

Information notices

Hungarian Central Statistical Office

United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

United Nations Population Fund

Regional Population Meeting

Budapest (Hungary), 7-9 December 1998

Information Notice N° 1

Budapest (Hungary), 7-9 December 1998

Information Notice N° 1

(15 May 1998)

1. Background

The Government of Hungary, the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), and the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) have agreed that the Government of Hungary will convene an intergovernmental technical Regional Population Meeting and will organize it in co-operation with the ECE and UNFPA. Among other things, the Meeting will contribute to the quinquennial review and appraisal of the implementation of the Recommendations of the 1993 European Population Conference (EPC) and the Programme of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD).

This meeting is being held in accordance with the United Nations General Assembly resolution, "Population and Development" (52/188) adopted on 18 December 1997 which, among other things, called for "the operational review of the implementation of the Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development to be undertaken under the auspices of the United Nations Population Fund, in co-operation with all relevant organisations of the United Nations system and other relevant international organisations..."

The Regional Population Meeting will be the fourth in a series of population events organised by the ECE either alone or in co-operation with others. The Regional Meeting on Population (Sofia, 1983), which was organised by the ECE and UNFPA was convened as part of the preparation of the United Nations International Population Conference in 1984 in Mexico City. The Regional Meeting on Population and Development (Budapest, 1987), which was organised by ECE in collaboration with the UNFPA and the Government of Hungary was a follow-up event to the International Population Conference. The European Population Conference (Geneva, 1993) was jointly organised by the ECE, the Council of Europe and the UNFPA in connection with the preparation of the United Nations 1994 International Conference on Population and Development.

2. Objectives

Europe and North America are in the *avant-garde* of emerging and unprecedented demographic trends and structures. These include very low fertility in a number of countries, showing no signs of recovery. In extensive parts of central and eastern Europe, reproductive health conditions, including the prevalence of induced abortion and modern contraceptive use are among the poorest in the world. Continuing low fertility and concomitant improvements in old age mortality, particularly in western Europe and North America are contributing to unrelenting population ageing, the consequences of which pose ever-growing challenges to society. In central and eastern Europe, particularly the Newly Independent States, mortality, especially among working-age men, has recently risen to levels higher than those in many developing countries. Migration movements affecting Europe, including the movements of asylum seekers and refugees, and documented and undocumented migrants have greatly abated in recent years.

The Meeting will consider the whole array of population issues and policies in the region in the context of the assessment and appraisal of the implementation of the EPC Recommendations and the ICPD Programme of Action, focusing, however, on the most salient ones. Three priority themes of the meeting, which have received ample attention in the EPC Recommendations and in the ICPD Programme of Action have been selected for the meeting. They are as follows:

- a) Low fertility, including its determinants and future prospects;
- b) Mortality, with special emphasis on the falling and stagnating survival in countries in transition and on old age mortality throughout the region; and
- c) Population ageing, including its dynamics and its social and economic implications at the family, community and societal levels.

The selection of the priority themes does not prejudge the salience of other issues and policies. The Meeting will provide an ample opportunity for the consideration of all relevant issues and policies, such as those pertaining to international migration and integration of migrants, that the ECE member states consider pertinent.

It is envisaged that the Meeting will negotiate and adopt a report on future priority actions for further implementation of the EPC Recommendations and the ICPD Programme of Action, as well as a plan for future population co-operation in the region. These two documents will represent the ECE's input to the global review and appraisal of the implementation of the ICDP Programme of Action. Also, they will be transmitted to the Conference of European Statisticians, which oversees ECE's work in the field of population for consideration and approval. Once approved, it is hoped that the Conference will present the report and the plan for consideration by the Economic Commission for Europe at its April 1999 Session where a debate may take place on the review and appraisal of the implementation of the EPC Recommendations and the ICPD Programme of Action.

