

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

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Item 3: Review of the
classification of statistical
activities used in the Integrated
Presentation of International
Statistical Work (IP)

**REVIEW OF THE CLASSIFICATION OF STATISTICAL ACTIVITIES USED IN THE
INTEGRATED PRESENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL WORK**

Note prepared by the ECE secretariat

INTRODUCTION

1. At its meeting on 12-13 February 2004, the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians decided to set up a Task Force to review the classification of statistical activities, which has been used in the Integrated Presentation of International Statistical Work Programmes (IP) since the early nineties. The ECE, EUROSTAT, OECD and Statistics Canada were designated as members of the Task Force (document CES/BUR.2004/43, paragraphs 23 and 24). The reasons for the review are explained in document CES/BUR.2004/39 that was discussed by the Bureau in February 2004.
2. In addition to the frequent communication via e-mail, the members of the Task Force met twice: on 3 March 2004 in New York (all members), and on 2 September 2004 in New York (ECE, EUROSTAT and OECD). The draft that resulted from the second meeting was circulated for a last round of consultations with all members of the Task Force on 6 September. The draft classification that is attached as an Annex to this document is the result of this process. However, some modifications have been made in the present draft as compared to the draft of 6 September. These modifications are indicated as footnotes in the Annex.

THE PROPOSAL

3. It is proposed that the new classification is based, like its predecessor, on a three level structure, with the third level used only where necessary (three times both in the new and the old classification). Where the third level is introduced, the elements at the third level are not meant as an exhaustive breakdown of the second level component, but only as a selection of items that have certain relevance. In total, 55 programme elements at the second and third level are proposed in the new classification as compared to 47 in the present classification.
4. At its first meeting, the Task Force agreed that the basic structure of the new classification should be the Major Headings as outlined in paragraph 13 of the Bureau document CES/BUR.2004/39, with subject area and output oriented Major Headings (1 to 3 in the Annex), and other Major Headings (4 and 5 in the Annex).
5. It is proposed that Major Headings 1 to 3 have a dual use: to serve as part of the classification for the Integrated Presentation, and to serve as subject area classification in the context of SDMX, i.e. the electronic interchange of aggregated statistics between national producers and international organizations, as well as between international organizations. Therefore, it is proposed that the first type

of activities to be classified in Major Headings 1 should cover all activities through which aggregated data from national producers are collected by international organizations and subsequently processed, used within the international organizations, and disseminated as international statistics to users.

6. Secondly, it is proposed that all international activities involving methodological work aimed at developing or revising standards related to such aggregated data at national level (output harmonisation) be allocated to items within the first three Major Headings.

7. Thirdly, it is proposed that any activity related to technical cooperation or training specific to a subject area be classified in one of the first three Major Headings.

8. The fourth and fifth Major Headings refer to activities that are not directly related to outputs in specific subject areas. The main difference with the present classification is that data sources at national level, and any activities undertaken by the international organizations to harmonise these sources (input harmonisation), or any activity undertaken by international organizations aiming at collecting data directly from businesses or households, will in future be included under Major Heading 4. This is a reflection of the growing tendency that, seen from the national perspective, outputs are increasingly based on a combination of data sources. Furthermore, the data sources, whether of survey type or administrative sources, are inputs into statistics of more than one subject area.

9. In most cases, standards developed by the international and supranational organizations refer to outputs at national level, leaving the methods as to how this output is generated, within certain limits, for countries to decide. All activities undertaken by the international organizations following this approach will be classified within the first three Major Headings. However, where cases of input harmonisation, direct implementation of surveys by international organizations, or of developing standards aimed at specific sources like the population census occur, it is proposed that in future they be classified under the Major Heading 4, including any transmission of microdata from national producers to international organizations. Only if the international or supranational organizations produce and disseminate their own statistical products based on harmonised sources in one or more subject areas will this part be classified under the corresponding subject area element(s) in Major Headings 1 to 3. Therefore, in future, the description of activities in the integrated presentation will have to indicate, in a more systematic way, to what degree input harmonisation is included (the use of the term "survey", for example, is not sufficient in itself to indicate input harmonisation).

10. The preliminary analysis of the present IP classification shows that, in most cases, the activities of the international organizations included in the individual programme elements can be allocated one by one to programme elements of the new classification without the need of breaking them up. In some cases, however, notably for some organizations other than ECE, OECD and EUROSTAT which used to report "en bloc" and which activities are frequently allocated "en bloc" in the present IP, a more detailed breakdown is necessary. Only in exceptional cases some additional information would be necessary, notably with respect to the focus on output versus input harmonisation.

