

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

For decision

First Meeting of the 2010/2011 Bureau
Geneva, 3-4 November 2010

Item 4(g)(i) of the Provisional
Agenda

STATISTICAL LITERACY

Note prepared by the UNECE secretariat

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Bureau conducted an in-depth review of statistical dissemination, communication and publications in October 2009. The outcomes of this review were presented to the June 2010 plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians (ECE/CES/2010/1, ECE/CES/2010/1 Add.1 and ECE/CES/79).
2. The Conference approved the follow-up actions to the review including the development of guidelines on improving statistical literacy. At its 11 June 2010 meeting, the Bureau asked the Steering Group on Statistical Dissemination and Communication to prepare a proposal for developing these guidelines.

II. WORKING ARRANGEMENTS

3. The Steering Group has convened a network of experts on statistical literacy to prepare the guidelines, which will be published as Part 4 of the popular "Making Data Meaningful" series. The working title is "Making Data Meaningful Part 4 – A Guide to Improving Statistical Literacy". The network of experts will work through monthly audio-conferences, which started in September 2010. The guidelines will be drafted using a wiki specially created for this purpose by the UNECE secretariat. The members of the network are:

Linda Bencic - Australian Bureau of Statistics
Joanne Dickinson - U.S. Census Bureau
Reija Helenius - Statistics Finland
Kerstin Haensel - Destatis, Germany
Jan Erik Kristiansen - Statistics Norway
Michael Levi - Bureau of Labor Statistics (USA)
Alberto Ortega - INEGI, Mexico
Siu-Ming Tam - Australian Bureau of Statistics
Mary Townsend - Statistics Canada

4. The style of the guidelines will be similar to other "Making Data Meaningful" guides, written for a relatively general audience (statisticians and educators rather than statistical literacy experts). The text will be clear and simple, with plenty of real examples, good and bad, including case studies and checklists of good practices. Chapters should be up to 10 pages long, and should be capable of being read in isolation from the rest of the guide.

5. One or more authors will create a first draft of each chapter, for review by the rest of the network. Draft chapters and any issues will be discussed in the regular audio-conferences. When the network is satisfied with all chapters, the draft publication will be circulated more widely (participants to Work Sessions on Statistical Communication) for peer review, and finally to the CES Bureau.

III STRUCTURE OF THE PUBLICATION

6. The network of experts proposes the following draft structure for the guidelines:

Introduction - Background information, target audience for the guidelines

Chapter 1 - What is statistical literacy and why is it important?

Chapter 2 - Overview of current initiatives - e.g. International Statistical Literacy Project

Chapter 3 - Defining strategies for different user groups

Chapter 4 - Educating the opinion leaders (strategic information users, politicians and journalists)

Chapter 5 - Improving the statistical literacy of decision makers (government agencies)

Chapter 6 - Statistical literacy for the education community, including how to influence curriculum development

Chapter 7 - Statistical literacy for respondents, businesses and the general public

Chapter 8 - Improving statistical literacy within statistical organisations - training the workforce

Chapter 9 – Making our numbers better understood: Improving dissemination activities of statistical organizations, including good practices for metadata and geo-referencing

Chapter 10 - Evaluating the impact of statistical literacy activities

Chapter 11 - Case Studies (practices in different countries, including the organisation of training seminars and workshops)

References and additional resources

IV. PROPOSAL

7. **The Bureau is invited to approve the approach outlined in this paper.**
