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STATISTICAL COMMISSION

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Fifty-fifth plenary session
Geneva, 11-13 June 2007
Item 4(i) of the provisional agenda

PROGRESS REPORTS

Follow-up to decisions taken by the Bureau and the Conference

Note by the secretariat

INTRODUCTION

1. The note on follow-up to decisions taken by the Bureau and the Conference has been prepared systematically since the October 2002. It is updated for each Bureau meeting and for the CES plenary session.
2. The present note follows up on the main decisions taken by the Bureau and Conference on which work is still not completed. Actions undertaken before 2006 are summarised in a short form under History; decisions and follow-up from 2006 are given in more detail. Under each decision, the action to be taken is indicated.
3. The decisions are grouped in two sections: I. Decisions related to the work of the Conference and its Bureau; and II. Decisions related to the Database of International Statistical Activities (DISA/IP) and specific Statistical Activities (SAs).

II. DECISIONS RELATED TO THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE AND ITS BUREAU

Progress of work and strategies of international organizations

4. **History:** at the June 2002 plenary session, it was agreed that, periodically, discussion should be devoted to the progress of work of international organizations and their strategies. The IMF presented its statistical activities to the Bureau in October 2003, the World Bank in October 2004, Eurostat in October 2005 and UNSD in October 2006.

Action: OECD will present its statistical activities in October 2007.

CES Seminars

Ways to increase the productivity of the statistical office and to conduct statistical programmes more efficiently and effectively

5. The CES selected this topic for the seminar on foundational issues of statistical systems at the CES 2007 plenary session. Latvia is the Organiser of the seminar. The Bureau reviewed the outline of the seminar at its October 2006 and February 2007 meetings.

Action: the seminar will take place on 11 June 2007.

Measurement of capital – beyond the traditional measures

6. *The CES selected this topic for the seminar on emerging issues at the 2007 CES plenary session. The Netherlands is the organiser of the seminar. The Bureau reviewed the outline of the seminar at its October 2006 and February 2007 meetings.*

Action: the seminar will take place on 12 June 2007.

III. DECISIONS RELATED TO THE DATABASE OF INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL ACTIVITIES (INTEGRATED PRESENTATION) AND SPECIFIC STATISTICAL AREAS

Purpose, structure and compilation of the Database of International Statistical Activities (formerly called Integrated Presentation)

7. **History:** the Bureau changed the procedure for reviewing the “Issues and Problems” in February 2005 and asked the UNECE secretariat to prepare a document on issues and problems, with contributions from other international organizations. The Bureau discussed the first version of the paper in February 2006.

June 2006 plenary session: the Conference considered it necessary to review periodically the high priority statistical areas where considerable work is ongoing. The Conference requested Rapporteur Reports to be more action-oriented and include actionable recommendations for further steps to be taken by the Conference.

October 2006 Bureau meeting: the Bureau decided to focus the Rapporteur Reports in future on strategic issues in the next five years or so rather than the current issues and problems. In addition, the UNSD volunteered to submit the provisional agenda of the UN Statistical Commission (UNSC) to the Bureau at its October meeting to avoid eventual duplication with the topics for in-depth discussion at the Commission.

February 2007 Bureau meeting: the Bureau discussed the paper on issues and problems and its future compilation. A review of the full range of statistical activities was considered too

overwhelming. It was decided to focus only on a few areas to be reviewed and on strategic issues. The Bureau will use the new approach for in-depth reviews at its next two meetings focusing on single topics or ad-hoc groupings of topics.

Action: i) *Issues and problems: the Bureau will*

- *select topics to be reviewed in-depth at the next 2 meetings;*
- *ask a Bureau member, UNECE, an international organization or a NSO to write a short review paper;*
- *make an in-depth review at the Bureau meeting;*

ii) *the secretariat will circulate to the Conference a paper informing about the discussion and its outcomes (including excerpts of respective topics from DISA and the Bureau decisions);*

iii) *UNSD will inform about the provisional agenda of the UNSC at the October meetings of the Bureau in order to avoid eventual duplication with the Statistical Commission.*

Statistical Domain 1. Social statistics

8. History: the Bureau discussed social statistics at its October 2003, June 2004 and October 2004 meetings. In February 2005, the Bureau supported the proposal for a joint UNECE/Eurostat meeting on social statistics. The first meeting took place in September 2005. In October 2005, it was decided to establish a Task Force to examine emerging issues in social statistics.

October 2006 Bureau meeting: The Bureau reviewed the progress of work in social statistics.

Action: i) *a session for emerging issues in social statistics will be organised at the ISI 2007 in Lisbon to get an idea of the whole range of issues that affect international comparability;*

ii) *the next UNECE/Eurostat Meeting of Directors of social statistics will take place on 18-19 September 2007 in Luxembourg, consider the possibility of not having the UNECE/Eurostat meeting on social statistics back-to-back with the Eurostat meeting of Directors of Social Statistics.*

SA 1.1 Population and Migration

Migration statistics

9. History: in October 2005, the Bureau endorsed the Work Plan to improve migration statistics developed by the US Census Bureau and Statistics Canada, and approved the TOR for the Task Force on Measuring Emigration.

