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CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

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**REVIEW OF THE ISSUES AND PROBLEMS RELATED TO THE STATISTICAL
AREAS IN THE INTEGRATED PRESENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL
STATISTICAL WORK PROGRAMMES**

Note prepared by the ECE Secretariat

INTRODUCTION

1. The present paper provides an overview of the developments with the Integrated Presentation (IP) of the international statistical work programmes that have taken place since the 2004 CES plenary session, when the Conference agreed on several changes with regard to the IP structure, the procedure for its review and updating.
2. Furthermore, at its February 2005 meeting, the Bureau decided to change the procedure for Rapporteurs' reports and the way the "issues and problems" related to the statistical areas in the IP are identified. The Bureau also reviewed five statistical areas on the basis of Rapporteurs' reports, namely: technical cooperation, migration statistics, income and consumption, labour statistics and transport statistics. Excerpts of these reports with focus on the "issues and problems" are presented in the Annex to this note.
3. Members of the Conference are invited to comment on the specific issues identified in the Rapporteurs' Reports that were reviewed by the Bureau, as well as on the procedure for identifying the "issues and problems" in future. Members of the Conference are encouraged to send written comments electronically to the UNECE secretariat prior to the plenary session in June 2005 to Mrs. Tiina Luige at e-mail: tiina.luige@unece.org.

INTEGRATED PRESENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL WORK

PROGRAMMES

4. The UNECE Statistical Division has been compiling the Integrated Presentation of International Statistical Work Programmes (IP) at the request of the Conference since 1993. It is a unique document that has been crucial in the achievement of effective coordination of international statistical work in the UNECE region. The 2005 IP is the 13th edition of the document. About thirty international organizations (including some city groups and inter-secretariat working groups) contribute to the IP database.

5. There have been several changes in the compilation of the IP during the last few years:

- since 2002, the IP is maintained in a database format and is made available on Internet (<http://unece.unog.ch/IntPres/>);
- the distribution of the full document in paper version has been discontinued; in the last two years only an excerpt of it is available;
- the IP is no longer discussed in detail at the CES plenary sessions;
- the activities of Eurostat, OECD and UNECE (and the ILO since 2006) are included, based on their Statistical Programmes;
- in future, the IP will cover only the activities and meetings undertaken by the contributing organizations. The information on “issues and problems” will be handled separately (see below para.12-14);
- a new classification of statistical activities in the IP has been developed and is being tested on the inputs for 2005; after completing the test, the new classification will be fully implemented in 2006 if the Bureau agrees in October 2005.

6. Some further improvements are foreseen for 2005, e.g. establishing a remote updating facility that would allow contributors to the IP to update it directly. This would enable contributors to make changes in the course of the year, e.g. updating the information on expert meetings.

7. Links will be provided on the UNECE Statistical Division’s website to the statistical programmes or other relevant documents of the member countries to complement the information on the activities of international organizations with information on important activities undertaken at national level.

RAPPORTEURS’ REPORTS

8. The Rapporteurs’ reports play an important role in the coordination of the statistically related work that the international organizations undertake in the UNECE region. Their purpose is to inform the Bureau on progress being made in a given field of statistics and to identify the issues that require the attention of the top management of national and international statistical agencies, like emerging issues, gaps, problems and developments. Special attention is also paid to problems in international cooperation.

9. Until recently, the Rapporteurs’ reports were prepared mainly by international organizations (UNECE, Eurostat and OECD shared the bulk of the responsibility). All statistical areas within the IP were reviewed over a period of two years. This was a somewhat heavy exercise with a considerable workload for the three main reporting agencies.

10. Therefore, the Bureau decided to simplify and make more efficient the procedure of

Rapporteur reporting. The Bureau agreed to review in-depth only five statistical areas each year instead of reviewing the whole IP over a two-year period. For the February 2005 review, the Bureau invited National Statistical Offices to be the Rapporteurs as evident from the attached excerpts of Raporteurs' reports, namely Statistics Canada (household income and expenditure), Statistics Denmark (transport statistics), ISTAT of Italy (labour statistics) and US Census Bureau (migration statistics). In future, the Rapporteurs will be selected on a case-by-case basis. The National Statistical Offices and the Steering Groups Task Forces that are created under the auspices of the Conferenec and its Bureau would also be involved in the reporting process in order to obtain the perspective of both the international organizations and the countries.