3. Documentation

The documentation for the Meeting will include:

- a) Brief national reports on current population-related issues and policies in the ECE Member Countries, emphasising changes in policies over the past five years;
- b) A broad background paper on recent population developments and policy responses in the region, including reproductive health issues in central and eastern Europe; and
- c) Three priority-theme papers on relevant developments, issues and policies in the respective priority areas.

ECE Member States should ensure that the text of their reports reaches the Hungarian Central Statistical Office (HCSO) (see section 10 of this document for the postal address) not later than 7 October 1998. Reports should not exceed 7 single-spaced pages in length, in one of three official languages of the Meeting (see section 8 below). The reports will be reproduced and disseminated by the HCSO only in the official language in which they are received. It will not be possible to reproduce and distribute reports received after the deadline. Member States unable to submit reports by the proposed deadline are requested to have their representatives bring 400 copies with them for distribution at the Meeting. Further information can be obtained in the "Guidelines for National Reports" (Annex 1). Member States are also invited to enclose a diskette with the paper copy of the report, which will contain a copy of the report in Word or WordPerfect format. The reports will be displayed on the meeting Web site (see section 11 below).

4. Provisional Programme

The ECE Advisory Group on the Follow-up to the European Population Conference and International Conference on Population and Development has suggested the following programme:

Monday, 7 December:

Morning: opening and presentation of the background paper.

Afternoon: presentation of the paper on fertility and debate.

Tuesday, 8 December:

Morning: presentation of the paper on mortality and debate.

Afternoon: presentation of the paper on ageing and debate.

Wednesday, 9 December:

Morning: general debate.

Afternoon: continuation of the general debate, and adoption of the report and the plan. .

5. Date and Venue

The Meeting will take place from 7 to 9 December 1998 at the Budapest Convention Centre in Budapest. Plenary sessions will be held in the Bartok Room, which can accommodate approximately 150 persons at tables. Members of delegations who cannot be seated in the Bartok Room will be accommodated in the Chanson Room which can hold about 180 persons. The group drafting the report of the Meeting and the plan for future population co-operation in the region will be accommodated in the Palma Room, which can seat 60 persons at tables.

6. Participation

The Meeting will be open to delegations from the Member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. National delegations are expected to be composed of representatives of Governments and their population and other pertinent experts. In view of conference facilities limitations, delegations should not exceed 4 persons.

All relevant organisations and agencies within the United Nations system will be invited to participate. Regional organisations and institutions, such as the European Union, the Council of Europe and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development will also be invited. The delegations of these agencies, organisations and institutions should not exceed 1 person.

A small number of International Organisations active in the population field and having the status of Non-governmental Organisations with the United Nations Economic and Social Council will be invited to attend. The NGO delegations should not exceed 1 person.

Also, a small number of individual experts will be invited to attend upon the recommendation of their Professional Organisations.

The competent authorities of the Member States, International Organisations and Institutions, and Professional Organisations must accredit members of their delegations and individual experts.

Participation in the Meeting is free of charge. Participants are requested, however, to meet their own travel, accommodation and subsistence expenses and make their own travel and hotel reservations. They may wish to arrange for hotel reservations as suggested in section 13.

7. Sessions

All sessions will be plenary. The first session will be devoted to the opening statements and the presentation of the broad background paper by its author. There will be one session per priority theme during which a relevant paper will be introduced by its author prior to a debate on the theme. National reports will not be introduced by the delegations who may, however, wish to draw on the reports while participating in the debate. The penultimate session and a part of the closing session will be devoted to a general debate during which discussions on all pertinent issues including those not related to the priority themes will be held. The report of the Meeting and the plan for future population co-operation in the region will be adopted toward the end of this session.

8. Languages

The official languages of the Meeting will be English, French and Russian. Due to limited funds available to organize the Meeting, documents will, as a rule, only be available in one of the three official languages, in particular, in the languages in which they are prepared. Interpretation in all three official languages will be available at plenary sessions.