February 2006 Bureau: the Bureau welcomed the progress of work in the implementation of the work plan on migration statistics and the Task Force.

February 2007 Bureau: the Bureau made an in-depth review of population statistics.

Action: i) *the TF will submit regular reports on progress of work to the Bureau;*

ii) *the review of the population statistics is included in the agenda of the Conference in June 2007.*

SA 1.2 Labour statistics

10. June 2005 plenary session: the countries' written comments to the Rapporteur Report on this issue indicated general support for priority to be given to measurement of working hours.

February 2006 meeting: the Bureau approved the Terms of Reference for the Task Force on Measurement of Quality of Work. ILO will act as the secretariat to the Task Force.

Action: the Task Force will submit a progress report at a future Bureau meeting.

SA 1.4. Health statistics

11. History: the Bureau discussed coordination of health statistics at its February 2006 meeting. June 2006 plenary session: the Conference discussed health statistics based on a Rapporteur report prepared by the United States and OECD.

October 2006 Bureau meeting and February 2007 Bureau meeting: the Bureau reviewed coordination of health statistics. Disappointment was expressed with the slow progress of the work of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Health Statistics. The Bureau appreciated the finalisation of the survey module on health status developed by the Task Force on Measuring Health Status.

Action: i) coordination of health statistics will be considered at the CES 2007 plenary session; ii) the survey module on health status will be presented to the CES plenary session for endorsement; iii) the TF will continue to refine the survey instrument, to be finalised within 2-3 years; iv) the TF will consider the collection of comparable data by a regional or international organization; v) the Bureau will continue to follow up on the coordination of health statistics.

SA 1.8 Justice and crime statistics

12. June 2006 plenary session: the Conference made an in-depth review of crime statistics. The Conference asked the Task Force on Victimization Surveys to continue its work towards the harmonisation of victimisation surveys and selected statistics based on administrative records.

Action: the Task Force on Victimization Surveys will take into account the recommendations of the Conference and will report to the Bureau at a future meeting.

SA 1.9 Culture statistics

13. History: in February 2003, the Bureau approved the proposal for the organization of a joint UNECE/UIS-UNESCO/Eurostat meeting in 2004-2005. The meeting was not included in the UNECE Statistical Programme for 2004-2006 due to lack of resources. In February 2005, the Bureau asked Eurostat to consider taking over the organization of this meeting.

February 2006, October 2006 and February 2007 Bureau meeting: Eurostat is still considering the organization of the meeting on culture statistics.

Action: the Bureau will continue to follow up on culture statistics.

SA 2.7. Prices

14. October 2006 Bureau meeting: the Bureau considered the TOR for a Steering Group on Price Statistics. The Bureau asked the UNECE secretariat to revise the TOR for the February 2007 meeting.

February 2007 Bureau meeting: the Bureau considered the revised TOR but found that the comments made in October 2006 were not properly reflected.

Action: UNECE secretariat will present a new proposal to the Bureau in October 2007.

SA 3.3.1 Living conditions, poverty and cross-cutting social issues

15. History: in countries' written comments to the Rapporteur Report on this issue at the CES June 2005 plenary session, it was proposed that a workshop be organized to develop an agenda for future action. The October 2005 Bureau meeting noted that one possibility is to undertake the work within the Social Statistics Project.

Action: the next joint UNECE/Eurostat meeting on Social Statistics will consider how to deal with this issue.

SA 3.3.4 Globalization

16. History: as a follow-up to the CES Seminar on Globalization in June 2003, an experiment on measuring the activities of the multinational enterprises (MNE) was carried out. Progress reports were presented at the June 2004 plenary session and at the October 2004 Bureau meeting. In June 2005, the CES decided to terminate the MNE project in its current configuration. The project was taken over by Eurostat.

June 2006 plenary session: globalization was considered based on a Rapporteur Report prepared by Canada and the United Kingdom. Coordination of work on globalization statistics was considered necessary.

October 2006 Bureau meeting: the Bureau considered a proposal for work on globalisation statistics, prepared by the UNECE secretariat, R. Lynch and P. Smith.

February 2007 Bureau meeting: the Bureau considered a revised proposal for work on globalisation statistics and agreed to create an expert group to deal with the distortions caused by globalisation in the compilation of national accounts. The Bureau asked Statistics Netherlands to chair the future Working Group.

*Action: i) Statistics Netherlands (Chair of the Working Group) revised the TOR, consulted it with all interested parties and with the Bureau;
ii) the Conference will be informed about the creation of the Working Group and its TOR.*

SA 3.3.6 Sustainable development

17. History: following the CES seminar on sustainable development in June 2005, the Conference asked for further work on measuring sustainable development. In October 2005, the Bureau approved the creation of a Joint UNECE/OECD/Eurostat Working Group on Statistics for Sustainable Development (WGSSD). In February 2006, the Bureau approved the terms of reference for the Steering Committee on Sustainable Development and the work plan for the WGSSD. The Working Group reports both to the CES and the OECD Annual Meeting of SD Experts.

