

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

First Meeting of the 2004/2005 Bureau

Washington, D.C. (United States), 18-19 October 2004

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

The Bureau meeting will take place in the Conference Centre at the US Department of Agriculture's Economic Research Service, located at 1800 M Street, N.W., in Washington, D.C. The meeting will start at 9:30 on Monday, 18 October. It is anticipated that the meeting will end around 17:00 on Tuesday, 19 October.

1. Opening by Katherine Wallman

2. ECE Statistical Programme(CES/BUR.2005/3 and Add.1)

Note by ECE secretariat; draft ECE Statistical Programme for 2005.

The first Annual ECE Statistical Programme was compiled for 2004. The Programme includes all statistical activities that are undertaken by the ECE. The ECE secretariat will present a progress report/evaluation on the implementation of the 2004 Statistical Programme and a draft Statistical Programme for 2005.

The Bureau is expected to endorse the ECE Statistical Programme for 2005.

3. Review of the classification of statistical activities used in the Integrated Presentation of International Statistical Work (IP) (CES/BUR.2005/4)

Note by the ECE secretariat.

The 2004 February Bureau meeting decided to set up a Task Force consisting of ECE, Eurostat, OECD and Statistics Canada to review the classification of statistical activities that is used in the IP.

The Bureau is expected to review the proposals of the task Force and make recommendations on the IP classification

4. Review of the Rapporteur's reporting regime and the selection of topics for the in-depth review of the IP in February 2005 (CES/BUR.2005/5)

Note by the ECE secretariat.

At its 2004 February meeting, the Bureau proposed to reduce substantially the number of Programme Elements (PEs) for in-depth review of the IP at its February meetings and to choose them based on a priority setting. Regarding the number of PEs to be reviewed annually, Eurostat and OECD suggested a range of five and ten. It was also decided to improve the process of designating the Rapporteurs and their reporting regime. The ECE secretariat was asked to investigate the feasibility of the Bureau's proposal to make the system more effective.

The ECE secretariat will propose to the Bureau for comments and decision a procedure to be followed for reviewing the IP and the selection of Rapporteurs for comments and decision. It is expected that Bureau members will select the next programme elements to be reviewed at the February 2005 meeting, including the proposals for designated Rapporteurs.

5. Presentation of the statistical activities of the World Bank (CES/BUR.2005/6)

Note by the World Bank.

The 50th CES plenary session in 2002 decided that, periodically, some time should be devoted to discussion of the work of international organizations and their strategies. IMF presented its statistical activities to the Bureau in October 2003. At the same meeting, the World Bank agreed to make a presentation of its statistical activities at the 2004 October Bureau.

The World Bank will briefly present its statistical activities.

6. Issues and problems related to social statistics (CES/BUR.2005/7)

Note by UNSD.

The issue of social statistics has come up repeatedly on the agenda of the Bureau meetings. In October 2003, the Bureau was informed by UNSD of the outcome of the expert meeting organised in New York in April 2003, setting the scope for social statistics. The Bureau considered the proposed programme of work for social statistics, 2004-2014, to be a good basis for future action, but too ambitious. It was also stressed that there is a need for a well-defined and realistic minimum programme. The Bureau agreed that the definition and status of "social statistics" should be discussed by the Conference in June 2004. However, the topic was not included in the agenda of the Conference.

The issue was briefly discussed at the Bureau meeting in June 2004. Some concern was expressed that not enough is being done to improve international cooperation in social statistics and the area is not sufficiently covered by international standards and definitions. The Bureau decided to discuss the issues related to social statistics at its next meeting and consider how the work programmes of international organizations should address these concerns.

7. Seminar on Measurement of Sustainable Development: what is the role of official statistics? (CES/BUR.2005/8)

Note by Statistics Sweden.

The CES 2004 plenary session selected Measurement of Sustainable Development to be the topic for the seminar on emerging issues in 2005. Statistics Sweden, the organiser of the seminar, will report on the preparations for the seminar.