9. Advisory Group

The preparation of the Meeting has been initiated following consultations of the Organisers of the Meeting with the ECE Advisory Group for the Follow-up to the European Population Conference and the International Conference on Population and Development. The Advisory Group is composed of Mr. E. Andreev (Russian Federation), Mr. P. Festy (France), Mr. A. Golini (Italy), Mrs. C. Höhn (Germany), Mr. K. Katus (Estonia), and Mr. A. Klinger (Hungary). Messrs. A. MacDonald (UNFPA) and M. Macura (ECE) are ex officio members of the Advisory Group. At its first meeting, which was held on 15-16 January 1998 at the United Nations Office at Geneva, the Advisory Group considered and made recommendations to the Organisers on the objectives, programme, format, venue and duration of the Meeting. The Organisers will continue to consult the Advisory Group concerning technical and other aspects of the preparation of the Meeting.

10. Contacts with organisers:

Letters of acceptance and national reports should be sent to:

Regional Population Meeting
International Relations
Hungarian Central Statistical Office
P.O. Box 51
H-1525 Budapest, Hungary
Fax: +36 1 345 6378
Telephone: +36 1 345 6136 / +36 1 345 6137
E-mail: sandorne.pal@ksh.x400gw.itb.hu

Inquiries concerning the Meeting should be addressed either to the Hungarian Central Statistical Office or to the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

In particular, inquiries pertaining to the various aspects of organising and holding the meeting in Budapest, including the mailing of documents for the meeting should be addressed to:

Regional Population Meeting
International Relations
Hungarian Central Statistical Office
P.O. Box 51
H-1525 Budapest, Hungary
Fax: +36 1 345 6378
Telephone: +36 1 345 6136 / +36 1 345 6137
E-mail: sandorne.pal@ksh.x400gw.itb.hu

Inquiries concerning the preparation of meeting documents, including the background and priority-theme papers and national reports should be addressed to:

Regional Population Meeting
Population Activities Unit
Economic Analysis Division
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
Palais des Nations
CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland
Fax: +41 22 917 0101

11. Web site

As of 15 June 1998, information on the Meeting will be available at the following Web site:

<http://www.unece.org/pau/rpm/>

This information will be periodically updated. The documentation of the Meeting will be displayed on this site as it becomes available.

12. Registration

Members of delegations are requested to complete the registration forms (Annex 2), one copy per member, and return them to the HCSO by 7 October 1998. To ensure that a set of meeting documents is received by a designated member of the delegation (see attached registration form), it is essential that the HCSO receives completed registration forms by this deadline. Member States and International Organisations and Institutions are requested to send the registration forms for all members of their delegations along with a cover letter accrediting them. Individual experts also are requested to complete and send the registration forms to the HCSO.

13. Hotel reservations

Participants wishing to receive assistance with respect to hotel reservations are encouraged to contact the Hungarian Central Statistical Office:

Regional Population Meeting
International Relations
Hungarian Central Statistical Office
P.O. Box 51
H-1525 Budapest, Hungary
Fax: +36 1 345 6378
Telephone: +36 1 345 6136 / +36 1 345 6137
E-mail: sandorne.pal@ksh.x400gw.itb.hu

14. Mailing of documents

The following meeting documentation will be sent to the participants by mid-October 1998: Information Notice N°2, Provisional Agenda, Annotated Provisional Agenda, Initial Draft Report of the Meeting, Initial Draft Plan for Future Population Co-operation in the Region, Order of Business, background and priority-theme papers, and national reports.

ANNEX 1

GUIDELINES FOR NATIONAL REPORTS FOR THE REGIONAL POPULATION MEETING

Budapest (Hungary), 7-9 December 1998

The Organisers of the Meeting wish to give the opportunity to invited ECE Member States to make known views of their Governments on key issues and policies selected for discussion at the Meeting. It may be recalled that the objective of the Meeting will be to contribute to the quinquennial review and appraisal of the implementation of the Recommendations of the 1993 European Population Conference (EPC) and the Programme of Action of the 1994 International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD). In view of this, the reports may focus on pertinent national issues and policies of recent years, that is, since around 1993, which figure prominently in the EPC Recommendations and the ICPD Programme of Action and are deemed particularly important by Governments. They may deal with issues and policies to be considered in the context of the selected priority themes of the Meeting (see section, Priority Themes, of this annex) as well as with issues and policies pertaining to other themes (see section, Other Themes).

