-implications of such a transformation. Only the Russian Federation has indicated to be opposed to a transformation of the WGA to a standing committee.

B. Review of / agreement on a draft text of the proposal to upgrade the Working Group on Ageing to a Standing Committee on Population Issues

12. The Chair of the Consultation Group proposed a draft letter to permanent missions highlighting key arguments for the transformation to accompany the proposal and Bureau members discussed how the letter and proposal could be further strengthened to clarify concerns raised, including strengthening the economic aspects of ageing, and putting more stress on a potentially more important inter-agency role of a standing committee. Bureau members were invited to submit written suggestions on how to strengthen the draft letter and proposal to the secretariat by 23 May.

C. Next phase: organizing informal consultations at the level of UNECE EXCOM members (Ministries of Foreign Affairs/Representatives of the Permanent Missions to the United Nations and other international organizations in Geneva).

13. The Bureau agreed to invite representatives of Geneva-based permanent missions for a meeting with the Consultation Group in the second half of June.

14. It was further decided to keep the title of the proposed committee focused on population ageing rather than broadening it to population issues.

V. Progress on implementation of the WGA work programme for 2018

A. Policy Brief #20 "Innovative social services and supportive measures for independent living in advanced age" and decision on topic #21

15. The Bureau discussed the draft policy brief #20 and provided feedback. The brief's emphasis on social as well as technical aspects of innovation and the focus on integrating formal and informal services and support were welcomed. Suggestions included highlighting the potential of older persons above the age of 80 to still contribute rather than just focusing on their need for support to live independently. It was further suggested to

expand on drivers and obstacles to innovation that might be engrained in country-specific regulatory frameworks of health and social care systems. Another proposition was to include the specific challenges of people with disabilities when they age and measures needed to support their ability for independent living. The importance of support provided by neighbourhoods and “caring communities” was noted. Two publications by the MoPAct (Mobilising the potential of active ageing in Europe) project were shared to inform the brief, one on social support and long-term care in EU care regimes and one providing a qualitative inventory of the key drivers of social innovation in social support and long-term care.

16. The discussion placed emphasis on the needs of informal carers and there was general agreement that a future policy brief should focus on this topic, echoing the findings of the discussion groups during the 2017 meeting of the Working Group.

17. The Bureau was informed that as per usual practice, a call requesting good practice examples for the policy brief was issued and a number of countries submitted examples. In a next step, good practice examples would be identified and included in the revised policy brief to be finalized by July 2018.

18. The secretariat informed Bureau members of the follow-up discussion with Germany on the forthcoming topics of policy briefs. Germany is funding three policy briefs in 2018-2019 and has agreed on merging the planned policy brief on ageing in place with the current policy brief #20 on supporting independent living in advanced age, thus freeing up one issue for one of the topics that emerged from the discussions at the Tenth meeting of the WGA in November 2017, including “Ageism”, “Informal Carers”, and “Ageing and the SDGs”.

19. It was decided that Policy Brief #21 would be on the topic of ageism (autumn 2018 – funded by Germany), and Policy Brief #22 would focus on informal carers (spring 2019 – no allocated funds). The Director of the European Centre Vienna volunteered to develop a first draft of the Policy Brief on informal carers. Policy Brief #23 would be on ageing in urban environments and funded by Germany (second half of 2019).

B. Brief report on other programme elements

20. The secretariat reported on ongoing activities under the Active Ageing Index (AAI) project. The research activities include the implementation of a research study on AAI results for different population groups in Italy, development of guidelines for AAI calculation in non-EU countries and /or at subnational level; and continuing work on updating AAI results, methodology fine-tuning etc. Two major events will be held in 2018. A national seminar on AAI results for Poland will take place in Warsaw on 18 June and will be hosted by the Ministry of Family, Labour and Social policy. It will bring together some 50 participants: representatives of regions, municipalities, other ministries, civil society and academia to discuss AAI results for different population groups in Poland, subnational results, and further application of the index. The Second international seminar on AAI will take place in Bilbao on 27-28 September.² It is co-organized by UNECE, European Commission’s DG-EMPL, Oxford institute of population ageing, the University of the Basque Country with the support of the Biscay Provincial Government (Spain). Up to 350 researchers, policymakers and other stakeholders are expected to take part in the event. The seminar is the culmination of the so-called Silver week – a series of ageing-related events organized in Bilbao starting from 24 September. These include the Active and

