



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
5 May 2010

English only

Economic Commission for Europe

Conference of European Statisticians

Fifty-eighth plenary session

Paris, 8-10 June 2010

Item 4(c) of the provisional agenda

Progress reports and work of the CES Teams of Specialists

Report of the second meeting of the 2009/2010 Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians

Note by the secretariat*

Summary

The present report is submitted in compliance with the Rules Governing the Work of the Conference and its Bureau (ECE/CES/2007/8), adopted by the Conference at its fifty-third plenary session. Referring to the Rules, the Bureau acts as a steering body of the Conference. The report includes decisions taken by the Bureau at its February 2010 meeting on the work carried out under the auspices of the Conference.

* This document has been submitted late for technical reasons.

Contents

	<i>Page</i>
I. Introduction	3
II. Preparations for the CES 2010 plenary session.....	3
(a) Preparation of the formal session, draft agenda and timetable for the 2010 plenary session...	3
(b) Consideration of the guidelines, recommendations, frameworks etc. developed under the umbrella of the Conference	4
(i) Manual on gender statistics.....	4
(ii) Statistical measurement of quality of employment.....	4
(iii) Measurement of different emerging forms of households and families	5
(c) Outline for the seminar on impact of crises on official statistics	5
(d) Outline for the seminar on spatial statistics	5
III. Any other business and dates and organization of the next CES Bureau meetings.	6
(a) Canberra Group Handbook.....	6
(b) Database of International Statistical Activities (DISA).....	6
(c) Sharing Advisory Board.....	6
(d) Dates of the next CES Bureau meetings	6

I. Introduction

1. The second meeting of the 2009/2010 CES Bureau was held in New York on 24 February 2010, back-to-back with the UN Statistical Commission. The following members of the Bureau attended: Ms. H. Jeskanen-Sundström (Chairman); Mr. B. Pink; Mr. E. Pereira Nunes; Mr. M. Sheikh; Mr. G. O'Hanlon; Mr. O. Olsen; and Ms. I. Krizman. The following permanent observers also attended: Ms. M. Durand (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)); Mr. P. Everaers (representing Mr. W. Radermacher, Eurostat); Mr. V. Sokolin (Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT)); Mr. S. Schweinfest (representing Mr. P. Cheung, United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD)), Ms. A. Bürgi-Schmelz (International Monetary Fund (IMF)), Mr. M. Belkindas (representing Ms. S. Badiie, World Bank); and Ms. L. Bratanova (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)). Mr. A. Ortega and Mr. J. A. Mejia (National Institute of Statistics, Geography and Informatics, Mexico) and Ms. S. Evinger (United States Office of Management and Budget) attended at the invitation of the Chairman.

2. The following persons assisted members of the Bureau: Ms. Z. Bianchini and Mr. L. P. S. Fortes (Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE)); Mr. B. Prigly (Statistics Canada); Ms. H. Vihavainen (Finland), Ms. A. Hocevar (Slovenia), Mr. M. Korolev (CIS-STAT), Mr. A. Kosarev (Federal Service for State Statistics, Russian Federation), Ms. M. João Santos (Eurostat), Mr. R. Heath (IMF) and Mr. P. Schreyer (OECD). Ms. T. Luige of UNECE served as Secretary of the meeting.

II. Preparations for the 2010 plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians

A. Preparation of the formal session, draft agenda and timetable for the 2010 plenary session.

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2010/FEB/2 by UNECE

3. The CES 2010 plenary session will start at 14:30 on Tuesday, 8 June with the formal business part. The Conference will be informed about the outcomes of the UN Statistical Commission session in February 2010. The outcomes of the two in-depth reviews carried out by the Bureau since the 2009 CES plenary session, namely on statistical dissemination, communication and publications, and on government finance, fiscal and public sector statistics, will be presented to the Conference.

4. The CES plenary session will include a discussion on two topics that are planned to be reviewed in-depth by the Bureau in November 2010. The aim of the discussion will be to obtain input for the review. The topics are:

(a) Time-use surveys (including the time-use related aspects of the political and community activities and volunteer work; papers to be prepared by UK and Germany with input from Finland and the United States); and

(b) Measuring the information society and statistics on science, technology and innovation (paper to be prepared by Australia).

5. The Conference will select the topics for the two plenary modules to be organised in 2011 on new emerging issues and on foundational issues of statistical systems. The selection will be made based on the results of an electronic consultation on possible topics

among all CES members (to be conducted in April-May) and the recommendation by the Bureau.

6. Conclusion: the Bureau approved the agenda for the CES plenary session in 2010. The Bureau also discussed three documents developed under the auspices of the Conference described below.

B. Consideration of the guidelines, recommendations, frameworks etc. developed under the auspices of the Conference

7. The Bureau discussed the status of the three documents that were planned to be submitted to the CES plenary session in 2010 for endorsement: *Manual on gender statistics*, *Statistical measurement of quality of employment*, and *Measurement of different emerging forms of households and families*.

1. Manual on gender statistics

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2010/FEB/2 Add.1 by UNECE

8. Conclusion: following the Bureau decision in October 2009, the Manual will be sent to all CES members for electronic consultation. The CES will be informed about the outcome of the consultation. If the outcome is positive, the CES 2010 plenary session will be invited to approve the Manual.