11. The Heads of National Statistical Offices will be consulted each year at the CES plenary session in order to select the areas to be reviewed by the Bureau in-depth. This year, the members of the Conference will be consulted concerning selection of the areas to be reviewed by the Bureau in February 2006 (see document CES/2005/6).

REVIEW OF THE ISSUES AND PROBLEMS IN INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL WORK

12. At its February 2005 meeting, the Bureau decided to change the way of reviewing the "Issues and Problems". The information will not be part of the IP any longer but will be prepared as a separate document to be presented at the Conference plenary session, starting from 2006. The document will focus on issues of particular significance, as opposed to covering all statistical areas from the IP.

13. The Bureau also agreed that, in future, the UNECE secretariat will identify the issues and problems for those statistical areas from the IP for which the required expertise is available in the UNECE. The UNECE will seek advice and a contribution from the Bureau members in identifying issues and problems in areas where expertise is not available in-house. The paper will be first reviewed by the February meeting of the Bureau before being brought to the attention of the Conference in June.

14. As an interim solution, a document on issues and problems based on the 2005 Rapporteur reports has been prepared for this year's plenary session covering only the areas that were reviewed in-depth by the Bureau in February 2005. The document does not include migration statistics since this area will be discussed under a separate agenda item of the plenary session.

ANNEX

IMPORTANT ISSUES THAT SHOULD BE BROUGHT TO THE ATTENTION OF THE CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Excerpts from 2005 Rapporteurs' Reports

TECHNICAL COOPERATION AND CAPACITY BUILDING

Excerpt from the Rapporteur Report by Eurostat (CES/BUR.2005/18)

Executive summary

1. The capacity of many national statistical offices throughout the world to perform basic tasks, such as implementing global standards and providing good quality statistics, is clearly insufficient. Examples include SNA implementation and the MDG indicators. This raises two questions: (i) are enough resources being allocated to capacity building? and (ii) are the available resources being well spent? The answer to the first question is no, but there is little a forum like ours can do to resolve this. Instead, we should concentrate on the second question. It is the authors' opinion that coordination efforts made over the years have not been very successful. Attempts have been made on numerous occasions, but if we could go some way to improving coordination, eliminating duplication and sharing work, we would be able to better programme our actions, thus using the meager resources efficiently. Therefore, this report will concentrate exclusively on coordination.

2. Coordination in technical cooperation in statistics has always been a thorny issue. In the statistical elements of the IP, statisticians are usually able to come up with a common goal and, in most cases, there is a will to make progress towards that goal. However, in technical cooperation, statisticians operate within the constraints imposed by the sections of their organizations that are responsible for overall development aid, so most of the time the funds available are not under their direct control. In addition, these funds are programmed according to large policy domains and it is normally up to the beneficiary to decide whether to spend on a domain as small as statistics and, if so, then how much should be spent. Often this depends on negotiations between different government services of the country.

3. Furthermore the goals have tended to be rather vague. For example, the last version of the IP stated "... [countries should] ... have mature, stable and adequate statistical infrastructure suitable for their needs; ... and that they adhere to international statistical standards and norms.". It is hardly surprising that efforts to coordinate have not proved to be successful.

4. This report discusses efforts towards coordination and proposes possible improvements in the situation, as follows: the European Union has a specific interest in countries that are potential new members. It is also about to embark on a new European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP), covering countries to the East and South of the EU. Therefore, Eurostat is prepared to coordinate in EU Candidate Countries, the Western Balkans and the ENP region. It is proposed that UNECE takes on the role of chief coordinator in the rest of the UNECE region.

5. Although coordination amongst donors is important, experience has shown that it is not

sufficient. Coordination can take the form of a donor questionnaire to be analyzed by the coordinating agency but this needs to be supplemented with information from beneficiaries. Further input obtained from the delegations of international organizations active in those countries could also be used.

Issues to be brought to the attention of the Conference

6. There are few coordination issues for EU candidates, current and potential.
7. The EU's new European Neighbourhood Policy will raise Eurostat's profile in the countries covered by that programme. As a major donor, Eurostat could play a role of key coordinator in this region, both for the CIS and Mediterranean participants in this programme.
8. Coordination in other countries of the Former Soviet Union is not good. If Eurostat were to play an enhanced coordination role in the countries that participate in the ENP, another organization could take the lead in the others. Since the UNECE is concentrating its resources in this region, it would be the logical choice as focal point for coordination issues.

