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STATISTICAL COMMISSION and ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Fifty-third plenary session
(Geneva, 13-15 June 2005)

**ELECTION OF THE BUREAU OF THE CONFERENCE FOR THE 2005/2006 AND
2006/2007 PERIOD**

RULES GOVERNING THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE AND ITS BUREAU

Note prepared by the ECE Secretariat

1. The current term of all members of the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians expires at the closing of the 2005 plenary session, on 15 June 2005. At the 2005 plenary session, therefore, elections for a Chair and for the Vice-Chairs will be held for the two-year period June 2005 to June 2007.
2. The elections of the Bureau are governed by the rules adopted by the Conference at its 1991 plenary session (with minor amendments in 2003 and 2004). These rules are provided in the report of the 1991 plenary session (paras. 97 to 99 entitled "Future role and functioning of the Bureau of the Conference") and in annex II to the 1991 report (entitled "Report on structure and relations"). The 2003 and 2004 amendments concerning the size and composition of the Bureau are provided in the report of the 2003 CES plenary session (ECE/CES/64 paras. 106-107) and the report of the 2004 June Bureau meeting (CES/BUR.2004/46, para. 10).
3. At its February 2005 meeting, the Bureau decided to prepare a consolidated document that describes the rules governing the work of the Conference and its Bureau instead of referring to excerpts from previous reports. The Bureau has agreed on the consolidated text of the document that is reproduced in the Annex to this note (additional text is highlighted in bold). It is presented to the Conference for endorsement.

4. As explained in para. 11 (i) of the Rules governing the work of the Conference and its Bureau (see Annex), “any member of the Conference is eligible for membership in the Bureau of the Conference”. “Membership” in the Conference is defined in the Rules para. 3 as “the Head of the statistical service of any member country of the United Nations that participates regularly in the work of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe”.

5. It is thus possible for the Head of the statistical service of a country outside the UNECE region to be a member of the Conference, and to be elected to its Bureau. According to the Rules para. 11 (ii), the size of the Bureau can be up to 8 members, of whom 6 members should be from countries in the UNECE region and the remaining one or two possibly from countries in other regions.

6. The Bureau currently consists of the following persons, who were elected at the 2001 and 2003 plenary sessions:

Chairman: Ms. Katherine Wallman (United States), first term as the Chairman,
second term as a Bureau member
Vice-Chairs: Ms. Milva Ekonomi (Albania), first term
Mr Luigi Biggeri (Italy), first term
Mr. Vladimir Sokolin (Russian Federation), second term
Ms. Irena Krizman (Slovenia), first term
Mr. Svante Öberg (Sweden), first term
Mr. Dennis Trewin (Australia), first term

7. According to the Rules para. 13 (iv), “Bureau members can be elected to four successive Bureaus” and “any previous Bureau member can be re-elected to the Bureau after an interruption of at least two years”. Therefore, the current Chairman and the six Vice-Chairs of the Bureau whose term of office expires in June of 2005, as well as all members of the Conference who previously served as Chairs or Vice-Chairs, are eligible to be re-elected.

8. According to the Rules para. 14 (iii), the “Chairman of the Conference may be re-elected once. Any previous Chairman may be re-elected Chairman after an interruption of at least two years”. Therefore, the current Chairman is eligible to be re-elected as the Chairman, as well as any other previous Chairman of the Bureau.

9. There are no formal nominations for Bureau membership. Para. 13 (i) of the Rules provides for the elections to the Bureau to be organized by "the most senior previous Chairman of the Conference present at the plenary session concerned". Para. 13 (ii) states that “If no previous Chairman of the Conference is present at the plenary session or in exceptional cases, the Bureau proposes the designation of a member of the Conference at the beginning of the plenary session, who will assume the task of preparing the proposal for the composition of the Bureau”. Mr. Ivan Fellegi, Chief Statistician of Canada, is the most senior previous Chairman of the Conference who is currently Head of a national statistical office. However, he is also a permanent observer in the Bureau as the Chairman of the OECD Committee on Statistics. Therefore, the Bureau proposes to the Conference that Mr. Snorrason (Iceland) organize the elections of the Bureau.

10. The Bureau of the Conference usually has a two-day meeting twice a year, in February and October. Additional Bureau meetings may be convened in conjunction with the annual plenary

session (para. 10 (i) and (ii)). The documentation for the meetings is informal and is produced only in English. When Bureau members require interpretation during the meetings, the secretariat attempts to provide them with official interpretation at meetings that are held in Geneva. However, if Bureau meetings are held outside Geneva (in recent years, at the invitation of the Chairman, the Bureau's autumn meetings have been held in the Chairman's country), the secretariat cannot provide interpretation at those meetings.

VERSION OF 24 MARCH

DRAFT RULES GOVERNING THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE AND ITS BUREAU

The first document on the Structure and Relations of the Conference was adopted by the Third Regional Meeting of European Statisticians (Geneva, 15-19 June 1953; document E/CN.3/CONF.3/1;E/ECE/167). The Structure and Relations were amended by the thirty-ninth plenary session in 1991 in order to adjust them to the new conditions for international statistical cooperation (report of the Conference, document ECE/CES/38). The 1991 plenary session also defined the new role of the Bureau as a “Steering Body” of the Conference and adopted the rules for the composition and election of the officers of the Bureau. The 2003 and 2004 plenary sessions agreed on amendments to the size and the composition of the Bureau.