² For more information on the Second international seminar visit <https://statswiki.unece.org/display/AAI/Second+international+seminar++on+the+Active+Ageing+Index>

Assisted Living forum, meeting of local stakeholders, the General Assembly of the Covenant on Demographic Change and others. The registration for the international seminar will start at the end of May. Members of the Bureau were invited to attend.

21. The discussion highlighted the potential of the Active Ageing Index to raise awareness on ageing. A new visualization tool that is in preparation will further enhance communication about the AAI by providing a more visually appealing, interactive and user-friendly interface.

22. The secretariat briefed the Bureau on the recent developments in the Generations and Gender Programme (GGP). In March, the Generations and Gender Survey (GGS) data sharing agreement with Belarus was signed. Kazakhstan and Latvia are currently fielding the survey and further fund-raising for GGS is underway in Georgia, the Republic of Moldova and Romania. The United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and other agencies are supporting activities at country level, an example being a recently organized Regional Forum on the GGS in Belarus. The GGP is currently piloting studies on conducting the survey online with a smaller sample of about 400 participants (ongoing in Portugal and in preparation in Germany and Croatia). The next Council of Partners meeting will take place in June, back to back with the European Population Conference on 6-9 June 2018 in Brussels.

23. Regarding capacity-building activities, the secretariat did not receive any new official requests for development of a Road map for mainstreaming ageing. The representative of Belarus informed that the anticipated official request to develop a Road map for Belarus may not be forthcoming as there are plans to develop the strategy on ageing internally.

VI. Preparations for a Policy Seminar back-to-back with the 11th meeting of the WGA: topic, concept, contributors

24. In preparation of the planned Policy Seminar on 21 November 2018, members of the WGA were consulted on the choice of topics. Three potential topic areas, based on themes of interest that had emerged from discussions at the tenth WGA meeting in November 2017, were proposed to WGA members via an online questionnaire. These are “Ageing and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)”, “Informal carers” and “Ageism – a barrier to longer working life”. In total, the secretariat received 37 responses from government representatives and civil society organizations of which 20 indicated a first preference for the topic “Ageing and the SDGs”. The Bureau decided that “Ageing and the SDGs” will be the topic for the Policy Seminar in 2018.

25. An exploration of the linkages between the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) and the 2030 Agenda is timely given that the 2019 High-Level Political Forum will be on the theme of “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”, with voluntary national reviews focusing on SDGs 4, 8, 10, 13, 16 and 17. SDGs 4, 8, and 10 are particularly relevant to the Lisbon Ministerial Declaration and MIPAA and its Regional Implementation Strategy (RIS).

26. The representative of Austria shared experience on the cooperation between the national coordinating mechanism on the SDGs and line ministries. An initial discussion on the possible focus of the policy seminar suggested that in the first part, the mechanisms for mainstreaming ageing in national implementation of the 2030 Agenda could be discussed, with more in-depth focus on relevant SDGs in the second part.

VII. Briefing on UNECE/UNFPA project “Enhanced integration of population dynamics into development planning: follow-up to the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) in the UNECE region” (ICPD@25)

A. ICPD Regional monitoring framework – links with MIPAA & SDGs

27. The secretariat gave a status update on the development of a monitoring framework to support the follow-up on the implementation of the ICPD Programme of Action in the UNECE region, and more specifically the recommendations of the Chair’s summary that concluded the 20-year review of ICPD in the region in 2013. The monitoring framework is aligned to the extent possible with the SDG indicators.