Action proposed/decided by the Bureau:

- it was proposed that UNECE be the main coordinating agency for assistance activities for Central Asia, and EUROSTAT for the CIS countries covered by the European Neighbourhood Policy programme and for South-Eastern Europe;
- the Bureau requested UNECE, Eurostat and the Interstate Statistical Committee of the CIS to prepare a concrete proposal on how to improve the coordination of technical assistance in the UNECE region, and to submit it for consideration by the Bureau at its October 2005 meeting;
- it was proposed to include technical cooperation in the list of topics for possible future CES seminars.

STATISTICS OF HOUSEHOLD INCOME AND EXPENDITURES, OF THE WELFARE OF THE POPULATION, AND OF POVERTY, AND INCOME INEQUALITY **Excerpt from the Rapporteur Report by Statistics Canada (CES/BUR.2005/20)**

Executive summary

9. Enormous strides have been made in the area of household income and expenditure distribution statistics in recent years, primarily as the result of increasing and intensive international collaboration. This is particularly true for developed countries, but a great deal of work is also being done in developing countries. The result is a general increase in the data quality and in the harmonization and comparability of data across countries.
10. Much work has been aimed at concepts and definitions. An important aspect of this work is that practical considerations have been incorporated into the conceptual work. Survey

operations, sample design, collection and processing have been considered. Analytical standards are being developed.

11. While many difficult issues remain and others will undoubtedly emerge, the establishment of a cooperative approach has laid the basis for developing and implementing solutions.

Issues and problems

12. The implementation of the EU-SILC will result in a common definition of income across those countries that adopt it. This definition is virtually identical to that recommended by the Canberra Group. Countries outside Europe, such as Canada, Australia and the United States, are moving towards alignment with these recommendations as well. Problematic areas are those that are difficult to measure: in-kind income, fringe benefits from employment, inter-household transfer income, direct taxes, and imputed income from owner-occupied dwellings. Although excluded from the Canberra Group income definition, several countries include realized capital gains.

13. In contrast with the work on a standard definition of household income, there is no basic agreement on a standardized definition of poverty. On the income side, discussions are aimed more at difficulties of collection and measurement whereas the poverty debate is much more fundamental. For example, no common agreement exists on whether to measure poverty using income or consumption. Interestingly, the Rio Group and the UNSD working group are considering a variety of approaches. However, the December 2001 meeting of the European Council set an official poverty cut-off for member countries at 60% of the median adult-equivalent adjusted household income.

14. Canada, Australia and the United States employ methodologies for measuring low-income or poverty that were developed in the 1960s and 1970s, although only in the United States is the line official. Recent public debate on the usefulness of these measures has led to an examination of the methodologies. So far, the traditional measures continue; in Canada, an alternative measure has been introduced, based on the cost of a well-defined basket of goods and services.

15. Difficulties in achieving high quality data of household expenditures continue for certain items: non-cash expenditures and consumption; and illegal and "sin" expenditures (alcohol, tobacco, gambling, prostitution). Also included are items that have a high cost but are purchased only infrequently and by a small proportion of households, such as recreational vehicles.

Issues to be brought to the attention of the Conference

16. It is commonly agreed that the preferred analytical measure of income is adult-equivalent adjusted household income. The use of such a measure is problematic for the general release of household statistics since it is prone to being misinterpreted by lay-persons, including the media. Discussions on a realistic communications strategy may be helpful.

17. Discussions regarding the definition of poverty have resulted in the recognition that the

related but more wide-reaching concept of social exclusion is important. The European Union has endorsed a set of statistical indicators for social inclusion. To what extent should the existing international working groups expand their discussions to include the concept of social exclusion or should international cooperation to develop standard approaches be initiated distinctly?

18. The 17th ILCS in December 2003 recommended the establishment of a City Group on household expenditure statistics, similar to the Canberra Group on income, to further research in this area and to increase the harmonization of practices across countries.

19. While analysis of household income has moved towards a preference for the median over the mean and the use of equivalized income, no such movement has taken place on the expenditures side. As one aspect of the work, an international working group could contrast and evaluate the analysis of income and expenditure data.

Action proposed/decided by the Bureau:

the Bureau noted that, while there is good progress towards a common definition of household income, there is no basic agreement on a standardized definition of poverty that would allow international comparisons. The Bureau supported the proposal to aim for a multidimensional set of indicators (including indicators on social exclusion) rather for a single definition of poverty. An interest in further work to be organized along these lines was pointed out.