Structure and relations of the Conference

1. The Conference of European Statisticians meets under the joint auspices of the UN Statistical Commission and the UN Economic Commission for Europe.

2. Objectives

The objectives of the Conference are:

- (i) to improve national statistics and their international comparability with regard to the recommendations of the Statistical Commission of the United Nations, the Specialised Agencies and other appropriate bodies as necessary;
- (ii) to promote close coordination of the statistical activities in Europe of international organizations so as to achieve greater uniformity in concepts and definitions and to reduce to a minimum the burdens on national statistical offices;
- (iii) to respond to any emerging need for international statistical cooperation both within the UNECE region and between the UNECE region and other regions;
- (iv) **to discuss and adopt statistical standards.**

3. Membership

The Head of the statistical service of any member country of the United Nations that participates regularly in the work of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe may be a member of the Conference.

4. Participation in the work of the Conference by statisticians from International Agencies

The Heads of statistical services of the international agencies **that participate regularly in the work of the Conference shall be invited.**

5. Activities

The Conference shall provide a forum for work on all statistical matters that are of interest to its members. In particular, it may:

- (i) decide on the collection and dissemination of internationally comparable statistics of UNECE member countries that are required by policy makers, enterprises, researchers and the general public in the UNECE region;
- (ii) promote the development of statistical methodological guidelines and standards (concepts, definitions, classifications) as required for purposes of international comparability of statistics in the region;
- (iii) assist in the improvement of the statistical infrastructure of countries both within and outside the UNECE region as required;
- (iv) coordinate international statistical cooperation and the statistical work programme of the UNECE;
- (v) make the results of its work available to national statistical offices, international organizations, enterprises or any other user;
- (vi) arrange for any study that may be required to further its objectives.

6. Officers

The Conference elects a Bureau and a Chairman according to rules laid down by the Conference.

7. Secretariat

The Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe places at the disposal of the Conference the staff and facilities necessary to assist it in the accomplishment of its objectives and work programmes.

8. Meetings of the Conference

Meetings of the Conference shall take place regularly once a year, preferably in June, at a time fixed by the Bureau in consultation with the secretariat. Additional meetings may be convened by the Bureau in consultation with the secretariat.

Role and functioning of the Bureau of the Conference

9. Role of the Bureau

The Bureau acts as a steering body of the Conference.

10. Functioning of the Bureau

- (i) **Meetings of the Bureau will normally be held in February and October of each year.**
The subjects of discussion, as well as the need for the availability of all secretariat experts for the February meeting, suggest that the meeting should be held in Geneva.
- (ii) **Additional Bureau meetings may be convened in conjunction with the annual plenary session.**
- (iii) Further meetings of the Bureau could be determined by the Bureau members or the Chairman of the Conference as the need arises.
- (iv) The documentation necessary for the Bureau meetings would be determined by the Bureau members in each case. **As a rule, the secretariat should make all documentation available via e-mail at least two weeks prior of the meeting.**
- (v) **As a rule, announcements for Bureau meetings are issued by the secretariat not less than six weeks in advance.**
- (vi) For purposes of consultation with the Bureau, the secretariat may take initiatives on matters affecting the implementation of the work programme of the Conference, or in relation to other issues that are of interest to the Conference and the Bureau.

11. Composition of the Bureau

- (i) Any member of the Conference is eligible for membership in the Bureau of the Conference. The members of the Bureau undertake to devote the time necessary to an adequate discharge of their duties.
- (ii) The Bureau is composed of up to 8 members, of whom 6 members should be from the UNECE member countries and the remaining one or two places be reserved for possible candidates from countries in other regions.
- (iii) If a Bureau member leaves the Bureau, a new member may be co-opted until the time of the next plenary session, when a new Bureau member is elected.

12. Permanent observers and other participants

- (i) Standing invitations are extended to the Director-General of Eurostat, the Chief Statistician of the OECD, the Chairman of the OECD Committee on Statistics, the Chairman of the Interstate Statistical Committee of the CIS, **the Director of the IMF**

Statistics Department and the Director of the Development Data Group of the World Bank. The Director of the UN Statistical Division is invited to participate in Bureau meetings as a representative of the UN secretariat.

- (ii) The Bureau may invite to the meetings of the Bureau anyone who may facilitate its work.

13. Election of the Bureau

- (i) The election of the Bureau by the Conference is carried out on the basis of a proposal by the most senior previous Chairman of the Conference present at the plenary session concerned. The proposal should be prepared in such a way that it maximizes the chances of being adopted by consensus.
- (ii) If no previous Chairman of the Conference is present at the plenary session or in exceptional cases, the Bureau proposes the designation of a member of the Conference at the beginning of the plenary session, who will assume the task of preparing the proposal for the composition of the Bureau.
- (iii) The Conference elects its Bureau for a period of two years.
- (iv) Bureau members can be elected to four successive Bureaus. Any previous Bureau member can be re-elected to the Bureau after an interruption of at least two years.

14. Election of the Chairman of the Conference

- (i) The Chairman of the Conference is elected by the Conference from among the members of the Bureau. The term of office is two years. **The election is carried out on the basis of a proposal by the designated member of the Conference who is responsible for the proposal of the Bureau composition.**
- (ii) If the post of Chairman of the Conference falls vacant, the Bureau designates an Acting Chairman from among the Bureau members until the time of the next plenary session, when a new Chairman is elected by the Conference.
- (iii) A Chairman of the Conference may be re-elected once. Any previous Chairman may be re-elected Chairman after an interruption of at least two years.

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