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**STATISTICAL COMMISSION and ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS**

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

**REPORT ON THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNECE STATISTICAL  
PROGRAMME:  
2004 – BEGINNING OF 2005**

Note prepared by the UNECE secretariat\*

**MAJOR ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2004-2005**

**Coordination of international statistical work in the UNECE region (Activity 1: 1.1-1.5)**

1. In 2004, at its regular annual session, the Conference of European Statisticians decided to streamline the Integrated Presentation of International Statistical Work, which is publicly accessible on the web in a database format. Furthermore, the Conference approved new mechanisms for reviewing the various subject areas of the international statistical work.
2. The Conference also considered the coordination, independence, integrity and credibility of official statistics in a seminar organized by Statistics Finland. The measurement of services and the increasing importance of the service sector were discussed in a second seminar organized by the Office for National Statistics of United Kingdom. The Conference also analyzed the difficulties encountered in the coordination of environment statistics and recommended that an Intersecretariat Working Group review the issues related to overlaps in data collection and improving coordination.
3. As one of the custodian organizations of the Fundamental Principles of Official

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\* The 2004 Statistical Programme is available in document CES/2004/6 and on the UNECE website at: <http://www.unece.org/stats/activities.e.htm>. The calendar of meetings that were held in 2004-beginning of 2005 is presented in the Annex to this document.

Statistics (adopted by UNECE in 1992), the UNECE made a major contribution to the drafting of a declaration of similar principles for the statistical activities of international organizations. Furthermore, the UNECE secretariat provided assistance and advice for the implementation of the existing principles to the statistical offices of Croatia, Serbia and Montenegro, and Slovakia. A seminar on the application of UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics in statistical planning for CIS countries was held in Moscow in collaboration with the Interstate Statistical Committee of the CIS, the World Bank and the PARIS 21 Consortium.

### **Collection, processing and dissemination of macroeconomic, social and demographic statistics (Activity 2: 2.1-2.8)**

4. The transition from 2004 to 2005 saw the launching of public access to the UNECE macro-economic database on the web, via a user-friendly tool for selection and downloading. The main benefits of this database, compared to economic databases of other organizations, are timely and comparable statistics on the economic situation of CIS and South-East European countries. To increase user-friendliness, the dissemination of the UNECE's gender statistics database was also migrated to the new access tool.

5. Three publications were released in 2004: "Non-observed Economy in National Accounts, a Survey of National Practices"; the mini version of "Trends in Europe and North America", and "World Robotics 2004". The release of the latter was part of a conference event entitled "A Robot in Every Home", which attracted considerable media attention. Four issues of the quarterly Statistical Journal were prepared, including two special issues on Consumer Price Indices and on the proceedings of the CES 2004 plenary session.

6. The 2005 edition of the annual statistical pocketbook "Trends in Europe and North America" was published in an extended format. The publication is accompanied by a CD-ROM containing the "Thematic Atlas of Europe and North America" created in cooperation with the Swiss Federal Statistical Office. The CD-ROM also contains source data of the pocketbook along with numerous web references.

### **Methodological work in various statistical areas (Activity 3: 3.1-3.25)**

7. The methodological work towards new or revised statistical standards and guidelines continued. Most expert meetings held in the various subject areas were organized as joint meetings with other organizations. In addition to providing substantive inputs to and secretarial support for these meetings, the role of the UNECE secretariat is to allow for the non-EU and non-OECD countries of the UNECE region to be associated with the development work of the partner organizations. Another role that the UNECE also plays is to provide a bridge for the European-based specialized UN agencies with the national statistical offices in the region.

#### Economic statistics

8. A UNECE survey on business registers data among the non-EU member countries in the UNECE region and non-European OECD countries was completed. This survey complements the corresponding survey that Eurostat conducts for the EU countries. The

UNECE survey is contained in an analytical report, which will be presented to the joint UNECE/Eurostat Seminar on Business Registers in June 2005.

9. Work on the international Handbook on Rural Households, Livelihood and Well-being: Statistics on Rural Development and Agriculture Household Income was progressing as planned and a first draft was reviewed by a Task Force meeting in April 2005. Preparations for the 2005 joint UNECE/Eurostat/FAO/OECD Meeting on Food and Agriculture Statistics, to which the Handbook will be reported and discussed in detail, is also progressing as planned.

10. In 2004, the international manuals on CPI and PPI, to which the UNECE secretariat also contributed, were published. Under the guidance of a Steering Group, UNECE is about to initiate work on a survey on the scope of the consumer price index in relation to its main users in the region, and a users' feedback survey on the CPI manual. The results of the survey will be reported to the 2006 joint UNECE/ILO meeting on CPI.