October 2006 Bureau meeting: the Bureau reviewed the progress of WGSSD and made recommendations on how to proceed further.

February 2007 Bureau meeting: the Bureau reviewed the progress and commended the group for the work done. Concern was raised in relation to the plans to review the System of Economic and Environmental accounting while it has not yet been adopted and implemented.

Action: the Working Group will present a progress report to the CES plenary session in June 2007. The final report is planned for the 2008 CES plenary session.

SA 4.1 Metadata

18. **February 2007 Bureau meeting:** the Bureau reviewed the progress with the Common Metadata Framework. It was decided to establish a Steering Group on Statistical Metadata.

Action: the UNECE secretariat will prepare the terms of reference for the Steering Group on Statistical Metadata for review by the Bureau at a future meeting.

SA 4.3.2 Business and agricultural censuses and registers

19. October 2006 Bureau meeting: the Bureau considered the TOR for a Steering Group on Business Registers. The Bureau asked to revise the TOR for the February 2007 meeting.

February 2007 Bureau meeting: the Bureau reviewed the updated TOR but considered that the recommendations of its previous meeting were not properly reflected in the document.

Action: the UNECE/Eurostat/OECD meeting on business registers on 18-19 June will consider whether there is a need for a steering group and will prepare a new proposal. In order to take into account the conclusions from the meeting of the Roundtable of Business Survey Frames in October 2007, the Bureau will consider the revised proposal in February 2008.

SA 4.6 Statistical confidentiality and disclosure protection

20. History: as a follow-up to the CES Seminar on Statistical Confidentiality and Microdata in June 2003, a Task Force was created to develop a set of guidelines for confidentiality protection (the Terms of Reference approved in October 2003).

June 2006 plenary session: the Conference adopted the Guidelines subject to inclusion of modifications to address the latest comments. It was recommended to set up a Task Force to examine the confidentiality concerns related to integrated data sets and consider the development of common principles.

October 2006 Bureau meeting: the Bureau approved the *Guidelines for managing confidentiality and microdata*.

February 2007 Bureau meeting: the Bureau approved the TOR for the Task Force on Confidentiality and Privacy Issues in Integrated Data Sets.

Action: the Terms of Reference for the Task Force on confidentiality and privacy issues in integrated data sets will be presented to the Conference in June 2007 for information.

SA 5.3. Quality frameworks and measurement of performance of statistical systems and offices

21. June 2006 plenary session: the Conference considered quality frameworks based on a Rapporteur Report prepared by Sweden. The Conference considered it necessary to establish a focal point to coordinate the numerous international activities going on in this area.

Action: the Bureau will wait for the outcome of the CCSA initiative on this topic to see if any follow-up action is still necessary. Eurostat and OECD could prepare a paper for the Bureau February 2008 meeting, if necessary.

SA 5.4 Management and development of human resources

22. June 2006 plenary session: the CES seminar on human resources and training was held. The Conference considered it necessary to continue to exchange experience in this area.

October 2006 Bureau meeting: the Bureau had its first discussion on follow-up to the Seminar on human resources and training.

February 2007 meeting: the Bureau approved the TOR for an Organising Committee (OC) for a forum on human resources management to take place in 2008.

Action: i) the 2007 plenary session of the Conference will be informed about the plans to organise a meeting on human resources management;

ii) the OC will submit the draft concept of the forum to the CES Bureau in October 2007.

SA 5.5 Management and development of technological resources

23. History: at the June 2005 plenary session, the Conference recommended to establish a working group to further explore the issues concerning Electronic Data Reporting (EDR). The Bureau approved the TOR for the work of the Task Force in October 2005.

February 2006 Bureau meeting: the Bureau approved the work plan for the Task Force.

February 2007 Bureau meeting: The Bureau considered a progress report by the Steering Group on Management of Statistical Information Systems and supported the continuation of the work.

Action: a report by the Task Force on EDR will be presented at the next plenary session of the Conference.

SA 5.7 Technical cooperation and capacity building

24. History: In February 2005, the Bureau requested UNECE, Eurostat and the Interstate Statistical Committee of the CIS to prepare a proposal on how to improve the coordination of technical assistance in the UNECE region. In February 2006, the Bureau approved the coordination of technical cooperation in the UNECE region based on the paper by UNECE secretariat.

June 2006 plenary session: the Conference approved the strategy for coordinating technical cooperation.

February 2007 meeting: the Bureau considered the report on the survey of donor activities in Central Asia carried out by UNECE and approved the proposals in the report.

Action: the Conference will be informed about the results of the survey at its June 2007 plenary session.

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