

Meeting of the Bureau  
Geneva (Switzerland), 21-22 October 2015

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## **I. INTRODUCTION**

1. The meeting of the 2015/2016 Bureau was held in Geneva on 21-22 October 2015. The following members of the Bureau attended: Mr. W. Smith (Chairman), Mr. S. Mnatsakanyan (Armenia), Mr. K. Pesendorfer (Austria), Mr. T. Koskimäki (representing Marjo Bruun, Finland), Mr. A.M. Ortega (representing Eduardo Sojo Garza-Aldape, Mexico), Mr. B. Aydemir (Turkey), and Mr. J. Pullinger (the United Kingdom). Ms. L. Macpherson (New Zealand) participated in selected agenda items via a phone conference. The following permanent observers also attended: Mr. J. Rosales (representing Louis Marc Ducharme, IMF), Mr. M. Mira D'Ercole (representing Martine Durand, OECD), Ms. M. Kotzeva (representing Mr. W. Radermacher, Eurostat), Mr. A. Kosarev (representing Vladimir Sokolin, CIS-STAT) and Ms. L. Bratanova (UNECE).

2. The following persons assisted the members of the Bureau: Ms. A. Safyan (Armenia), Ms. S. Michaud (Canada), Ms. S. Onur (Turkey) and Ms. M. J. Santos (Eurostat). Ms. T. Luige of UNECE served as Secretary of the meeting.

3. The following staff of the UNECE Statistical Division also attended: Mr. C. Boldsen, Ms. A. Peltola, Mr. T. Gjaltama, Mr. P. Valente and Mr. A. Vikat.

4. New Zealand and the United Nations Statistics Division sent written comments on selected agenda items. These were presented as Room paper no. 3 and taken into account in the discussion.

## **II. IN-DEPTH REVIEWS OF SELECTED STATISTICAL AREAS**

### **A. Strategic partnerships with stakeholders in the information industry** *(ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/2 by Canada, 2/Add.1 by UNECE)*

5. The Bureau conducted an in-depth review of strategic partnerships with stakeholders in the information industry based on a paper by Canada, and a note by UNECE. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

- (a) The paper is of excellent quality providing a comprehensive overview of partnerships at various levels and a good basis for the discussion;
- (b) The landscape of information producers is changing rapidly and official statistics needs to find its appropriate place. This should be based on a wider view on the purpose of official statistics, how a statistical office relates to other information producers, and who are its potential partners and competitors. The high interest in statistics from many stakeholders should be seen as an opportunity rather than a threat;
- (c) Official statistics will need to develop a new business model moving away from seeing data collection as its main task. Other data providers are sometimes producing data with comparable quality to official statistics in a much shorter timeframe. In this situation, the national statistical offices' role in coordination, standard setting, quality control and accreditation is becoming much more important. Official statisticians should take initiative to shape the new business model, otherwise there is a risk of being overrun by the events;
- (d) The legal frameworks in countries may need to be changed to address the partnerships with private sector. For example, it can be difficult to get access to the data maintained by private companies without the legal basis;
- (e) Partnerships may be a way to address resource constraints and increase the influence of official statistics. It may also allow using the tools, dissemination channels and

networks of the partners. For a partnership to be successful, it should be beneficial to both sides;

(f) The importance of partnerships with education system to increase statistical literacy and bring up a new generation of users of statistics was highlighted;

(g) International cooperation can help in establishing and maintaining successful partnerships, for example, by developing common solutions and learning from experiences. Some good examples are the sandbox and work on big data under the High-level group for the modernization of official statistics (HLG-MOS), and an EU pilot project to get access to big data for all EU countries;

(h) Partnerships are also very important for international organizations. A partnership between UN agencies to align the data available in international databases would be very useful.

6. The Bureau briefly discussed the Global Partnership for Sustainable Development Data. This initiative has been met with enthusiasm from the information industry and civil society organizations. For official statistics community, it presents an opportunity to reach out to data users. There should be a balance between maintaining the high quality criteria and adherence to Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, while recognising and using the contributions that the other players can bring into producing statistics and making it more widely used.

#### Conclusion:

7. The seminar on strategic partnerships during the 2016 CES plenary session (organized by Statistics Canada) will be used to get broader input to the discussion (see also item VI.C.). The Bureau will decide on further work on this issue after the seminar.