11. The work in the area of robotics was terminated in 2004 with the release of World Robotics 2004. Collection and processing of international robot statistics will from now on be carried out by the International Federation of Robotics and the German industry association VDMA, both located in Frankfurt, based on the UNECE methodology and databases.

#### Social and demographic statistics

12. A major activity in demographic and social statistic was the work towards the recommendations for the 2010 round of population and housing censuses. UNECE carried out the analysis of the practices used in countries in the 2000 census round and their plans for 2010 with a view to identify the areas of the Recommendations that needed further improvement. Under the auspices of the CES Bureau, several task forces began work to produce a new or a revised text for the Recommendations on the basis of the analysis and the discussions held at the 2004 meeting. At the beginning of 2005, the work of the Task Forces was proceeding according to the agreed timetable. UNECE also continued to participate in the 2010 World census programme.

13. UNECE was also very active in the field of migration statistics, where a training workshop was organized in collaboration with UNFPA and NIDI. As a result of a work session that was held in early 2005, a plan was developed to test the exchange of data among countries to study the emigrant population through the immigrant population of a different country. The work carried out on migration statistics also contributes to the revision of the Census Recommendations, where a new and expanded section on international and international migration will be included.

14. Gender statistics has also been one of the areas of major involvement of UNECE. In addition to the maintenance of the gender statistics web-site and database and the substantial contributions presented in relevant events in the region, work was initiated and task forces established following the work session in 2004 in measuring violence against women, engendering national statistical systems, and the sharing of methods in time-use surveys. In collaboration with UNDP, UNFPA and USAID, two workshops for CIS and South-East

European (SEE) countries were carried out, together with one advisory service to the national statistical office of Turkmenistan. To better tailor future activities of technical cooperation, UNECE conducted in collaboration with UNDP an assessment of the quality and availability of gender statistics in the region. Recommendations were developed on the areas that need further attention and a proposal on future activities to be carried out in the region was identified.

15. Concerning housing statistics, the CES Bureau agreed to set up a Steering Group on the Coordination of International Housing Statistics in February 2004.

16. In November 2004, the first CES meeting on crime statistics was jointly organized by UNECE and UNODC. Victimization surveys were identified as a priority area for the work on crime statistics in the region and a task force was established to improve the harmonization of methods and definitions. The work of the task force will start with an inventory of methods used in national statistical offices and by the international victimization survey programme.

17. ECE continued to coordinate and contribute to the UNECE Steering Group and task force on the measurement of health status. In early 2005, the work towards the identification of a common set of health domains and questions was proceeding according to schedule.

18. On the monitoring of MDG in the region, UNECE was active in the Inter-agency Expert Group Meeting on MDG Indicators and in some of its sub-groups (gender and employment). UNECE provided in early 2005 a contribution on the progress made toward MDG in CIS and SEE countries for the so-called internet global report. UNECE also provided the UNDP Regional Center in Bratislava with a section on the statistical capacity of CIS and SEE countries to monitor MDG to be included in the UNDP Regional MDG Report. Only a selected part of this contribution was actually included in the Regional Report. In early 2005, UNECE began activities to lead a regional team to implement the UNDP-funded project on Capacity Building and Statistical Literacy for MDG Monitoring. The main objectives of the project areas were to make data more accessible, to enhance statistical capacity and literacy, and to support evidence-based policy dialogue and advocacy.

#### Technical infrastructure and other cross-cutting issues in statistics

19. The first phase of the Task Force on a common metadata framework, aimed at creating an annotated structure of the framework, has been completed. Substantive progress has been made in the section on functions of metadata and the section on metadata objects and standards.

20. A guide on presenting a story behind statistical data will be also published. Progress has been made on the structure and the draft text of the guide.

21. The international exchange of experience in the field of statistical information systems is very important because of the rapid developments and fewer opportunities for IT experts in NSOs to meet their counterparts in other offices. The 2005 meeting on management of statistical information systems focused on IT governance and development strategies in NSOs and on the use of XML-based web services in statistical dissemination.

#### **Technical assistance to UNECE member countries (Activity 4: 4.1-4.2)**

22. In addition to assistance related to the implementation of the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, the Statistical Division provided technical cooperation in statistics to the SEE and CIS countries. On a bilateral basis, the partnership with Eurostat has continued with the global assessments of the statistical systems of Croatia and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, including recommendations for short- and medium-term improvements. Bilateral technical cooperation has been provided to CIS as well, especially to Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan, and Turkmenistan on gender statistics in collaboration with UNDP and the World Bank, and to Kyrgyzstan on industrial production indices.