8. Seminar on improved data reporting (CES/BUR.2005/9)

Note by the United States.

The CES 2004 plenary session selected Improved Data Reporting to be the topic for the seminar on foundational issues of statistical systems in 2005. United States volunteered to organise the seminar. An outline of the seminar will be presented to the Bureau for comments and proposals.

9. Progress report of the MNE project (CES/BUR.2005/10)

Note by Statistics Canada.

An experiment on measuring the activities of multinational enterprises (the MNE project) is being carried out as a follow-up to the seminar on globalisation held in 2003. The Bureau is acting as the Steering Committee for the project. The five participating countries (Canada, France, Italy, the Netherlands and United Kingdom) are working on the first phase of the project. Preliminary results of the first phase will be presented to the Bureau.

The Bureau is expected to discuss the progress report and agree on how the first results should be presented to the 2005 Conference.

10. Report of the Task Force on Statistical Confidentiality and Microdata (CES/BUR.2005/11)

Note by Dennis Trewin.

As a follow-up to the Seminar on Confidentiality and Microdata in 2003, a Task Force chaired by Dennis Trewin is developing agreed international principles on the provision of access to microdata. A first draft of the principles was presented to the CES 2004 plenary session and made available on the ECE web site for comments. An updated draft reflecting the various comments will be presented to the Bureau. It is planned that the principles be finalised by the beginning of 2005 and presented to the Conference for endorsement in 2005.

11. Review of the work of various Steering Groups and Task Forces working under the auspices of the CES (CES/BUR.2005/12)

Note by the ECE secretariat.

Since October 2003, several Steering Groups and Task Forces have been created (including their TORs) that work under the auspices of the CES Bureau. At its February 2004 meeting, the Bureau endorsed draft guidelines for establishing Teams of specialists within the CES and asked the ECE secretariat to review the existing groups and bring them in line with the guidelines once approved by the Conference. In June 2004, the Conference approved the guidelines.

The ECE secretariat will present updated information on the work of the various team of specialists, including separate reports on:

a. Population and housing censuses (CES/BUR.2005/12/Add.1)

The Steering Group on Population and Housing Censuses is developing recommendations for the 2010 round of population censuses. The progress report and timetable were discussed by the Bureau in February 2004. According to the plan, the preliminary results of the ECE questionnaires on the 2000 round of censuses, including compliance with the ECE-Eurostat recommendations, should be available in September 2004.

b. Management of information technology (CES/BUR.2005/12/Add.2)

Back in 2002, the Bureau asked the Steering Group on Information Technology to collect information on the development of IT technologies in the NSOs. In May 2004 the joint UNECE-Eurostat-OECD meeting on Management of Statistical Information Systems reviewed a draft questionnaire prepared by Statistics Canada, which was sent afterwards to member countries to collect information on the development of the IT technologies. A summary of this exercise will be presented to the Bureau.

c. Proposal for the creation of a Steering Group on Health Statistics (CES/BUR.2005/12/Add.3)

A joint ECE/Eurostat/WHO expert meeting was held in May 2004 in Geneva. The meeting recommended that a Steering Group and an ad-hoc Working Group be created to work toward the development of a new common instrument and to coordinate with existing groups such as the Eurostat Group on HIS and the Washington Group. A draft TOR will be presented to the Bureau for comments and approval.

d. Statistical Dissemination and Communication (CES/BUR.2005/12/Add.4)

Draft TOR for creating a Group on Statistical Dissemination and Communication was circulated for comments to the Bureau members in July. Several comments were made. The final version will be presented to the Bureau for approval.

12. Follow-up to decisions taken by the Bureau (CES/BUR.2005/13)

Note by ECE secretariat.

A note on follow-up to decisions taken by the Bureau was prepared for information. Its aim is to assist the Bureau in identifying possible delays and in taking decisions for further action.

13. Dates and venue of the next meeting

Under this agenda item, the Bureau is expected to confirm the dates and venue of its next meeting.

14. Other business

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