#### **B. Diversification of population census methodology and sources**

*(ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/3 by Finland and Turkey, 3/Add.1 by UNECE)*

8. The Bureau conducted an in-depth review of diversification of population census methodology and sources based on a paper by Finland and Turkey, and a note by UNECE. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) Considering the increasing use of administrative data and registers in censuses, it is very important to prepare new guidelines on register-based censuses covering operational, practical, technical and legal aspects. This has been requested by many countries;

(b) The new guidelines should cover the use of multiple sources (including the so-called combined censuses) and include methods for measuring coverage and quality of the various sources. The objective should not be to compare the different census taking methods;

(c) In preparing the new guidelines, consideration should be given to existing material and cooperation should be established with ongoing activities, including those conducted under the Eurostat's ESS.VIP.ADMIN project (part of ESS Vision 2020) on the assessment of the quality of administrative sources;

(d) There was general support to the organization of regional training workshops in the areas identified in the in-depth review paper, including: internet response; use of geographic information systems (GIS), mobile devices and other technology; methods for ensuring data confidentiality when disseminating small area data; methods to give access to microdata to researchers; and assessing quality of administrative sources.

Conclusion:

9. The Bureau supported the preparation of new guidelines on the use of registers for population and housing censuses. A Task Force should be set up for this purpose, taking into account the comments above.

10. The Secretariat will prepare for the February 2016 Bureau meeting new TOR for the Steering Group on Population and Housing Censuses and the new Task Force on Register-Based Censuses.

**C. Selection of topics for in-depth reviews in February and October 2016**

*(ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/4 by UNECE)*

11. The Bureau discussed the topics for next in-depth reviews and considered which countries/organizations could prepare the papers to provide basis for the discussion.

Conclusion:

12. The following topics were selected for the in-depth reviews to be carried out in February and October 2016 (in brackets are countries/organizations who volunteered or who were suggested by the Bureau as contributors to the in-depth review papers):

- (a) Measuring governance (Turkey and OECD, in addition, a country from the Praia city group should be involved);
- (b) Exchange of economic data and data sharing (Canada, Finland, Norway, IMF and OECD);
- (c) Data integration (New Zealand, Canada (to contribute), HLG-MOS and UNECE);
- (d) Main data gaps in UNECE countries considering the upcoming SDG monitoring (Mexico will contribute).

13. The Secretariat will contact possible lead authors for the in-depth reviews.

**III. MEETING WITH THE EXECUTIVE SECRETARY OF UNECE**

14. The Bureau met with the UNECE Executive Secretary, Mr. Christian Bach. The Executive Secretary emphasised the crucial importance of statistics in monitoring progress towards SDGs. He noted that data can drive development and can empower people to push for action with politicians. Mr. Bach underlined the central role of the Conference of European Statisticians in establishing a road map for the SDG monitoring in the UNECE region, together with Eurostat and OECD.

15. Mr. Bach thanked Chief Statisticians for their readiness to take a key coordinating role in measuring SDGs, a commitment made in the Declaration adopted by the CES plenary session in June 2015. He noted that statisticians are looking for new ways to produce statistics to monitor the achievement of the 2030 Agenda with high quality information. The monitoring would also greatly benefit from a better integration of official statistics and geospatial information, an issue ECOSOC will discuss in April 2016.

16. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

- (a) Monitoring SDGs presents a challenging agenda that requires revolutionizing the way statistics are produced. Transparency, openness and having in place safeguards to ensure good quality of the data are key to turn this challenge into a success;
- (b) Private businesses and NGOs could contribute with their data and there is a willingness to form new partnerships in support of the Goals. Official statisticians need to use the opportunity to build effective partnerships with data producers outside official statistics;
- (c) CES provides a good platform to discuss and agree on how to provide data for the regional SDG monitoring in the UNECE region;
- (d) The responsibility of official statistics goes beyond measuring SDGs. Official statisticians' task is to ensure the availability of data for policy making in areas that are important for countries but which may not necessarily be covered in SDGs and targets;
- (e) The reporting on SDGs will be costly and challenging in all countries, especially in developing countries. For policy making to be well informed, statistical work needs sufficient resources both at national and international levels.

#### **IV. UNECE STATISTICAL PROGRAMME FOR 2016**

*(ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/5 by UNECE)*

17. The Bureau discussed the draft UNECE Statistical Programme for 2016 and the various Steering Groups and Task Forces that relate to the activities. The terms of reference of currently active Teams of Specialists are available at [www.unece.org/stats/ToS.html](http://www.unece.org/stats/ToS.html).

##### Conclusion:

18. The Bureau approved the Statistical Programme for 2016 subject to the suggestions made in the discussion on individual items below.

