

**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE STEERING GROUP  
ON MIGRATION STATISTICS AND ITS TASK FORCES**

**Note prepared by the UNECE secretariat**

**I. BACKGROUND**

1. The Steering Group on Migration Statistics was created by the CES Bureau in 2005 (CES/BUR.2005/13). The Steering Group's objectives are to coordinate the work of the CES Task Forces on migration issues, provide advice as necessary, and plan UNECE meetings and workshops in the field of migration statistics, in collaboration with Eurostat and other relevant international organizations.
2. The Steering Group currently includes representatives from Australia, Canada, Italy, Netherlands, Spain, United Kingdom, United States (chair), Eurostat and UNECE.

**II. PROGRESS ACHIEVED**

3. In October 2008 the Steering Group submitted to the CES Bureau a progress report on its activities and the work of the Task Forces working on migration issues. On that occasion, the CES Bureau approved the creation of the Task Force on the Analysis of International Migration Estimates Using Different Length of Stay Definitions.
4. The progress of the work carried out since October 2008 by the Steering Group and the task forces working on migration issues is presented by topic in this section. In addition to the activities listed below, the Steering Group developed the agenda of the joint UNECE-Eurostat Work Session on migration statistics which took place in April 2010 in Geneva<sup>1</sup>.
5. *Measurement of emigration:* The Task Force on the Measurement of Emigration Using Data Collected by the Receiving Country (set up in 2005) completed its work in early 2009. The final output of the task force was endorsed by the CES in June 2009 and is available on the UNECE website with the title "Guidelines for Exchanging Data to Improve Emigration Statistics"<sup>2</sup>. On the occasion of the April 2010 Work Session, the participants asked the secretariat to develop a proposal – based on the content of the Guidelines – to facilitate data sharing among countries.
6. *Impact of different duration thresholds on migration estimates:* The Task Force on the Analysis of International Migration Estimates Using Different Length of Stay Definitions (set

<sup>1</sup> <http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2010.04.migration.htm>

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.unece.org/stats/publications/Guidelines\\_improve\\_emigration\\_statistics.pdf](http://www.unece.org/stats/publications/Guidelines_improve_emigration_statistics.pdf)

up in 2008) carried out the first part of its assignment, and presented a progress report at the April 2010 Work Session on migration statistics<sup>3</sup>. Further work to be carried out by the Task Force includes: further analysis of the information collected by the study (including information on age and sex); investigation of the implications of using alternative migration definitions for emigration; further investigation of the implications of using different sources and data collection methods on the estimates produced; and analysis of year-on-year fluctuations using different definitions. The Task Force is planning to complete its work by mid-2011.

7. *Use of household surveys and other sources to improve migration data:* The Task Force on Improving Migration and Migrant Data Using Household Surveys and Other Sources (also known as the Suitland Working Group) was set up by the CES Bureau in October 2009. This group held its first meeting in 2009 at the U.S. Census Bureau headquarters in Suitland. On that occasion, the group proposed to carry out seven projects on the following topics:

- (a) Literature review of methodologies used to estimate emigration;
- (b) Website repository of household survey questionnaires for collecting data on migration and migrant populations;
- (c) Linking registers and other sources of administrative data with surveys to provide socio-economic information on migrants;
- (d) Module on migration and remittances to be included in nationally representative household surveys;
- (e) Categories, definitions, and the importance of hard-to-count migrant populations;
- (f) Data quality issues for migrant estimates in surveys;
- (g) Sampling frame and sample design issues for measuring migrant populations.

These projects are currently under development. The Task Force is expected to review the progress of these projects in the course of 2011 and report to the Steering Group on Migration Statistics and the CES Bureau.

8. *Inventory of definitions adopted by countries on stocks and flows of migrants:* In April 2008, a comprehensive questionnaire was sent out to collect information on definitions and sources used in countries to collect information on stocks and flows of migrants. The main results of the questionnaire were presented at the April 2010 Work Session<sup>4</sup> on migration statistics.

9. *Measurement of the socio-economic conditions of migrants:* On the occasion of the April 2010 Work Session, the participants proposed to create a new Task Force on the Measurement of the Socio-economic Conditions of Migrants to undertake methodological work in this field. The objective is to study how to better measure the different dimensions of the socio-economic conditions of migrants, and to improve the availability, quality and comparability of data in this field, taking into account all available sources.

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<sup>3</sup> <http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/ece/ces/ge.10/2010/wp.8.e.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> <http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/ece/ces/ge.10/2010/wp.3.e.pdf>

10. As requested by the meeting, the Steering Group on Migration Statistics prepared the draft Terms of Reference for the new task force that are submitted to the CES Bureau for review and approval (doc. ECE/CES/BUR/2010/NOV/7/Add.2). In drafting the Terms of Reference, the Steering Group took into account the objectives and characteristics of existing initiatives to avoid duplication and create synergies whenever possible.

### III. CHALLENGES FOR THE COMING PERIOD

11. In the coming years, the Steering Group and its Task Forces will, subject to the approval of the Bureau, carry out the following activities on the selected topics:

a) *Measurement of emigration*: Based on the content of the “Guidelines for Exchanging Data to Improve Emigration Statistics”, the Steering Group is expected to work with the secretariat to develop a practical proposal to facilitate data sharing among countries, with the main objective of improving emigration data. This proposal should take into account existing initiatives for data collection and sharing, in order to avoid duplication;

b) *Impact of different duration thresholds on migration estimates*: The Task Force on the Analysis of International Migration Estimates Using Different Length of Stay Definitions is expected to complete its work by the end of 2010 and submit the final report to the Steering Group on Migration Statistics;

c) *Use of household surveys and other sources to improve migration data*: The Task Force on Improving Migration and Migrant Data Using Household Surveys and Other Sources (also known as the Suitland Working Group) is expected to review in the course of 2011 the progress of the projects currently being carried out, and report to the Steering Group on Migration Statistics by the end of 2011;

d) *Measurement of the socio-economic conditions of migrants*: The draft Terms of Reference for the new task force working in this field are presented in document ECE/CES/BUR/2010/NOV17/Add.2. If the creation of the task force is approved by the CES Bureau, the Steering Group is expected to provide advice and oversee the work of the task force;

12. Taking into consideration the important developments in the activities of the Steering Group and its Task Forces that have taken place since 2005, and the new challenges for the coming period, a revised version of the Terms of Reference for the Steering Group on Migration Statistics has been prepared for review and approval by the CES Bureau (doc. ECE/CES/BUR/2010/NOV/7/Add.1). The new draft Terms of Reference are based on the template that was approved by the CES Bureau in June 2010.

### IV. PROPOSAL

19. The Bureau is invited to:

(a) **Approve the revised Terms of Reference for the Steering Group on Migration Statistics “(ECE/CES/BUR/2010/NOV/7/Add.1);**

**(b) Approve the Terms of Reference for the new Task Force on the Measurement of the Socio-Economic Conditions of Migrants (ECE/CES/BUR/2010/NOV/7/Add. 2).**

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