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Executive Committee

103rd meeting

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Item 3(b) of the provisional agenda

Matters relating to the Working Group on Ageing

decisions on matters relating to the Working Group on Ageing

Decisions relating to the Working Group on Ageing

Background

1. In the 2017 Lisbon Ministerial Declaration, member States of the Economic Commission for Europe acknowledged “that the UNECE Working Group on Ageing has proven its added value as an intergovernmental body that provides an institutional framework for the exchange of information and good practice and for engaging stakeholders, including civil society and the scientific community, in ageing-related policymaking”. To further support the intergovernmental collaboration in the field of population ageing, as suggested in the General Assembly resolution 72/144, member States also acknowledged “the need to explore the possibility of a resource-neutral transformation of the Working Group on Ageing to a standing sectoral committee without prejudice to the work of the UNECE in other areas of its mandate.” (ECE/AC.30/2017/2/Rev.1, annex 1, 2017 Lisbon Ministerial Declaration, paragraph 38).
2. The Consultation Group on this matter was established at the tenth meeting of the Working Group on Ageing and two rounds of informal consultations with ECE Executive Committee members were held on 22 June and 5 November 2018. As a result, a draft proposal for revised (new) terms of reference of the Working Group on Ageing was prepared. Following a discussion at its eleventh meeting on 19 November 2018 and subsequent electronic consultation the Working Group on Ageing approved the proposal and requested the secretariat to submit it to the Executive Committee for decision.
3. The Executive Committee is invited to consider the revised terms of reference of the Working Group on Ageing including the change of its name to “Standing Working Group on Ageing”, as contained in the annex, and transmit them to the Economic Commission for Europe for consideration at its sixty-eighth session.

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Draft Decision

4. The Executive Committee endorses the revised terms of reference of the Working Group on Ageing including the change of its name to “Standing Working Group on Ageing”, as contained in the Annex, and invites the Commission to consider the proposed changes at its sixty-eighth session.

Annex

Terms of reference of the Standing Working Group on Ageing

A. Mandate

1. The Standing Working Group on Ageing (SWGA) is an intergovernmental body which is subsidiary to the Executive Committee and reports regularly to EXCOM on its work programme and achievements. SWGA builds on the ten-year effective and fruitful experience of the Working Group on Ageing instituted in December 2008.

2. The mandate of SWGA emanates from the following recent resolutions and global agendas: the General Assembly resolution 72/144 (2017) on the Follow-up to the Second World Assembly on Ageing, the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development (A/RES/70/1, 2015), the World Health Organization's Global Strategy and Action Plan on Ageing and Health (2016) and the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development Beyond 2014.

B. Objectives

3. SWGA aims to help all countries in the ECE region to mainstream population ageing in their policy and regulatory framework in order to adjust to demographic changes and create an environment conducive to the full realization of the individual and societal potential of living longer. The Working Group supports the realization of the policy principles set out in the 2002 Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing (MIPAA) and its Regional Implementation Strategy (RIS), and the subsequent Ministerial Declarations on Ageing among the ECE member States. It strives for synergies in the activities related to the implementation and monitoring of MIPAA/RIS and those related to the regional/national follow-up on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda and other population-related international frameworks such as the ICPD Beyond 2014 and the WHO Global Strategy on Ageing and Health.

C. Membership

4. The membership of SWGA consists of national focal points on ageing representing the member States of the ECE region. National focal points are expected to be appointed for a longer period, if possible, and be able to inform all related ministries and agencies about SWGA initiatives and activities. In addition, representatives of relevant international organizations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), the private sector and academia can also be invited as observers, in compliance with the rules and practices of the United Nations in this respect.

D. Activities

5. SWGA, acting within the framework of the policies of the United Nations, is entrusted with the implementation of the Population component of the Housing, land management and population subprogramme of ECE. The work of SWGA is demand-driven, focuses on issues of population ageing and intergenerational relations, and aims to contribute to the effective implementation of commitments taken by member States at international summits on population issues, in particular the commitments of MIPAA/RIS and 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development by:

- (a) promoting international cooperation, exchange of experience and policy discussion on ageing and intergenerational relations taking into account the situation and different needs of individual countries;

- (b) developing guidelines and policy recommendations for governments on population ageing issues;
- (c) supporting MIPAA/RIS monitoring activities and coordinating the five-year review and appraisal exercises of MIPAA/RIS implementation;
- (d) providing demand-driven policy advisory services and other capacity-building activities;
- (e) raising awareness of population ageing and its implications throughout the ECE region;
- (f) creating synergies with related policy agendas and collaboration within and outside ECE.

6. SWGA operates in accordance with a multi-year Programme of Work anchored in the periodic review and appraisal of MIPAA/RIS implementation as well as the implementation and follow-up of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable.

7. SWGA cooperates and determines its activities in close contact with other United Nations agencies, international governmental and non-governmental organizations active in the field of ageing, to avoid duplication, and to focus on challenges of specific interest to ECE member States. It promotes cooperation with international organizations and encourages partnership among the public and private sectors in addressing the implications of population ageing.

E. Officers

8. SWGA elects a Bureau and a Chair according to the section V of the Guidelines on procedures and practices for ECE bodies (E/2013/37 E/ECE/1464, Appendix III).

F. Meetings

9. SWGA meets annually. In between the sessions its work is guided by the Bureau as provided by section VI of the Guidelines on procedures and practices for ECE bodies (E/2013/37 E/ECE/1464, appendix III). The Standing Working Group on Ageing and its Bureau are serviced by the ECE secretariat.