2. Statistical measurement of quality of employment

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2010/FEB/2 by UNECE

9. The Bureau discussed the draft *document of statistical measurement of quality of employment*. The following comments were made in the discussion:

(a) There are several issues with the proposed framework that make it difficult to use. It can be challenging for statistical offices to try to measure some of the elements identified. The country case studies should be looked at carefully to make sure that the framework can be implemented in countries;

(b) The results of validation studies and country reports are considered very useful by experts and will contribute to the discussion. The work will continue on refining the set of indicators and further testing in countries;

(c) It was proposed to advance the framework in particular by supporting the transition from general indicators to specific ones and support was given UNECE initiative to have a meeting on Quality of employment issues late in 2011;

(d) The proposed measurement of quality of employment is related to the ILO 'Decent Work' initiative. A lot of work has gone into developing the material and it is useful. The next steps should ensure wide consultation to develop a product that that can support policy makers and be accepted by the statistical community;

(e) The document should explain how the indicators can be used to avoid their misinterpretation;

(f) The discussion on this topic by statistical offices is useful but it is not clear whether this kind of work could be a part of the regular statistical programme;

(g) The document does not deal only with quality of employment but mixes different concepts (employment, jobs, work);

(h) The document includes a number of value judgements: a statistical agency should not comment on whether an indicator shows good or bad quality of work (e.g. working in the public sector seems to guarantee a high quality of employment);

(i) Concerning working hours, the number of working hours in itself does not indicate quality of employment. Quality may be different depending on whether the short working hours are voluntary or not;

(j) Belonging to a pension fund may not indicate quality of employment – in many countries the pension funds are private and not linked to quality of work.

10. Conclusion: the document will be updated by Statistics Canada to take into account the issues raised. The secretariat will circulate the updated document for electronic consultation to the CES members, together with the country pilot reports. The CES 2010 plenary session will be informed about the outcome of the consultation and the Conference will be asked to approve the document subject to a positive outcome of the consultation. The UNECE secretariat will proceed with the publication of the pilot country reports.

11. The Bureau will discuss further the work on Statistical Measurement of Quality of Employment at its 11 June meeting.

3. Measurement of different emerging forms of households and families

12. The Report on *Measurement of different emerging forms of households and families* is being updated to take into account the comments by the Bureau collected through electronic consultation in December 2009-January 2010, and the comments by the UNECE network on social statistics experts (the members of the former Steering Group on Social Statistics who initiated the work on new forms of families and households).

13. Conclusion: the updated Report will be sent for electronic consultation to all CES members. The CES will be informed about the outcome of the consultation. If the outcome is positive, the CES 2010 plenary session will be invited to approve the document.

C. Outline for the seminar on impact of crises on official statistics

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2010/FEB/3 by IMF and OECD

14. An updated outline of the seminar was presented to the Bureau for comments and recommendations.

15. Conclusion: the Bureau agreed with the outline and the plans for the organization of the seminar.

1. Outline for the seminar on spatial statistics

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2010/FEB/4 by Mexico and Eurostat

16. An outline of the seminar was presented to the Bureau for comments and recommendations.

17. The Bureau discussed the ongoing and planned future work by countries and international organizations in the area of spatial statistics in view of possible recommendations for any follow-up actions that could be suggested at the seminar.

18. Conclusion: the Bureau agreed with the outline and the plans for the organization of the seminar.

III. Any other business and dates and organization of the next Conference of European Statisticians Bureau meetings

A. Canberra Group Handbook

19. The Bureau was informed by Brian Pink about the progress of work with updating the Canberra Group Handbook on household income. The Task Force is working enthusiastically and making good progress with the update of the Handbook. The document is planned to be presented to the Bureau for approval in February 2011.

B. Database of International Statistical Activities

20. The Database of International Statistical Activities (DISA) has been updated to include statistical activities of international organizations planned to be undertaken in 2010 and is available on Internet (<http://www1.unece.org/stat/platform/display/DISA2010/>).

21. The DISA classification is being used by other international organizations and activities (e.g. SDMX, CCSA, etc.). The DISA and its classification of statistical activities should be more actively promoted within the international statistical community.

22. Eurostat informed about the update of the inventory of international working groups in the area of statistics which is now available on the CCSA website (<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/acsub-public/inventory.htm>). The Inventory should be linked to DISA and to the UNSD website.

23. Conclusion: the Conference will be informed about the DISA, the DISA classification and the inventory of international working groups.

C. Sharing Advisory Board

24. Conclusion: the Bureau was informed about the progress made in agreeing on the final Terms of Reference (TOR) for the Sharing Advisory Board (SAB). The Bureau was informed about discussions on the TOR for the SAB that indicate the clear preference to develop a high level advisory group on the directions for the organization (governance, methodology, IT) of the production process for statistics without changing the original idea of the SAB as a board that will function on the lower technical level. When finalised, the TOR of this new proposed board will be sent to the CES Bureau for electronic consultation and approval.

D. Dates of the next Conference of European Statisticians Bureau meetings

25. The next CES Bureau meeting will take place on Friday 11 June at 9:00-15:00. The autumn 2010 meeting will take place in Geneva on 3-4 November 2010.