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

Workshop on the dissemination of census results
 (Geneva, 16 May 2008)

DESCRIPTION OF SESSIONS

1. Communicating quality

The communication of quality pervades all aspects of the census, from content determination (to the authorities), to collection (to the general public) to processing (to the NSO staff) to dissemination (to the general public and the data users). From the dissemination perspective, public trust in the quality of the data is critical to participation in a census and to the credibility of the data when released.

This session focuses on the importance of data quality to the dissemination of census results. We suggest papers touching on topics such as methods of communication to different stakeholders (general public, government stakeholders, academia, media, etc.), measures of data quality, publication of technical quality reports, communicating erratum, timeliness and accuracy.

2. Disseminating census results to specific users

The users of census results do not constitute a convenient homogeneous grouping. On the contrary they can be categorised into a number different groupings, including:

- Governments and central, regional and local authorities may have a constitutional requirement for census data to underpin representation in Parliaments/Senates etc and will use the data for policy formulation and assessment, budgetary allocations and service provision.
- The media with a view to disseminating well based objective information and through them the public at large so that members of society are well-informed and can thus make informed judgements.
- Business in order to have a detailed picture of the market and plan their affairs successfully.
- The academic and research community for benchmark/denominator data to underpin their research activities.
- Statistical offices to provide the necessary infrastructure for other statistical activities.

This session will focus on how best to meet the needs for census information of these diverse groups. Rather than presenting the overall range of census products, papers should concentrate on a particular product that has been developed to meet the specific needs of one or more of these groups. The use of different media, from hard copy to web based publishing and interaction, should be addressed as well as the use of graphical information tools. Papers should also comment on how to simultaneously cater for the requirements of naïve as well as more sophisticated users.

3. Dynamic Dissemination Systems on the Web

Improved access to technology opens up possibilities for disseminating census results on the web. Dynamic systems enable users to access, download and manipulate data in ways they had not before. These systems are range from the very simple to the most sophisticated, and increase the array of users who are now able to retrieve data. Many systems build in statistical intelligence to prevent the user from misusing data or to insure confidentiality. The workshop may include papers on content and presentation of census materials on the web (tabular, maps, analytic, data visualization), web applications (static, dynamic), multi-tiered access rules for different stakeholders, and where dissemination on the web fits in context of an overall census dissemination strategy.