

OPEN ENDED WORKING GROUP ON AGEING 10TH WORKING SESSION

Financing the right to social security for older persons: challenges and policy options to expand coverage

Side event co-sponsored by the Permanent Missions of Portugal (tbc), GANHRI (tbc), the International Labour Organization (ILO), and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR)

Date: 16 April 2019, 01:15-2:30

Location: Conference Room xx in the UN Conference Building

Concept Note

Context

The world's population is ageing, virtually every country in the world is experiencing growth in the number and proportion of older persons in their population. By 2050 all regions of the world except Africa will have nearly a quarter or more of their populations at ages 60 and above.

An important social policy challenge facing ageing societies is how to secure an adequate level of income for all people in old age. In the context of demographic changes, States are pressured to respond to financing and sustainability challenges, and to forecast the long-term balance between resources and expenditure to guarantee institutions meet their obligations towards older persons.

According to ILO Recommendation 202, the design of transparent, accountable and sound financial management and administration mechanisms are essential in a context of poverty risks and demographic challenges faced by many societies. "Well-designed and financed social protection systems reinforce the national capacity to address these challenges, thereby acting as economic and social stabilizers which help to stimulate aggregate demand in times of crisis and beyond, and to support a transition to a more sustainable economy."

Social protection is a fundamental human right and a powerful tool to combat inequality and discrimination, to reduce poverty and to promote social inclusion and cohesion, to ensure adequate opportunities for decent work, and to act as a stabilizer in times of crisis. Especially in times of crisis States should adopt specific measures to protect the rights of older persons, particularly their right to social pensions.

We are witnessing the close link between social protection and more inclusive development and economic growth. This goes hand in hand with building more inclusive societies, what countries committed to when the 2030 Agenda was adopted. SDG 1.3 is explicit: we should implement nationally appropriate social protection systems and measures for all, including floors, and by 2030 achieve substantial coverage of the poor and the vulnerable.

This side event will discuss concrete challenges and opportunities for States to meet this commitment, examples on how investing in social protection can positively impact in achieving inclusive development and fostering economic growth, and options for States to maintain and expand fiscal space to finance social protection for older persons.

Objective

The objective of the event will be to present and discuss the challenges and opportunities faced by states in implementing social security systems. What are the economic, financial, social and political barriers in adopting social protection systems? How social security systems can positively impact in reducing poverty and discrimination against older persons and fostering inclusive development and economic growth? The event will also discuss concrete examples on existing social protection systems and their impacts in guaranteeing an adequate standard of living for older persons and identify tools and options to expand fiscal space towards universal social protection coverage for all older persons.

Format

The discussion will be held as a side event during the 10th Session of the Open-Ended Working Group on Ageing. The event will last 1 hour and 15 minutes. Opening remarks will be delivered by the representative from the Permanent Mission of Portugal (tbc). The event will be moderated by OHCHR with distinguished speakers (as below). The panellists' remarks will be followed by an interactive discussion with the audience. A representative of the Office of the High Commissioner for Human Rights will deliver closing remarks.

PROPOSED PROGRAMME

01:15-01:25 **Welcome and Opening Remarks: Ambassador Francisco Duarte Lopes,**
Permanent Representative of Portugal to the UN

01:25-02:00 **Panel Discussion:**

- **Fabio Duran Valverde**, ILO Head, Public Finance, Actuarial and Statistical Services
- **Magdalena Sepulveda**, former UN Special Rapporteur on poverty (tbc)
- **Xxxx** , Chairperson of Global Alliance of National Human Rights Institutions (tbc)
- **Valerie Schmitt**, Deputy Director, ILO Social Protection Department

02:00- 02:25 **Interactive Dialogue:** Question and Answer session

02:25- 2:30 **Closing Remarks:** Andrew Gilmour, Assistant Secretary-General,
Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (tbc)