

**CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS**

Second meeting of the 2004/2005 Bureau  
Geneva, 10-11 February 2005

Item 3: Election of a new  
Bureau

**RULES GOVERNING THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE AND ITS BUREAU**

Note prepared by the ECE secretariat

Document CES/BUR.2005/24 concerning the Election of the Bureau of the Conference was circulated to the Bureau members on 2 February 2005. It proposes that a consolidated document describing the rules governing the work of the Conference and its Bureau be prepared, rather than referring to two excerpts from the report of the 1991 plenary session – a practice that was applied for 13 years. An updated text of the two excerpts was included as an example. It reflects the changes concerning the size and the composition of the Bureau that the Conference adopted in 2003 and 2004, and also reflects some minor editorial amendments.

However, after circulating the document to the Bureau, the ECE secretariat took it upon themselves to prepare in advance a new version of the Rules in order to facilitate the discussions of the Bureau and, most importantly, to save some time. The draft Rules are presented overleaf. They have a new structure. Some editorial changes to the original text have been introduced. The new proposals are indicated in italic in bold.

It should be noted that the draft Rules might benefit from some legal advice.

The Bureau is invited to consider the new structure and text of the Rules, including the proposed additions. The Bureau should also decide on how to proceed with the preparation of the document for discussion and adoption by the Conference in June.

## **RULES GOVERNING THE WORK OF THE CONFERENCE AND ITS BUREAU**

The first document on the Structure and Relations of the Conference was adopted by the Third Regional Meeting of European Statisticians (Geneva, 15-19 June 1953; document E/CN.3/CONF.3/1;E/ECE/167). The Structure and Relations were amended by the thirty-ninth plenary session in 1991 in order to adjust them to the new conditions for international statistical cooperation (report of the Conference, document ECE/CES/38). The 1991 plenary session also defined the new role of the Bureau as a “Steering Body” of the Conference and adopted the rules for the composition and election of the officers of the Bureau. The 2003 and 2004 plenary sessions agreed on amendments to the size and the composition of the Bureau. The sections on Structure and Relations and Role and Functioning of the Bureau below reflect the agreed amendments.

### **Structure and relations of the Conference**

1. The Conference of European Statisticians meets under the joint auspices of the UN Statistical Commission and the UN Economic Commission for Europe.

#### **2. Objectives**

The objectives of the Conference are:

- (i) to improve national statistics and their international comparability with regard to the recommendations of the Statistical Commission of the United Nations, the Specialised Agencies and other appropriate bodies as necessary;
- (ii) to promote close coordination of the statistical activities in Europe of international organizations so as to achieve greater uniformity in concepts and definitions and to reduce to a minimum the burdens on national statistical offices;
- (iii) to respond to any emerging need for international statistical cooperation both within the UNECE region and between the UNECE region and other regions.

#### **3. Membership**

The head of the statistical service of any member country of the United Nations that participates regularly in the work of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe may be a member of the Conference.

#### **4. Participation in the work of the Conference by statisticians from International Agencies**

The heads of statistical services of the international agencies shall be invited to participate in the work of the Conference.

#### **5. Activities**

The Conference shall provide a forum for work on all statistical matters which are of interest to its members. In particular, it may:

- (i) decide on the collection and dissemination of internationally comparable statistics of UNECE member countries that is required by policy makers, enterprises, researchers and the general public in the UNECE region;
- (ii) promote the development of statistical methodological guidelines and standards (concepts, definitions, classifications) as required for purposes of international comparability of statistics in the region;
- (iii) assist in the improvement of the statistical infrastructure of countries both within and outside the UNECE region as required;
- (iv) coordinate international statistical cooperation and the statistical work programme of the UNECE;
- (v) make the results of its work available to national statistical offices, international organizations, enterprises or any other user;
- (vi) arrange for any study that may be required to further its objectives.

#### 6. Officers

The Conference elects a Bureau and a Chairman according to rules laid down by the Conference.

#### 7. Secretariat

The Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Europe places at the disposal of the Conference the staff and facilities necessary to assist it in the accomplishment of its objectives and work programmes.

#### 8. Meetings of the Conference

Meetings of the Conference shall take place regularly once a year, preferably in June, at a time fixed by the Bureau in consultation with the secretariat. Additional meetings may be convened by the Bureau in consultation with the secretariat.

### **Role and functioning of the Bureau of the Conference**

#### 9. Role of the Bureau

*The Bureau acts as a Steering body of the Conference.*

#### 10. Functioning of the Bureau

- (i) Two meetings of the Bureau of a duration of one to two full days should be held in the second half of February and October each year. The subjects of discussion, as well as the need for the availability of all secretariat experts for the February meeting, suggest that the meeting should be held in Geneva.
- (ii) A third Bureau meeting could regularly be convened during the first day of the plenary session.
- (iii) Further meetings of the Bureau could be determined by the Bureau members or the Chairman of the Conference as the need arises.

- (iv) The documentation necessary for the Bureau meetings would be determined by the Bureau members in each case.
- (v) Invitations for Bureau meetings are issued by the secretariat. As a rule, they should be mailed not less than six weeks in advance.
- (vi) For purposes of consultation with the Bureau, the secretariat may take initiatives on matters affecting the implementation of the work programme of the Conference, or in relation to other issues that are of interest to the Conference and the Bureau.

#### 11. Composition of the Bureau

- (i) Any member of the Conference is eligible for membership in the Bureau of the Conference. The members of the Bureau undertake to devote the time necessary to an adequate discharge of their duties.
- (ii) The Bureau is composed of up to 8 members, of whom 6 members should be from the UNECE member countries and the remaining one or two places be reserved for possible candidates from countries in other regions. The Bureau may invite to the meetings of the Bureau anyone who may facilitate its work.
- (iii) If a Bureau member leaves the Bureau, a new member may be co-opted until the time of the next plenary session, when a new Bureau member is elected.
- (iv) Standing invitations are extended to the Director-General of Eurostat, the Chief Statistician of the OECD Secretariat, the Chairman of the OECD Committee on Statistics, the Chairman of the Interstate Statistical Committee of the CIS, ***the Director of the IMF Statistics Department and the Director of the Development Data Group of the World Bank to attend meetings of the Bureau as permanent observers.*** The Director of the UN Statistical Division is invited to participate in Bureau meetings as representative of the UN secretariat.

#### 12. Election of the Bureau

- (i) The election of the Bureau by the Conference is carried out on the basis of a proposal by the most senior previous Chairman of the Conference, ***called 'kingmaker'***, present at the plenary session concerned. The proposal should be prepared in such a way that it maximizes the chances of being adopted by consensus.
- (ii) If no previous Chairman of the Conference is present at the plenary session or ***in exceptional cases***, the Bureau proposes the designation of a member of the Conference at the beginning of the plenary session, who will assume the task of preparing the proposal for the composition of the Bureau.
- (iii) The Conference elects its Bureau for a period of two years.
- (iv) Bureau members can be elected to four successive Bureaus. Any previous Bureau member can be re-elected to the Bureau after an interruption of at least two years.

#### 13. Election of the Chairman of the Conference

- (i) The Chairman of the Conference is elected by the Conference from among the members of the Bureau. The term of office is two years. The election is carried out on the basis of a

proposal *by the 'kingmaker'* who is also responsible for the proposal of the Bureau composition.

- (ii) If the post of Chairman of the Conference falls vacant, the Bureau designates an Acting Chairman from among the Bureau members until the time of the next plenary session, when a new Chairman is elected by the Conference.
- (iii) A Chairman of the Conference may be re-elected once. Any previous Chairman may be re-elected Chairman after an interruption of at least two years.

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