

**UNITED NATIONS STATISTICAL COMMISSION and
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS**

UNECE Work Session on Statistical Dissemination and Communication

(13-15 May 2008, Geneva, Switzerland)

UNECE Workshop on Communication and Dissemination of Census Results

(16 May 2008, Geneva, Switzerland)

INFORMATION NOTICE No.1

The work session will be held at the United Nations, Palais des Nations, Avenue de la Paix 8, Geneva, from 9.30am, 13 May to 5pm, 15 May 2008. This will be followed by an optional one-day workshop on 16 May 2008.

I. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

1. At its 2007 plenary session, the Conference of European Statisticians included the Work Session on Statistical Dissemination and Communication in its 2007-2008 meeting programme. The meeting will be held from 13 to 15 May 2008 in Geneva, Switzerland.
2. The objective of the meeting is to exchange experiences about statistical dissemination and communication and to collect and publish best practices, guidelines and recommendations on this topic. The programme of the meeting will focus on strategic and management issues of communication. Particular attention will be on issues surrounding ethics and independence, and building and maintaining relationships with the media, customers and partners. Given the increasing demands on statistical organizations to disseminate information using the latest technologies, the meeting will also focus on the strategic aspects of communicating statistics in the information age and Web 2.0.
3. The target audience of the meeting includes managers and experts in national and international statistical offices responsible for communication and media relations.

II. AGENDA OF THE MEETING

4. The programme of the meeting will consist of the following substantive topics:
 - (i) Managing communication and dissemination
 - (ii) Ethics and Independence
 - (iii) Building and maintaining relationships
 - (iv) Communicating statistics in the information age
5. Detailed explanatory notes on the nature of topics (i) – (v) are provided in Section VII of this Information Notice.
6. This meeting is held back-to-back with two other events:
 - Workshop on Developing Data Dissemination Systems – 12 May 2008 (refer to <http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2008.05.dissemination3.htm> for more information)
 - Workshop on Communication and Dissemination of Census Results – 16 May 2008 (refer to Section III below for more information)

Participants are encouraged to arrange their travel so that they can benefit from attending more than one of these events.

III. ONE-DAY WORKSHOP ON COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION OF CENSUS RESULTS – 16 MAY 2008

7. The Work Session on Statistical Dissemination and Communication will be followed by a one-day workshop on communication and dissemination of census results on Friday 16 May 2008. This workshop is being held jointly with participants of the UNECE Work Session on Population and Housing Censuses, who are also meeting in Geneva that week.

8. The programme of the workshop is expected to include discussion on: communicating quality; disseminating census microdata; dynamic dissemination of census results; communication methods; and working with the media.

9. Participants can register for the workshop by completing the registration form sent with this notice. Those that wish to contribute a paper for presentation at this workshop should express their interest in accordance with the instructions under section VI below. The agenda and documents for the workshop will be made available at <http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2008.05.dissemination2.htm>.

IV. PARTICIPATION AND ACCREDITATION

10. Representatives of all Member States of the United Nations, and interested intergovernmental organizations, are welcome to participate in the meeting. All delegates must be accredited by the competent authority of their country or international organization. All delegates attending the meeting are requested to have a valid passport and, if required, a visa. Applications for visas must be made as soon as possible to the Embassy of the Switzerland in the country in which the delegates reside, with a reference to the UNECE Work Session on Statistical Dissemination and Communication.

11. Delegates should complete the registration form sent with this notice and return it to the UNECE Secretariat by 29 February 2008. Those intending to submit a paper should take note of the deadlines and requirements under Section VI below.

V. ACCOMMODATION

12. Delegates are requested to make their own accommodation arrangements. Information about accommodation options in Geneva can be found at <http://www.geneva-tourism.ch>.

VI. DOCUMENTATION, METHODS OF WORK AND OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

13. For each topic on the agenda, the session organizers will invite 2-3 speakers to write an invited paper and to present it at the meeting. All other delegates are welcome to submit a supporting paper on any topic of the agenda.

14. The following deadlines and requirements apply to the submission of papers and associated presentations:

- The intention to submit a paper should be communicated to the UNECE Secretariat by **15 February 2008**, by emailing a 2-5 paragraph **abstract** to jessica.gardner@unece.org.
- The **final** papers should be emailed to jessica.gardner@unece.org at the UNECE Secretariat by **11 April 2008 at the latest**.
- Papers should be submitted in Microsoft Word or Rich Text File formats. The UNECE Secretariat will send each author a template containing the header, document number and format.
- Authors who intend to present their written papers are invited to email their on-screen presentations to jessica.gardner@unece.org by **9 May 2008** at the latest, so they can be installed on the projection equipment.

15. The recommended length for each paper is up to five pages of text (3,000 words). Authors are requested to send an abstract or short summary of the paper to allow the session organizers to efficiently plan their session (please see the deadlines above).

16. Authors of invited papers will have 20 minutes to give a presentation on their paper. Authors of supporting papers will have 5 minutes to highlight the main issues raised in their papers. PowerPoint presentations, Adobe Acrobat full screen presentations or A4/letter transparencies may be used. UNECE secretariat cannot provide translation of the presentations.

17. Papers will be made publicly available on the website of the UNECE Secretariat at: <http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2008.05.dissemination.htm> for the work session, and <http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2008.05.dissemination2.htm> for the one-day workshop that follows. Delegates are encouraged to download the papers from the website and bring their own copies to the meeting. Written papers posted on the website before the meeting will not be distributed in the conference room.

18. The working languages of the work session are English, French and Russian. Interpretation facilities will be provided during the meeting. The documents may be submitted in any of the official languages of the UNECE (English, French, Russian), but document translation is not provided by the UNECE.

VII. EXPLANATORY NOTES TO THE AGENDA

19. Topic (i): Managing communication and dissemination

This topic will focus on the management of communication and dissemination functions within a statistical office. Discussion should include the role of communication and dissemination within the context of a statistical programme, examples of governance models, and management challenges and solutions. This may include recruitment, training and retention of staff in the communication field, and the required skills and competencies for conducting this work.

Contributions about approaches to measuring, monitoring, and reporting on performance, in the context of communication, dissemination and media coverage, would also be appreciated.

20. Topic (ii): Ethics and independence in communicating official statistics

Ethics and independence are fundamental issues for statisticians and are reflected as such in the [Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics](#). This topic is intended to explore ethical challenges through sharing of experiences and discussion of strategies for achieving independence. The communication of quality and credibility is a key component of this topic.

21. Topic (iii): Building and maintaining relationships, including with the media

Statistical offices must build and maintain relationships with a large number of stakeholders within and outside the organization. Communication professionals play a vital role in this. This topic should focus on challenges and solutions in:

- developing statistical literacy in relation to helping the media to understand official statistics
- good practices in building relationships with journalists
- extending customer bases and maintaining client relationships
- developing partnerships
- managing relationships with policy/decision makers
- managing internal customer relationships.

22. Topic (iv): Communicating statistics in the information age

The Internet has changed the way statistical offices disseminate their products and communicate with customers. This topic will explore the impact new technologies are having on communication methods, from a strategic perspective rather than a technical one.

This topic is an opportunity to examine the growing share of electronic publication in the mix between print and electronic, and the emergence of tools that allow users to interact with data. The group may consider the effectiveness of data visualization (DV) tools, Web 2.0 and other interactive mediums for engaging with users and improving statistical literacy, and also the role of metadata in facilitating communication (eg Data Quality Statements and contextual linking of metadata and statistical data).

VIII. FURTHER INFORMATION

23. For further information, please contact the following organizers:

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