B. UNECE Regional Report outline

28. Bureau members were briefed on the preparation of a regional report on ICPD@25, that will cover trends and developments since the last regional review in 2013, assessing progress in the implementation of the Chair’s summary recommendations in the UNECE region. The report will inform discussions at the Regional Conference in October 2018 and will feed into the global review to take place at the 52nd Session on Population and Development in 2019.

C. Preparations of the UNECE Regional Conference on follow-up to the ICPD Beyond 2014 Review (1-2 October 2018, Geneva) - potential WGA input

29. The UNECE Regional Conference on ICPD@25 “Enabling Choices: Population Dynamics and Sustainable Development” will focus on key actions for implementation and address the wider policy concerns related to three major themes covered in the Chair’s summary: population dynamics and sustainable development; families, sexual and reproductive health over the life course; and inequalities, social inclusion, and rights. Bureau members were invited to consider organizing a side event on ageing during the Regional Conference.

D. Possible side event / reception on 1 October to celebrate the International Day of Older Persons

30. The Bureau was informed that the theme of the International Day of Older Persons (IDOP) in 2018 is “Celebrating older human rights champions” to commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights in 1948. Bureau members were invited to identify older human rights champions in their countries to be portrayed for the IDOP celebration on 1 October and it was agreed that the secretariat would prepare a template to facilitate the submission of profiles.

VIII. Communication activities: messages for a video clip on the Working Group on Ageing, news articles, tweets, etc.

31. The secretariat provided a brief update on communication activities including the coverage of the side event and High-Level Panel at the 56th Session of the Commission for

Social Development on 31 January 2018. The group reaffirmed interest in preparing a short video clip to celebrate the tenth anniversary of the Working Group on Ageing.

IX. Round up of the discussion and closing of the first day

32. The Chair summarized the discussion and decisions taken during the first day of the meeting.

X. Closing of the third cycle of review and appraisal of MIPAA/RIS: High-level panel and draft resolution of the 56th Session of the Commission for Social Development

33. The representative of Austria and former Chair of the Working Group on Ageing briefly reported on the High-Level Panel on the third review and appraisal of MIPAA at the 56th Session of the Commission for Social Development on 31 January 2018.³ Mr. José António Vieira da Silva, Minister of Labour, Solidarity, and Social Security of Portugal spoke on behalf of the UNECE region. During the subsequent discussion, the idea of a third World Assembly on Ageing was raised and received some interest by delegates. However, no country has so far come forward to explore hosting such an event.

34. The side event “MIPAA meets SDG1: Responses to old-age poverty in the UNECE region” organized by the Working Group on Ageing at the 56th Session of the Commission for Social Development on 31 January 2018 in New York was well attended and successful in raising awareness on the activities of the Working Group. The side event was referenced at several other side events. Austria, France and Norway shared policy strategies addressing the risk of old-age poverty through inclusive policies and the promotion of active ageing. A brief report⁴ on the event was prepared by the secretariat and shared through social media.

XI. Report on the population ageing-relevant outcomes of:

A. The 51st Session of the Commission on Population and Development (9-13 April 2018)

35. The secretariat briefly informed the Bureau about the outcome of the 51st session of the Commission on Population and Development, which this year focused on sustainable cities, human mobility and international migration. As in the past two years, member States did not succeed to agree on a resolution text. The special theme for the fifty second session of the Commission, in 2019, will be “Review and appraisal of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development and its contribution to the follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”.

