

**SELECTION OF TOPICS FOR IN-DEPTH REVIEW BY THE CES BUREAU
IN 2010-2011**

Note prepared by the secretariat

1. The CES Bureau regularly undertakes in-depth reviews of selected statistical areas. These reviews enable the Bureau to promote the coordination of international statistical activities in the region, so that duplication is avoided, and emerging issues addressed. The aim of the discussion is to identify problems and propose possible solutions.
2. In October 2006, the Bureau decided that about 4-5 topics should be reviewed each year and that the reviews should focus on strategic issues in the next five years or so, rather than reviewing the current issues and problems. The criteria for selecting a topic or a group of topics for review are that:
 - (a) there are significant developments in the area;
 - (b) there are significant coordination issues;
 - (c) there is a lack of activities at the international level.
3. The topics for in-depth review are selected from the 56 statistical areas listed in the classification of statistical activities. The topics may be either single topics, or ad hoc groupings from among the 56 statistical areas in the classification. The Bureau also nominates a country/organization to prepare the issue paper that provides basis for the discussion. The Bureau members and other agencies actively involved in the area are invited to contribute short notes to the discussion.
4. Furthermore, in October 2008, the Bureau decided that it will be useful to discuss the topics selected for in-depth review by the Bureau at a CES plenary session prior to the discussion at the Bureau meetings. This will allow to get input from the CES members. This approach was tested at the 2009 CES plenary session with the topic on statistical dissemination, communication and publications.
5. In order to organise the next in-depth reviews, **the Bureau is invited to**
 - (a) **select topics to be reviewed in-depth during 2010 and 2011;**

To facilitate the discussion, the secretariat has prepared a list of potential topics that could be reviewed, provided in Annex 1. The Bureau could select from this list, or propose any other topics. The current classification of statistical activities is provided in Annex 2 – the topics can be either single topics or combinations of topics from the classification. The list of topics that were reviewed in-depth during the last four years is provided in Annex 3.

- (b) **nominate the countries or international organizations to prepare the issue papers to provide basis for the discussion;**
- (c) **evaluate the usefulness of the pre-discussion of the in-depth review topic at the CES plenary session and decide whether to make it a regular part of the in-depth review process.**

ANNEX 1
POSSIBLE TOPICS FOR IN-DEPTH REVIEWS IN 2010-2011
PROPOSED BY THE UNECE SECRETARIAT

1) Time-use surveys (CSA 1.11 Time-use)

There are very few activities at the international level in this area. At the same time, the surveys provide a wealth of information that can be used for many different purposes (gender statistics, volunteering, informal economic activities, lifelong learning, political and community activities, human and social capital, etc.). This topic has been proposed as a possible candidate for an in-depth review several times in the past and was also on the Bureau list of possible topics in February 2008. It has not been chosen because, as there are very few activities in this area, it has been difficult to find a country/organization to prepare the basic paper for the discussion.

2) The use of secondary and mixed sources for official statistics (CSA 4.3.5. Other administrative sources and 4.4 Data editing and data linkage)

Secondary sources encompass traditional public sector administrative data sets, as well as the growing number of private sector data sources used in the compilation of official statistics. These sources can be used on their own, or mixed with survey data, to produce statistical outputs. There have been a number of one-off seminars on the use of secondary and mixed sources over recent years, but there is no sustained, coordinated activity in this field. This has resulted in fragmentation of knowledge and reduced efficiency. This lack of coordination was noted in the session on quality of administrative sources at the 2009 ISI conference, whilst ethical issues related to the use of non-official sources were raised at the September 2009 meeting of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA). Specific issues to be addressed include quality assessment, feedback versus statistical confidentiality, the creation of a knowledge base or similar resource, data integration methods, and the impact on the way the statistical production process is organized.

3) Political and other community activities, including voluntary and community groups, social enterprises, charities, volunteering (CSA 1.10 Political and other community activities)

This area is increasing in importance, including in the context of good governance, social capital, etc. There is not very much work going on in official statistics at the international level in this area. The CES Task Force on measuring volunteering has completed its work. ILO has prepared a draft Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work which was adopted by the ICLS last December. The Manual is currently being finalized. The ILO is also collecting data related to trade unions. The World Bank is undertaking work on measuring governance. A lot of work on measuring (good) governance is undertaken outside official statistics: in the research and academic area, and by agencies like the Economist Intelligence Unit, Gallup World Poll, etc. How much is official statistics involved in this area? How much should we or can we be involved? The area is quite wide and it could merit a review by the Bureau to get an overview of what is being done, what the links are with official statistics, and whether there are gaps where international activities would be useful. A closely related topic “The role of the 3rd sector (voluntary sector or non-profit sector)” was proposed by Walter Radermacher in February 2008 for an in-depth review.

4) Entrepreneurship statistics (CSA 3.3.7 Entrepreneurship)

This relatively new topic has been proposed for inclusion in the classification of statistical activities, following its addition to the version of the classification used in the SDMX Content-oriented Guidelines. It crosses the traditional boundaries of economic and social statistics, combining data on business demography and performance with characteristics of individuals, households and societies. In the current economic climate, the role of entrepreneurs in stimulating economic growth is being given increasing attention, and the development of statistical methodology to measure this phenomenon is a priority for several statistical organizations. Therefore, it seems to be an appropriate point for the Bureau to review what has been achieved so far, and to provide input on the future direction of this work.

5) Measuring the information society and statistics on science, technology and innovation (CSA 3.3.3 Information society and 2.9 Science, technology and innovation)

These closely related topics can be grouped together, and have not yet been reviewed by the Bureau. Possible issues for discussion include data quality (particularly relevance and comparability), the impact of existing international initiatives in this area, and possibilities for improved standardization of outputs.