#### **A. Integration of multiple data sources on migration**

*(ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/6 by the Steering Group on Migration Statistics)*

19. The Bureau considered the draft terms of reference for a new Task Force on data integration for measuring migration. The following issues were raised:

- (a) The Task Force could consider further work on definitions and how to make a distinction between short-term, long-term, permanent and informal migration;
- (b) The Task Force should explore the possibilities for improving the quality of the different administrative sources used for measuring migration;
- (c) New Zealand, Turkey, United Kingdom, Eurostat and OECD expressed interest in participating in the Task Force.

##### Conclusion:

20. The Bureau approved the terms of reference for the Task Force on Data Integration for Measuring Migration, subject to the comments in paragraph 19.

**B. Labour mobility and globalization**

*(ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/7 by the UNECE secretariat)*

21. The Bureau discussed the terms of reference for the Task Force on Measuring Labour Mobility, proposed to be set up as a follow-up to an in-depth review on this topic.

Conclusion:

22. The Bureau approved the terms of reference for the Task Force on Measuring Labour Mobility.

**C. Quality of employment**

*(ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/8 by UNECE)*

23. The Bureau discussed possible further work related to measuring quality of employment, after the CES plenary session endorsed the *Handbook on Measuring Quality of Employment* in June 2015. The Bureau also reviewed the proposed terms of reference for a Steering Group to guide the work in this area. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

- (a) Priority should be given to following up on the implementation of the statistical framework presented in the Handbook, and subsequently to further work on topics of the research agenda;
- (b) The need for close coordination with other international initiatives, including current work on quality of work in OECD, was underlined.

Conclusion:

24. The Bureau approved the terms of reference for the Steering Group on Measuring Quality of Employment.

**D. Environmental indicators**

*(ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/9 by UNECE)*

25. The Bureau discussed the terms of reference for the Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators. The Bureau supported the better alignment of the Task Force with the work on environmental accounting.

Conclusion:

26. The Bureau approved the terms of reference for the Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators.

**E. Implementation of the System of Environmental-economic Accounting (SEEA) in the UNECE region**

27. The Bureau discussed the outcome of the seminar on the implementation of SEEA, organized jointly with OECD on 14-15 October 2015 in Geneva, and considered the proposals for future work. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

- (a) The seminar was very useful. The high number of participants showed the need to share experience in SEEA implementation and provide information about international activities in this area;
- (b) The cooperation with OECD in the seminar organization worked very well;
- (c) An inventory of international initiatives on SEEA implementation would be useful;
- (d) The UNSD training programme was considered very relevant. It would be useful to extend the number of training sessions for trainers to further increase the spread of information on SEEA.

Conclusion:

28. The Bureau supported the continuation of the joint UNECE/OECD seminars on the implementation of SEEA.

**F. Climate change**

*(ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/10 by the Steering Group on Climate Change Related Statistics)*

29. The Bureau discussed the outcome of the Expert Forum for producers and users of climate change-related statistics, held on 2-3 September 2015 in Geneva. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

- (a) The Expert Forum is an excellent opportunity to bring together experts at national and international levels to discuss the very important and timely subject of climate change. It enables statistical offices and environmental agencies to work towards a coherent approach;
- (b) A Task Force is developing a set of key climate change related indicators that would be comparable internationally. This work should include a review of existing climate change-related indicators;
- (c) The Task Force on measuring extreme events and disasters is carrying out pioneering work to help statistical offices to improve their contribution to climate policies and disaster risk reduction with the needed statistical data;
- (d) Climate change statistics will be on the agenda of the Statistical Commission in New York in 2016 after the programme review of this topic in 2009. UNSD and UNECE will submit a joint paper to inform the international statistical community of the current work and future plans in this field.

Conclusion:

30. The Bureau supported organizing Expert Forums for producers and users of climate change-related statistics in the future. The Bureau supported the suggested further work of the Steering Group on climate change-related statistics and the work of the two Task Forces, including bringing the *CES Recommendations on Climate Change-Related Statistics* to the attention of the United Nations Statistical Commission and developing a road map with a tool allowing countries to prioritize their actions to improve climate change-related statistics.

**G. Measuring sustainable development**

*(ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/11 by UNECE, 11Add.1 by the Task Force, Room paper 1 by Denmark, Room paper 2 – summary of country comments on the road map)*

31. The Bureau considered follow-up actions to the 2015 CES seminar on response of official statistics to SDGs. The Bureau reviewed the outline of a road map for the development of official statistics for monitoring SDGs in the UNECE region (ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/11) and the terms of reference for the Task Force on adjusting the *CES Recommendations for measuring sustainable development* to SDGs (ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/11 Add.1). The following issues were raised in the discussion:

- (a) The need for an effective communication strategy on SDG indicators was highlighted;
- (b) The culture of openness and transparency in official statistics is important to build productive partnerships with other stakeholders, such as civil society and research, in follow-up and review of SDGs;
- (c) The road map should propose practical ways for the coordination between international organizations in SDG monitoring. Eurostat, OECD and UNECE are fully committed to make it work efficiently in the UNECE region;
- (d) The *CES Recommendations for measuring sustainable development* should be used as a basis for the regional reporting. For this purpose, it will be adjusted to SDGs;
- (e) One of the first steps should be an analysis of the global indicator list to see which indicators can be produced in a comparable way already now, for which indicators the methodology is in place although data are not yet available, and which are the new areas that have to be developed;
- (f) There are high expectations from the policy side to have data available quickly. Official statisticians should be proactive to show how it will deliver the indicators and move fast once the indicators are decided;
- (g) Countries may have different priorities in using the global indicators and in filling the gaps. The road map may present a coordinated strategy on developing new areas of statistics, but leave it up to countries to decide on their priorities in this area;
- (h) Although the road map will focus on UNECE region, it will be important to reach out to other regions to exchange experience;
- (i) Statistics Denmark is proposing a project on using administrative data for monitoring SDGs (Room paper 1). The issue of using administrative registers should be reflected in the road map.

Conclusion:

32. The Bureau approved the terms of reference for the Task Force on adjusting the *CES Recommendations for measuring sustainable development* to SDGs. The Task Force will present a draft proposal on adjusting the CES framework to SDGs to the February 2016 meeting of the Bureau.

33. The Bureau decided to set up a Steering Group to provide guidance on the work on the road map for the development of official statistics for monitoring SDGs in the UNECE region. The Terms of Reference for the Steering group will be presented to the February 2016 meeting of the Bureau.



## **H. Innovative working methods used by the High-level group for the modernization of official statistics**

*(ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/12 by HLG-MOS)*

34. The Bureau discussed the innovative working methods introduced in the activities overseen by UNECE HLG-MOS, and the extent to which these could be applied in other work areas of CES. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

- (a) Additional innovative methods that have been used are ‘sticker’ sessions to determine priority areas of work, and meetings held at an airport to reduce travel time and costs;
- (b) HLG-MOS has been a good promoter of the new working methods. Common innovative techniques could be developed jointly with the Vision Implementation Network of the European Statistical System (ESSnet). Some examples mentioned in this respect were the Eurostat Portal for documents, a portfolio management approach, and a newsletter;
- (c) Wikis, Webex and audio conferences are used by all Task Forces and Steering Groups operating under CES. Sprints have not been used so widely but could be experimented;
- (d) Information on the wiki is often difficult to find as there are no tables of contents or standard structures.

### Conclusion:

35. The Bureau supports the wider implementation of innovative methods in the work done under CES. Information about these methods should be distributed to a broader audience, and practical guidance on the new working methods (for example how to run sprints) should be made available through UNECE wikis.

## **I. Other issues related to the Statistical Programme**

36. The Bureau was informed of UNECE capacity building activities in 2015 for the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA). Eleven capacity building workshops in various statistical areas and ten advisory missions were carried out at the request of countries. The second round of global assessments of national statistical systems in EECCA countries is under preparation jointly with Eurostat and EFTA.

37. Furthermore, the Bureau was informed about the progress of work of the Task Force on the Value of Official Statistics, chaired by the United Kingdom. The Task Force has reviewed what users and stakeholders value in official statistics, and ways to add value through partnerships based on the in-depth review by Canada. The Task Force has also collected examples of how other industries measure and communicate their value, and case-studies that showcase the value of official statistics for decision makers. The Task Force is analyzing the responses to a survey, carried out jointly with the Modernisation Committee on Products and Sources. This will feed into identifying indicators for measuring the value of official statistics, a work stream led by OECD, and drafting recommendations for promoting and increasing the value, led by Mexico.

Conclusion:

38. The Bureau stressed the importance of the work on the value of official statistics to support statistical offices that are faced with increasing challenges and reducing budgets. The Bureau is looking forward to the outcome of the work of the Task Force.

**J. UNECE Programme of Work documents**

*(ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/5 and ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/13 by UNECE)*

39. The Bureau reviewed the planning documents of the Statistics subprogramme prepared in the context of the United Nations secretariat's biennial planning and reporting cycle: the Statistical Programme for 2016 and the Strategic Framework for 2018-2019.

40. The Bureau noted that while several new Task Forces were set up, a large number of groups also conclude their work and cease to exist. After the June 2015 CES plenary session, the following groups finalized their work: Task Forces on population and housing censuses; global production; business registers; socio-economic conditions of migrants and the Steering Group on human resources management and training. In addition, the Task Forces on circular migration, ageing-related statistics and measuring human capital are expected to submit a final report to the CES plenary session in April 2016.