³ Two UNECE News articles provide further details on the event :
<http://www.unece.org/info/media/news/population/2018/third-cycle-review-and-appraisal-of-madrid-international-plan-of-action-on-ageing-to-conclude-with-high-level-panel-in-new-york/doc.html>;
<http://www.unece.org/info/media/news/population/2018/un-social-development-commission-calls-for-active-inclusion-of-older-persons-in-the-implementation-of-the-2030-agenda/doc.html>

⁴ The summary of the side event and presentations are available online:
<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=47964>

B. UNECE Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (1-2 March 2018)

36. The Bureau was informed about the UNECE Regional Forum on Sustainable Development that took place on 1-2 March 2018 in Geneva in preparation of the High-Level Political Forum on SDGs in New York in July. The situation of older persons was mentioned in a case study provided by the Czech Republic on “Rental Housing finance for older persons”⁵ during a panel discussion on SDG11 – Financing the transition to sustainable cities and communities: challenges and opportunities. Civil Society Organizations present were also active in raising awareness about the needs of older persons.

37. The secretariat reminded Bureau members that in 2019, the theme of the High-Level Political Forum in New York will be “Empowering people and ensuring inclusiveness and equality”, providing an opportunity for members of the Working Group on Ageing to report on the contribution of MIPAA implementation to ensuring that older persons are not left behind in the implementation of the 2030 Agenda at national level. The in-depth review of SDGs 4, 8, 10, 16 and 17 on which there are clear linkages with the objectives of the Lisbon Ministerial Declaration will provide an opportunity to raise awareness of policy measures undertaken by member States to empower older persons and promoting inclusiveness and equality. The planned Policy Seminar on “Ageing and the SDGs” in November 2018 will provide a timely opportunity to strengthen understanding of the linkages between MIPAA and the 2030 Agenda and the ways in which they can mutually reinforce each other.

38. The Bureau agreed to explore with the secretariat in what way members of the WGA can best contribute to the 2019 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development, either through participation in panel or round table discussions and/or through the organization of a side event on ageing/population dynamics and sustainable development.

C. Other major international initiatives (based on information received at the Geneva Inter-agency meeting on 18 April)

39. The secretariat briefed the Bureau on the ageing-related activities and initiatives of other international organizations based on the outcomes of the inter-agency meeting on ageing held in Geneva on 18 April 2018. The secretariat has been organizing these meetings since 2014 once or twice a year with participation of representatives of the ILO, International Social Security Association (ISSA), Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR), UNFPA, WHO, and the NGO Committee on Ageing to provide the possibility for information exchange, coordination of activities, and the joint organization of events.

40. The main focus of WHO ageing-activities is implementation of the Global strategy and action plan on ageing and health (2016-2020), which includes preparation for a Decade of Healthy Ageing (2020-2030). The proposal on the latter will be considered by the World Health Assembly in 2019.⁶ The Human Rights Council will hold a seminar on 11 June 2018 in Geneva which will look into the role of the family in supporting the protection and promotion of human rights of older persons. The Independent Expert on the enjoyment of all human rights by older persons carried out two country visits in 2018 (Georgia and

⁵ The case study is available online:

https://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/RCM_Website/Case_Study_SDG11_1_Czech_Republic.pdf

⁶ For information on the Global strategy and action plan on ageing and health (2016-2020) and its implementation see <http://www.who.int/ageing/global-strategy/en>

Montenegro), and her thematic report to the Human Rights Council in September 2018 will be on social exclusion of older persons.

41. The secretariat also mentioned the UNECE Task Force on measuring old-age population in institutions set up in 2017 aiming at inter alia developing standard definition of institutional population as they pertain to older people and at providing guidelines for statistical offices on how to include such populations in the production of statistics on ageing-related topics. Another initiative linked to statistics on ageing is the newly created (March 2018) Titchfield City Group on Ageing which will work to to develop standardized tools and methods for producing both data disaggregated by age and ageing-related data.

42. The representative of France provided information on the mode of work of the Open-ended Working Group on Ageing and the content of its upcoming ninth session (23-26 July 2018, New York). The representative of Austria informed the Bureau that an international conference on human rights will take place in Austria on 13-14 November 2018.