6) Disability statistics (part of CSA 1.4. Health)

There have been several years of productive work on disability statistics at the international level through the UN Statistical Commission's Washington Group and the UNECE/WHO/Eurostat Budapest Initiative. The product of this work has been the development and testing of survey questions to measure disability. Despite this cooperation, there is some divergence between the approach taken by Eurostat and UNECE countries outside of the EU. The commitment of WHO in the joint UNECE/WHO/Eurostat Steering Group and Task Force on Health Statistics has also been questioned. An in-depth review into disability statistics could clarify the situation and ensure collaboration efforts are strengthened in the future. This is particularly timely as Eurostat works towards a revised version of the European Health Interview Survey (EHIS), which will be considered for legislation in 2011 for the next round of surveys in 2013/14.

7) Population Censuses (part of CSA 4.3.1 Population and housing censuses; registers of population, dwellings and buildings)

The 2010 population census round is in full swing in the UNECE region with nearly all countries conducting censuses at this time. There are significant moves away from the "Traditional" census collection methodology with countries adopting a number of different models for data collection. While there is significant international cooperation with respect to population censuses, and countries follow the guidelines as far as they are able, an independent high level review of the various changes and the implications for census results appears worthwhile. Also there are significant country differences regarding data dissemination. In the case of EU countries the main dissemination tool will be a new "Census Hub" currently being developed. UNSD traditionally collects census data from all countries of the world with a dedicated questionnaire. In general, it would be worthwhile reviewing what is happening with census output.

8) Emigration (*part of 1.1 Population and migration*)

Migration statistics were reviewed by the CES in 2005. However, the review focused on statistics on immigration. There is significant interest in emigration statistics where country data is often much weaker than for immigrants. This subject has been reviewed by a task force that produced the Guidelines endorsed this year by the CES. However many problems still remain and no follow-up activities are currently planned. A review could perhaps highlight what further work could be undertaken.

9) Education statistics (*CSA 1.3 Education*)

The topic is one of those few from social statistics that has never been reviewed in-depth by the Bureau. Comparability of data is a big problem in this area due to different education systems, different ages of compulsory education etc. Additional issues arise because of the changing scope of education statistics to cover alternative learning mechanisms (early childhood education, lifelong learning, home schooling, etc.), individual learning outcomes, quality of education, etc. The Bureau could consider whether the international activities in the UNECE region cover the emerging issues and whether any specific additional actions could be recommended.

10) Banking, insurance and financial statistics (*CSA 2.4.6 Banking, insurance and financial statistics*)

This topic was proposed by the Bureau as a possible candidate for an in-depth review in February 2008 but was not selected for the previous round of reviews because it was considered too early to review this topic.

ANNEX 2

CLASSIFICATION OF STATISTICAL ACTIVITIES

Domain 1: Demographic and social statistics

- 1.1 Population and migration
- 1.2 Labour
- 1.3 Education
- 1.4 Health
- 1.5 Income and consumption
- 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
- 1.11 Time-use

Domain 2: Economic statistics

- 2.1 Macroeconomic statistics
- 2.2 Economic accounts
- 2.3 Business statistics
- 2.4 Sectoral statistics
 - 2.4.1 Agriculture, forestry, fisheries
 - 2.4.2 Energy
 - 2.4.3 Mining, manufacturing, construction
 - 2.4.4 Transport
 - 2.4.5 Tourism
 - 2.4.6 Banking, insurance, financial statistics
- 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, technology (and innovation)

Domain 3: Environment and multi-domain statistics

- 3.1 Environment
- 3.2 Regional and small area statistics
- 3.3 Multi-domain statistics and indicators
 - 3.3.1 Living conditions, poverty and cross-cutting social issues
 - 3.3.2 Gender and special population groups
 - 3.3.3 Information society
 - 3.3.4 Globalisation
 - 3.3.5 Indicators related to the Millennium Development Goals
 - 3.3.6 Sustainable development
 - (3.3.7 Entrepreneurship)
- 3.4 Yearbooks and similar compendia

Domain 4: Methodology of data collection, processing, dissemination and analysis

- 4.1 Metadata
- 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 sources
- 4.4 Data editing and data linkage
- 4.5 Dissemination, data warehousing
- 4.6 Statistical confidentiality and disclosure protection
- 4.7 Data analysis

Domain 5: Strategic and managerial issues of official statistics

- 5.1 Institutional frameworks and principles; role and organisation of official statistics
- 5.2 Statistical programmes; coordination within statistical systems
- 5.3 Quality frameworks and measurement of performance of statistical systems and offices
- 5.4 Management and development of human resources
- 5.5 Management and development of technological resources (including standards for electronic data exchange and data sharing)
- 5.6 Coordination of international statistical work
- 5.7 Technical cooperation and capacity building

ANNEX 3

TOPICS REVIEWED IN-DEPTH SINCE FEBRUARY 2005

- Technical cooperation (February 2005)
- Migration statistics (February 2005)
- Income and consumption (February 2005)
- Labour statistics (February 2005)
- Transport statistics (February 2005)
- Human resources and training (February 2005)
- Quality frameworks and the link with institutional frameworks and principles (February 2006)
- Statistics on Globalisation (February 2006)
- Justice and crime statistics, including the safety concept (February 2006)
- Health statistics (February 2006)
- SDMX initiative (February 2007)
- Population statistics (February 2007)
- Business statistics (February 2007)
- Income, living conditions and poverty (October 2007)
- Gender statistics (October 2007)
- Culture statistics (February 2008)
- Environment statistics (February 2008)
- Agricultural statistics, including forestry and fisheries statistics (October 2008)
- Measurement of labour cost (October 2008)
- Housing statistics (February 2009)
- Statistical dissemination, communication and publications (October 2009)
- Government finance, fiscal and public sector statistics (October 2009)

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