LABOUR STATISTICS

Excerpt from the Rapporteur Report by ILO (CES/BUR.2005/21)

20. Although price statistics are not the subject of this report, they do form part of labour statistics for the purposes of the ILO. The Rapporteur would therefore like to take this opportunity to draw the attention of the Bureau and the Conference of European Statisticians to an example of good coordination of statistical work among international and regional organizations. During a period of more than five years, the ILO, IMF, OECD, Eurostat, UNECE and the World Bank worked closely on the revision of the 1989 ILO manual on consumer price indices. This collaboration culminated in July 2004 in the publication of the new manual, Consumer Price Index Manual: Theory and Practice (ILO, Geneva, 2004), and will continue with the production of a manual on other areas of prices statistics.

Issues and problems

21. **Working time**: the measurement of actual hours of work is an issue concerning more than one aspect of labour and employment statistics, and the absence of comparable statistics is a major impediment to the development of internationally comparable measures, for example labour productivity.

22. **Unpaid family workers**: the treatment of unpaid family workers that are absent from work in the reference week diverges in the EU labour force survey from the ILO recommendations. There is some concern in the Candidate Countries (especially in Turkey), where this type of employment relationship is widespread, that using the Eurostat method will seriously affect the national usefulness of the employment statistics.

23. **Social dialogue:** statistics on social dialogue, including trade union membership and collective bargaining coverage, as well as strikes and lockouts, play an important role in measuring the social dimensions of globalization and in developing social and economic policies, and in viewing one aspect of the decent work objective set by the ILO. The area of social dialogue is often neglected in national statistical systems for a number of reasons, including low priority in the face of limited resources and the lack of statistical guidelines. To remedy the situation, the ILO is establishing a database on statistics of social dialogue, covering trade union membership and collective bargaining coverage, as well as developing guidelines on best practices for sources and methodologies, to aid countries wishing to compile these types of data and to enhance comparability. A compendium of national statistics and methodologies is planned for 2005.

24. **Data gathering:** certain countries tend to be slow at responding to the annual and ad hoc requests for data from regional and international organizations. These organizations are making efforts to reduce the reporting burden on national statistical offices and ministries of labour, but there are still delays in sending data, or even responding at all. This may be due to communication problems, in which case it is important for countries to indicate the person/organization/unit to whom requests should be addressed, including in particular the e-mail address and fax and telephone numbers. This would facilitate the use of electronic questionnaires. Web site addresses are also important so that, where possible, data may be obtained directly without recourse to questionnaires.

Excerpt from the Rapporteur Report by ISTAT, Italy (CES/BUR.2005/35)

Issues to be brought to the attention of the Conference

Integration of labour market statistical sources

25. Greater efforts should be made, at national as well as at international levels, towards the integration of labour market statistical sources that can increase coherence and completeness. In this context, efforts should be made to improve the reliability of the information on the number of employees and of hours worked gathered by means of the business surveys or administrative registers. Further improvement can be obtained if business surveys report annually both data on hours actually worked and data on hours not worked but paid. Household surveys, on the other hand, should dedicate particular attention to the assessment of the reliability of the data on the economic activity of both employees and self-employed persons.

26. In order to develop comparisons, the application by all EU countries of the international conceptual framework that already exists and that is described in the System of National Accounts 1993 (SNA 93) as its European version (ESA 95) should be stressed.

Identification and dissemination of best practices

27. A good starting point in order to identify good practices on the measurement of various aspects related to labour conditions may be a reconnaissance of the statistics already available, in order to measure differences among countries and then work towards harmonization.

Updating the ILO resolution on working time (1962)

28. This action should be undertaken in order to ensure:

- a definition of working time broader than that of labour input for the purpose of SNA production boundaries, so as to cover wider labour market analysis needs (i.e. hours worked vs. not worked, paid vs. not paid);
- the best possible use of existing sources (enterprise surveys for hours paid and worked by regular wage earners, LFS for all the other subjects and working-time variables; administrative sources for contractual hours);
- the measurement of working time for different groups (in particular, full-timers vs. part-timers, agricultural workers, civil servants, own-account self-employed...);
- the clarification of measurement units (worked hours per job vs. per person);

29. Concerning the last issue mentioned above, a clear distinction of hours worked per job and hours worked per person is needed: due to multiple jobs and labour turnover, in fact the two variables do not coincide and, furthermore, the information on them is usually gathered by opposite sources (hours worked per job by business surveys, hours worked per person by household surveys) and is adequate for opposite purposes (measuring labour input, measuring labour market performance). Moreover, the comparison of the two variables can yield useful information on working time spent in the non-observed economy.