As indicated in the information notice, the national reports will form part of the documentation for the Meeting. They will be distributed to the participants and will be displayed at the meeting Web site. If possible, these national reports should not exceed 7 typed, single-spaced pages.

Priority Themes

(1) Perception and policy related to the family, fertility and reproductive health

What is the view of the Government regarding recent trends and patterns of union formation and dissolution? In particular, what is the perception of the Government concerning the increase in the number and proportion of persons cohabiting or living alone and in the number of births occurring outside of wedlock? Do they appear to contribute to problems whose solutions may fall within the responsibility of the Government? If yes, did the Government adopt measures to address these problems? If yes, what are they? Does it plan to adopt any measures in the near future?

How does the Government perceive recent trends, levels and patterns of fertility? Is sub-replacement fertility viewed as a transient or permanent phenomenon? Is it a matter of concern to the Government? If yes, does the Government consider it justified adopting policy or measures to influence fertility? If yes, did it adopt measures to address the problem? What are they? If not, why not? Are there any plans to adopt measures in the future?

What is the opinion of the Government concerning the degree of and change in the compatibility, especially for women, between paid employment and familial responsibilities in recent years? Is there a need to improve the conditions that influence the way parental roles are combined with paid employment? If yes, what measures appear to be the most useful? Have any such measures been adopted in the last five years? If not, why not? Is the adoption of any such measures planned for the near future?

How does the Government assess possible recent change in the cost of children to the family? Has it risen? If yes, has there been any change in Government programmes that directly or indirectly compensate, at least partially, for the costs of child-bearing and child-rearing,

particularly for the families with limited resources? If yes, what are they? If not, why not? Are any changes in these programmes currently being planned or considered?

How does the Government consider the recent evolution of the family? If the Government has adopted policy measures in favour of the family, how does it assess their effects on the evolution of the family? How does it foresee future evolution of the family? Does it plan to adopt measures and policy concerning the family in the future? If yes, what are they?

(2) Perception and policy concerning mortality and health

How does the Government perceive recent and current levels, trends and patterns of morbidity and mortality? Has the Government identified any specific population groups at risk (infants, children, working-age adults, older persons, particular socio-economic groups, etc.)? If yes, has it taken measures to reduce morbidity and mortality among those groups? What are they? If not, why not? Is the adoption of measures for the future being planned?

Has the Government identified any specific causes of morbidity and mortality (for example, malignant neoplasm and cardiovascular diseases) that are of particular concern? If yes, what is the view of the Government about the relationship between the prevailing life styles of the population and those causes? If certain life styles, such as cigarette smoking and alcohol abuse are perceived as detrimental to health and longevity, has the Government taken measures to promote healthy life styles? If yes, what are they? If not, why not? Are any new measures being planned for the future?

What is the perception of the Government regarding the country's health system, including its public and private health bodies or institutions? Have there been major shortcomings in the health system over recent years? If yes, has the Government made efforts to alleviate them? What reforms or measures have been implemented? If not, why not? If appropriate, are any reforms or new measures being planned for the future?

What changes in the reproductive health status of women and men occurred in the recent years? What changes in maternal morbidity and mortality have occurred? What is the current legal status of contraception, induced abortion and sterilisation? If there were significant changes in this status during the last five years, describe them. Does the Government consider that further changes in reproductive health and birth control practices are needed? If yes, what are they? And how can they be accomplished?

(3) Perception and policy related to population ageing, including change in population age structure

What is the perception of the Government concerning recent shifts in the age structure of the country's population and, specifically, the ageing of the population? Is the ageing of the population and the labour force a matter of concern to the Government? If yes, does the Government consider it justified adopting policy or measures to influence this process? If yes, did it adopt measures in the last five years to address the problem? What are they? If not, why not? Are there any plans to adopt measures in the future?