XII. WGA work programme for the fourth cycle of MIPAA/RIS: proposals for new and continuing elements of the programme in response to the 2017 Lisbon Ministerial Declaration:

A. Policy Briefs/Policy Seminars / master classes / in-depth discussions

43. Members of the Bureau agreed with the planned elements of the WGA work programme but suggested to move policy seminars and inter-agency meetings higher up in the document rather than starting with policy briefs. It was suggested to give more prominence to the inter-agency coordination through the regular meetings of Geneva-based United Nations agencies and civil society organizations working on ageing as the improved communication and exchange on activities and facilitated cooperation by the secretariat.

B. Monitoring MIPAA/RIS implementation (extending AAI coverage, use of GGP findings, etc.)

44. In preparation of the next periodic review of the implementation of MIPAA/RIS in the UNECE region, it was suggested to conduct a 20-year review of developments in addition to the more specific follow-up on the implementation of the Lisbon Declaration objectives. The 20th anniversary of the adoption of RIS provides an opportunity to revisit the strategy to assess if it is still relevant or if new elements should be included guiding the way forward. A host country for the next UNECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing will need to be identified by the end of 2019 to allow sufficient time for the conference preparations.

45. The AAI indicators are currently used for monitoring MIPAA/RIS. Going forward, it could be useful to also consider which of the SDG targets and indicators could be used to monitor implementation and to identify which aspects of the Lisbon Ministerial Declaration are neither covered by AAI nor the SDG framework.

C. Road maps & peer assessments of the existing national policies on population ageing

46. Building on the experience of developing national road maps on mainstreaming ageing, the Chair of the Working Group (Portugal) proposed to consider developing

guidelines on mainstreaming ageing that could benefit all UNECE member States in addition to offering road maps and peer assessments for individual member States.

D. Other possible elements: alignment with national processes in achieving SDGs

47. The Bureau agreed to include the development of guidelines on mainstreaming ageing as an additional element. These would also contribute to enhanced alignment with the 2030 Agenda. The representative of Italy suggested using AAI to provide evidence base for such guidelines.

E. Partnerships for implementation / WGA programme support: country voluntary contributions and fundraising possibilities

48. Portugal offered to explore the possibility of providing financial support for the development of guidelines on mainstreaming ageing.

XIII. Draft agenda of the eleventh meeting of the Working Group on Ageing (19-20 November 2018)

49. The Bureau reviewed the draft agenda for the eleventh meeting of the Working Group on Ageing. Under Item 3 of the agenda, ISSA will present a forthcoming report on inequalities by the International Actuarial Association. Furthermore, under this item, the WGA contribution to the 2019 Regional Forum on Sustainable Development will be discussed. Under Item 4 of the agenda on “Country experiences: aligning policy measures and strategies on ageing with the Lisbon Ministerial Declaration” the Czech Republic will present its strategy on ageing, with specific emphasis on its gender dimension aligning with SDG5. It was agreed to explore possible interventions by the United Kingdom on their experience with ageing foresights and with the Russian Federation on sharing their recent strategy on ageing. Under Item 5 (a) it was agreed that one of the group discussions will focus on sharing experience on mainstreaming ageing which could provide useful insights for the preparation of the planned guidelines. The second group discussion will focus on informal carers in preparation of Policy Brief #22 on this topic.

50. The Bureau further agreed to mark the 10th anniversary of the Working Group on Ageing in the opening segment of the meeting. A reception or lunch event to celebrate the anniversary could be organized. On this occasion, the video clip could be shown and the IDOP exhibition on older human rights champions identified by member States could be displayed. Sponsors for the reception will need to be identified.

XIV. Other business

51. No additional matters were raised.

XV. Decisions, summary and closing of the meeting

52. The secretariat summarized the main elements of the discussions and reviewed all decisions and action points. The Bureau adopted the draft decisions.

53. The Chair and the secretariat thanked the host country representative for hosting the meeting and for their hospitality. The Chair closed the meeting.

54. The next ad-hoc Bureau meeting will take place in Geneva on 19 November 2018 at 08:30. The room number will be communicated closer to the time.