Job Vacancy Statistics

30. A particularly relevant policy objective in the area of labour market and employment is that of minimizing the duration of unemployment spells and of the labour matching process. Many are the instruments through which such an objective can be pursued, but a relevant measure of the progress made can be obtained through a depiction of the relationship of unemployment to job vacancies. Progress in the distribution of relevant information (both to employers and to the unemployed), in the provision of training and other employability-enhancing services, as well as in the effectiveness of public and private employment services, can result in the reduction of vacancy-filling time and of unemployment spells, i.e. in the minimization of the coexistence of job vacancies and unemployment. This is why the regular collection of statistical information on job vacancies has a high priority on the agenda of labour market analysts and policy-makers.

Development of international guidelines

31. International guidelines should be developed to conduct regular surveys on social dialogue and to collect official information on unionization to be compared at international level. Further to the membership numbers declared by major labour unions (which are very partial and often contested as inaccurate), only some experiments have been performed on the basis of establishment surveys (businesses actually collect the dues from wages). These sources should provide more accurate information on financial membership, while household surveys could provide further information on members and their families; optimal frequency for the supply of this information should be annual. A working group of international experts with the

task of preparing a background study for substantive treatment of the area of unionization and social dialogue statistics during the next ICLS is welcome.

Development of activities in the field of legal and illegal foreign workers

32. Activities in the field of collection, processing and estimation of data on legal and illegal foreign workers should be developed. Recommendations on the organization of information exchange on the number of foreign workers between new EU members and countries already members of the EU should be developed. Improvements of methods to estimate the scale of labour migration, in particular the illegal ones, should be suggested. Of course, this work should be in line with the Regulation of the European Parliament and the Council on “Community statistics on international migration, citizenship, residence permits and asylum” advanced last year.

The production of gender-mainstreamed statistics

33. This has been recognized, at the 17th ICLS, as “essential to properly design social protection programs that are not solely based on workers’ participation in paid work, ignoring time away from paid work to look after young children” and “useful to explain differences in labour market participation between countries, which tend to be due to differences in women’s labour force participation”.

Action proposed/decided by the Bureau:

- the Bureau supported the proposal that, among the many issues in labour statistics, priority should be placed on measurement of working hours. This is also important because of international comparisons of labour productivity and its relation to the NA framework. ILO, the Paris Group on Labour and Compensation Statistics, Eurostat and OECD are working in this area. Canada would be ready to participate in work coordinated between Eurostat, the United States and the OECD. A practical way forward would be to identify a minimal number of supplementary questions in the Labour Force Survey that could provide a reasonable approximation of a common definition of “hours actually worked”.

TRANSPORT STATISTICS

Excerpt from the Rapporteur Report by Statistics Denmark (CES/BUR.2005/22)

Executive summary

34. The report looks at the existing international transport statistics as produced and disseminated regularly by UNECE, Eurostat and ECMT. The progress made recently within transport statistics is highlighted. Particular mention is made of the work on:

- the second level of the new classification of goods in transport, NTS2000, that will replace the previous UNECE classification, CTSE, and the corresponding EU classification, NST/R, and that will link the goods classification to the classification of activities via the CPC and the CPA;
- the extension of the GLOSSARY for transport statistics;

- definitions relating to urban transport;
- the preparation of the joint UNECE and Eurostat E-Rail Census in 2005;
- the Common Questionnaire for collection of data about road traffic accidents.

35. The trends in transport and in general economic development have shifted the transport policy from market opening to tackling the effects of the growth in traffic on the main European arteries. The bulk of the policy-driven demand for transport statistics is by and large met by the content of the existing information systems of the three international organizations. The Working Party on Transport Statistics (WP.6) continuously follows up on new requests for statistics and at present there are ongoing discussions at the annual sessions of WP.6 of:

- further variables relating to the environmental impact of transport (TERM indicators);
- transport of dangerous goods by mode of transport;
- urban transport;
- gas transport in pipelines;
- road and rail traffic accidents;
- price statistics;
- more frequent E-Road censuses.

36. The report suggests topics that might also be considered relevant in light of the revised transport policies, namely:

- statistics on the road traffic performance (vehicle-kilometres);
- daily mobility surveys on traffic habits of persons;
- improving of content and timeliness for the ABTS.

Issues and problems

Trends in transport development

37. The general economic growth in Europe and growing welfare of people has been accompanied by an increase in transport of goods, increased frequency of car ownership, personal daily mobility and the flow of tourists. The results have been a significant boost in traffic on the European roads, more intensive traffic in the European air space and congestions, particularly on parts of the road network and in major airports.