23. Multilateral technical cooperation has taken the form of seminars and training workshops. A special session on national accounts for CIS and other transition economies took place back-to-back with the UNECE/Eurostat/OECD meeting on national accounts in Geneva. In the same way, a training session on gender statistics took place for CIS and SEE countries back-to-back with the UNECE work session on gender statistics in Geneva, thanks to the support of UNDP and UNFPA. Finally, UNECE and UNDP organized a workshop on gender statistics for Central Asian countries in Turkmenistan.

#### **PLANS AND MAJOR CHALLENGES FOR 2005**

24. The work plan for the UNECE Statistical Division in 2005 is outlined in the UNECE Statistical Programme 2005, which was approved by the CES Bureau in October 2004. The Programme is available on Internet at: <http://unece.unog.ch/IntPres/default.asp>.

25. In 2005, some activities will be phased out in order to free resources for priority activities such as the better maintenance of the macroeconomic and gender databases, the methodological work in demographic and social statistics, notably with respect to the 2010 round of population censuses, the assessment of national statistical systems to produce in a sustained way the various MDG indicators, as well as multilateral and bilateral technical cooperation activities for less developed statistical systems of the region.

26. The following publications will be released in 2005: the third volume of Data Editing Methods and Techniques; the Handbook on Rural Development and Agricultural Household Statistics, and an analytical report on the practices used by UNECE countries in their 2000 Round of Censuses.

27. It is also expected that the two seminars to be held at the time of the Conference of European Statisticians on Improved Data Reporting and on the Measurement of Sustainable Development will lead to follow-up work, especially the second seminar concerning sustainable development. Furthermore, the projects on Multinational Enterprises (MNE project) and on access for researchers to microdata from official statistics are expected to result in the first findings/recommendations being made public.

## ANNEX

## CES CALENDAR OF MEETINGS 2004-beginning 2005

<i>Title and lieu of meeting</i>	<i>Date</i>
Meeting of the Members of the Task Force on Families and Households (Geneva)	20 January 2004
Meeting of the Members of the Steering Group on Population and Housing Censuses (Geneva)	21-22 January 2004
ECE-Eurostat-OECD Work Session on Statistical Metadata (Geneva)	9-11 February 2004
Second 2003/2004 CES Bureau Meeting (Geneva)	12-13 February 2004
Joint ECE/Eurostat/OECD Meeting on National Accounts (Geneva)	28-30 April 2004
ECE-Eurostat-OECD Meeting on Management of Statistical Information Systems (Geneva)	17-19 May 2004
ECE-WHO-Eurostat Work Session on Health Statistics (Geneva)	24-26 May 2004
<b>52<sup>nd</sup> Plenary Session of the Conference of European Statisticians (Paris)</b>	<b>8-10 June 2004</b>
Joint UNECE/UNDP Workshop on Gender Statistics (Turkmenistan)	6-8 July 2004
UNSD/ECE Regional (CIS and Balkan countries) Meeting on Revision of Economic Classifications (Geneva)	29 September- 1 October 2004
Joint OECD/UNECE Meeting on National Accounts (Paris)	11-15 October 2004
First 2004/2005 CES Bureau Meeting (Washington, D.C.)	18-19 October 2004
Work Session on Gender Statistics (Geneva)	18-22 October 2004
Third International Conference on Agricultural Statistics (ICAS III) (Cancun, Mexico)	2-4 November 2004
ECE-UNODC Work Session on Crime Statistics (Geneva)	3-5 November 2004

IEA/OECD/Eurostat/UNECE Energy Statistics Working Group Meeting ( <b>Paris</b> )	16-17 November 2004
ECE Seminar on New Methods for Population Censuses ( <b>Geneva</b> )	22 November 2004
Joint ECE/Eurostat Work Session on Population Censuses ( <b>Geneva</b> )	23-25 November 2004
Joint ECE/Eurostat Work Session on Housing Censuses ( <b>Geneva</b> )	26 November 2004
UNFPA/UNECE/NIDI Training Programme on International Migration ( <b>Geneva</b> )	24-28 January 2005
Work Session on Dissemination of Statistics ( <b>UK</b> )	14-15 February 2005
Second 2004/2005 CES Bureau Meeting ( <b>Geneva</b> )	10-11 February 2005
ECE/Eurostat Seminar on Migration Statistics ( <b>Geneva</b> )	21-23 March 2005
Expert Meeting on Statistics and Data on Violence against Women ( <b>Geneva</b> )	11-15 April 2005
ECE/Eurostat/OECD Meeting on Management of Statistical Information Systems (MSIS'2005) ( <b>Bratislava</b> )	18-20 April 2005
Joint UNECE/ILO/Eurostat Seminar on Quality of Work ( <b>Geneva</b> )	11-13 May 2005
Work Session on Statistical Data Editing (SDE) ( <b>Ottawa</b> )	16-18 May 2005

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