What is the Government's view of the shifts in the numbers and proportions of the young and old populations? Are these changes a matter of concern? If yes, has the Government, in the last five years, adopted new policies or modified existing ones as these may pertain to the education system and social and health services for older persons, including the oldest old? In particular, has the Government modified and/or adopted policies pertaining to geriatric and specialised health care as well as the long-term care for the oldest old? If yes, what are they? If no policy changes occurred, why was that the case? Are any new policies, reforms or programmes being planned for the future?

How does the Government perceive recent and future changes in the ratio of the old dependent population to the active population of the country? Are the changes a matter of concern to the Government? If yes, has it recently undertaken a reform of the public pension system? If yes, what are the main features of the reform? If not, why not? Is a reform being planned for the near future? Has the Government been encouraging private pension systems, such as occupational pension schemes and individual retirement plans? If yes, what is the thrust of Government policy in this respect? If not, why not? Is any change being considered in the Government position relative to the private schemes?

Other Themes

(4) Perception and policy concerning international migration

How does the Government perceive recent and current levels and trends of immigration and/or emigration? Did the Government indicate during the last five years any preference for desirable levels and trends of immigration/emigration? Did it adopt specific policy or measures to achieve those desirable levels and trends? If yes, what was adopted and when? If not, why not? Have these policies and measures been adopted in collaboration with sending/receiving countries? Did the Government participate in international agreements relative to international migration in recent years? If yes, which ones? Does the Government plan to adopt new policy or measures in the future? Does it plan to participate in any international agreements in the future? If yes, which ones?

(5) Perception and policy of the Government related to population growth

What is the perception of the Government concerning recent population growth of the country? Was there any significant change in this perception during the last five years? Did the Government indicate any preference concerning desirable levels and trends of population growth for the future? Did it consider it justified adopting a population policy to achieve these desirable trends? If yes, describe the policy and indicate when it was adopted.

(6) Perception of the Government regarding the need for policy-related collection of data and research

How does the Government perceive the need for data collection, analysis and research related to the formulation, implementation and monitoring of policies? Does the Government consider arrangements for such activities in support of policy making at the national level adequate? If not, why not? Are any changes to the current arrangements being contemplated or planned? If yes, what are they?

What are the views of the Government regarding regional co-operation in data collection, analysis and research in support of national policy making? Are the current arrangements for this cooperation adequate? If yes, what, in the view of the Government, are the strengths of these arrangements? If no, what are the weaknesses and how can they possibly be redressed?

What, in the view of the Government, should be priorities for a future regional cooperation in policy-relevant data collection, analysis and research?

(7) Perceptions and policies of the Government concerning other aspects of population change

The report may include information or observations on views and policies of the Governments regarding other aspects of population change.

ANNEX 2

**REGISTRATION FORM FOR
THE REGIONAL POPULATION MEETING**

Budapest (Hungary), 7-9 December 1998

Please return completed registration forms for all members of the delegation along with a letter of accreditation by 7 October 1998 to:

**Regional Population Meeting
International Relations
Hungarian Central Statistical Office
P.O. Box 51
H-1525 Budapest, Hungary**

Fax: +36 1 345 6378

Telephone: +36 1 345 6136 / +36 1 345 6137

E-mail: sandorne.pal@ksh.x400gw.itb.hu

Surname: Mr./Mrs./Ms. _____ First
name: _____

Present
position: _____

Title: _____

Member State or Organisation¹:

Address: _____

Telephone: _____

Fax: _____

Telex: _____ E-

mail: _____

Please indicate in which language you would like to receive the meeting
documentation:

English _____ French _____ Russian _____

As mentioned in the Information Notice N° 1, only one copy of Meeting documents
will be distributed per delegation. Please indicate below the person to whom you
want these documents to be sent:

¹ *Participation in the Meeting is subject to the endorsement of the competent national
authorities or organizations (see Section 6 of the present document).*