38. The increased volume of traffic has been accompanied by a harmful impact on the environment, one of the reasons being that growth has been unevenly distributed among the modes of transport, road traffic accounting for the largest increase. More traffic may also *ceteris paribus* cause more traffic accidents, fatalities and casualties.

Transport policy

39. The core transport policy has shifted from the opening up of the transport market to the monitoring of the open markets and the tackling of the effects of the general economic growth in Europe on traffic and transport. The basic challenges for the transport policy in the next decade are: monitoring the open markets in order to assure free and fair competition, decoupling the link between economic growth and the greater mobility of goods and passengers, developing the transport networks in Europe to allow for the expected increase in international transport, improving safety in transport, reducing the external effects of transport on the environment and reducing the congestion on main arteries of the transport network.

Policy driven demand for transport statistics

40. Transport statistics must be able to support the transport policies of governments and international organizations and to consequently react to changes in political priorities. The basic actual and foreseen future data needs can be summarized as information about the development in:

- transport infrastructure (extension and investments);
- use of infrastructure (traffic data);
- means of transport (by type, size, age, energy efficiency);
- transport markets (O/D data about volume of transport, type of cargo and type of goods, all by modes of transport);
- impact of transport on the environment (gas emissions, noise, etc.);
- safety (accidents, killed and injured persons by modes of transport);
- structure and performance of transport enterprises (turnover, value added, prices, employment, etc.).

41. The existing statistical information systems of the international organizations do meet the bulk of the demand derived from the present transport policies. There is, however, always the risk that part of the statistics produced is or will become irrelevant since it was established to serve the needs of previous policies. The production of antiquated transport statistics will thus be a hindrance for the updating of the statistical information system with statistics relating to the present demands for information. A periodic overhaul of the regular statistics produced is therefore recommended in order to free resources for new statistics.

On-going work on new statistics

42. The annual session of the WP.6 on Transport Statistics follows up, as far as possible, on requests for new statistics to be compiled. Indicators reflecting the development in the supply

and demand for transport and the environmental consequences of transport activities have high political priority.

New statistics and improvements that might be considered

43. Looking at the actual transport policies, there seems to be a need for statistical information about personal mobility and individual passenger transport. This would help forecast traffic on the arteries of the transport network and create a basis for decisions on how and where to improve the transport network, remove bottlenecks and supply alternatives through public transport. Relevant data would be reliable statistics about volume of traffic and the transport behaviour of persons.

44. The opening-up of the road transport market has increased the demand for statistics on the transport of goods between countries, split up according to the country of registration of the vehicle. Publication of pan-European O/D matrices would be a legitimate job for an international organization, as most countries only compile road transport statistics for vehicles registered in the country. Concerning the other modes of transport, there is also a need for statistics presenting transport flows between countries.

Important issues that should be brought to the attention of the Conference

45. It is recommended that the work programme of the Working Party on Transport Statistics (WP.6) should give priority to:

- review of the Annual Bulletin of Transport Statistics (ABTS) with the aim of adapting the content to the present needs for data, to delete variables of less priority to users, and to consider alternative means of dissemination that enable users to import data electronically into statistical analysis (web/CD's);
- improve timeliness and actuality of statistics in the ABTS, reducing the time gap between reported year and day of dissemination to a maximum of 18 months;
- examine methodologies applied in the compilation of statistics on the volume of road traffic performance (vehicle-kilometres) and investigate national practices within daily mobility surveys on traffic habits of persons with the purpose of finding best practices.

46. It is further recommended that the scope of the WP.6 be reconsidered with the aim of including statistics on air and maritime transport in the work programme.

Action proposed/decided by the Bureau:

- the Bureau agreed with the recommendations spelled out in paragraph 69 of the Rapporteur Report (CES/BUR.2005/22), namely that the UNECE Working Party 6 on Transport Statistics review the UNECE Annual Bulletin of Transport Statistics, and identify best practices in compiling statistics on the volume of road traffic performance and in mobility surveys on traffic habits of persons. There was also support for the inclusion of statistics on air and maritime transport in the work programme of the WP.6;
- the Bureau was informed about the revised classification of transport statistics. The classification should be endorsed by the CES, after its adoption by the Inland Transport Committee. The Bureau agreed that, given the time limits at the CES plenary session, a

written procedure for consultation of the classification with countries should be used.

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