11. The new classification needs to undergo a practical test before it is finally adopted. For this purpose, it is proposed that the ECE secretariat present the content of the Integrated Presentation database to the February meeting of the Bureau according to the new classification of statistical activities in the Annex (including any modification agreed at the October meeting). The document should include conversion keys between the old and the new classification, as well as conversion keys between the annual programmes of ECE, OECD and EUROSTAT and the new classification.

CONCLUSION

12. The Bureau is invited to:

- discuss the proposed new classification of statistical activities of IP, and amend it if necessary;

- agree that the ECE secretariat present at the next meeting of the Bureau the updated 2005 IP database according to the new classification, together with the relevant conversion keys;
- ask the international organizations that contribute to the IP database to provide to the ECE secretariat, on request and where necessary, the complementary information about their activities so as to ensure a correct reallocation of their activities to the new classification.

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ANNEX: Proposed New Classification for the Integrated Presentation of International Statistical Activities (Version of 30 September 2004)

Major Heading 1: Demographic and social statistics

- 1.1 Population and migration
- 1.2 Labour
- 1.3 Education
- 1.4 Health
- 1.5 Income and consumption¹
- 1.6 Social protection
- 1.7 Human settlements and housing
- 1.8 Justice and crime
- 1.9 Culture
- 1.10 Political and other community activities

Major Heading 2: Economic statistics

- 2.1 Economic accounts (including non-observed economy)²
- 2.2 Short-term economic statistics
- 2.3 Economy-wide statistics on the production of goods and services by businesses³
- 2.4 Sectoral statistics
 - 2.4.1 Agriculture, forestry, fisheries
 - 2.4.2 Energy
 - 2.4.3 Mining, manufacturing, construction⁴
 - 2.4.4 Transport
 - 2.4.5 Tourism
 - 2.4.6 Banking, insurance, financial markets
- 2.5 Government finance, fiscal and public sector statistics
- 2.6 International trade and balance of payments
- 2.7 Prices
- 2.8 Labour cost
- 2.9 Science and technology

Major Heading 3: Environment and multi-domain statistics⁵

- 3.1 Environment
- 3.2 Regional and small area statistics
- 3.3 Multi-domain statistics and indicators⁵
 - 3.3.1 Living conditions and time use
 - 3.3.2 Gender and special population groups
 - 3.3.3 Information society

¹ Modified title compared to the version of 6 September (proposal by Canada to delete “distribution of”)

² Modified title compared to the version of 6 September (proposal by ECE to add “including non-observed economy” for clarification purposes)

³ Modified title compared to the version of 6 September, following a proposal by Canada. The intention is to include in 2.3 structural (i.e. non-cyclical) business statistics covering the whole industrial sector, the whole market service sector, or both sectors at the same time

⁴ Modified title compared to the version of 6 September (proposal by Canada to list the individual industries)

⁵ Modified title compared to the version of 6 September (proposal by ECE to replace “cross-cutting” by “multi-domain”)

- 3.3.4 Globalisation⁶
- 3.3.5 Millenium Development Goals
- 3.3.6 Sustainable development
- 3.4 Yearbooks and similar all-domain compendia⁷

Major Heading 4: Methodology of data collection, processing, dissemination and analysis

- 4.1 Metadata structures⁸
- 4.2 Classifications
- 4.3 Data sources
 - 4.3.1 Population and housing censuses; registers of population, dwellings and buildings
 - 4.3.2 Business and agricultural censuses and registers
 - 4.3.3 Household surveys
 - 4.3.4 Business and agricultural surveys
 - 4.3.5 Other administrative and non-survey sources
- 4.4 Data editing and data linkage
- 4.5 Dissemination, data warehousing⁹
- 4.6 Statistical confidentiality and disclosure protection
- 4.7 Data analysis

Major Heading 5: Managerial issues of official statistics at national and international level

- 5.1 Institutional frameworks and principles; role of official statistics
- 5.2 Statistical programmes, priority setting, relationships with users and respondents
- 5.3 Organisation, coordination, and performance of statistical systems and agencies
- 5.4 Quality frameworks
- 5.5 Human resources
- 5.6 Technological resources
- 5.7 Co-ordination of international statistical work (including standards for electronic data exchange and data sharing)
- 5.8 Technical cooperation and capacity building programmes

⁶ Additional programme element compared to the version of 6 September (proposal by ECE). Globalisation spans across trade in goods and services, FDI, technology and activities of multinational enterprises (activities of businesses abroad are not covered anywhere else)

⁷ Additional programme element compared to the version of 6 September (proposal by ECE). Otherwise, there is no place for this form of output used both at national and international level

⁸ Modified title compared to the version of 6 September (proposal by ECE to replace “standards” by “structures”)

⁹ Modified title compared to the version of 6 September (proposal by ECE to add the term “data warehousing” for clarification purposes)