Conclusion:

41. The Bureau approved the Statistical Programme for 2016 (ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/5).

42. The Bureau adopted the Strategic Framework for 2018-2019 for the statistics subprogramme (ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/13) subject to small changes in the wording of the indicators of achievement (a(i)) and (c(i)).

**V. GENERIC STATISTICAL LAW FOR EECCA COUNTRIES**

*(ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/14 by UNECE, Eurostat and EFTA)*

43. The Bureau discussed the draft Generic Statistical Law, developed under the United Nations Development Account (UNDA) 9<sup>th</sup> tranche project for the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia, and considered the links to other CES work. The following issues were discussed:

(a) The Generic Statistical Law (the Law) is a valuable and innovative initiative. The current draft takes into account the circumstances in the EECCA region, with special focus on strengthening the professional independence and autonomy of the national statistical offices;

(b) A common model law for the whole UNECE region would be useful, for example when updating the statistical laws in countries. For this purpose, the current text should be adjusted so that it could be used in countries with different legal systems and different organization of the statistical systems. Some issues that can be developed further are the role of the Chief Statistician, independence and autonomy of the national statistical office, cooperation with other administrative bodies, access to microdata, etc; The principle of relevance and the user dimension should be made more prominent in the Law;

(c) The Law builds on the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, and could follow a similar path of development. The Fundamental Principles were first

prepared for the East European countries, but where soon endorsed for the whole UNECE region and thereafter globally;

(d) As the Fundamental Principles are not legally binding without national legislation, the Law can provide more detail on implementing the Principles;

(e) There are strong links between the work on the Generic Statistical Law and on the value of official statistics;

(f) The Generic Statistical Law should be seen as a recommendation for improving statistical legislation rather than a legal instrument. The feasibility of the implementation of the Law should be carefully considered taking into account the circumstances in countries. For the countries where the statistical office is not very strong, it could be seen as a norm to strive for.

#### Conclusion:

44. The 2016 CES plenary session will be informed about the Generic Statistical Law developed under the UNDA 9<sup>th</sup> tranche project for the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. The Secretariat will make a proposal on how to develop this Law further into a recommendation for countries of the UNECE region.

## **VI. PREPARATION FOR THE CES 2016 PLENARY SESSION**

### **A. Evaluation of the 63<sup>rd</sup> plenary session** (*ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/15 by UNECE*)

45. The Bureau was informed of the results of the evaluation questionnaires of the 2015 CES plenary session.

### **B. Provisional agenda of the 2016 CES plenary session** (*ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/16 by UNECE*)

46. The Bureau discussed the draft provisional agenda and tentative timetable for the 64<sup>th</sup> CES plenary session.

47. Concerning agenda item 9(a), it was not considered necessary to have a discussion on an in-depth review topic, as the two seminars (on strategic partnerships and on geospatial information services) are already based on in-depth reviews. The time initially planned for this item can be used to increase time for other agenda items, for example the Generic Statistical Law.

#### Conclusion:

48. The 64<sup>th</sup> CES plenary session will take place on 27-29 April 2016 in Paris, back-to-back with the OECD Committee on Statistics and Statistical Policy. The Bureau approved the draft provisional agenda subject to the comments above.

49. The Secretariat will prepare an updated timetable of the CES 2016 plenary session for the February 2016 meeting of the Bureau.

**C. Organization of the 2016 CES seminar on strategic partnerships**  
(*ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/17 by Canada*)

50. The Bureau discussed the organization of the 2016 CES seminar on strategic partnerships based on an outline prepared by the seminar organizer, Canada. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

- (a) A major input to the seminar will be a paper drafted by the United Kingdom jointly with Austria, Mexico, Turkey and Eurostat, focusing on partnerships in data production, especially with private sector. The paper should help to structure the discussion and make proposals for future work on this issue;
- (b) The seminar should showcase successful partnerships and present case studies of leading edge partnerships from different areas. HLG-MOS could help to identify the partnership examples, covering different kinds of partnerships, such as cooperation in data dissemination, access to mobile phone data, collaboration with academia, data scientists, mapping agencies, Google, etc. Negative examples are also useful;
- (c) The Session Organizer should summarize the case studies in the form of issues raised and lessons learned to provide basis of interactive discussion;
- (d) The seminar should also deal with partnerships at international level. Eurostat is ready to prepare a paper on case studies of such partnerships. OECD and Paris21 are organizing a workshop on a statistics business model for private partnerships and are ready to report on the outcome to CES;
- (e) The seminar should invite people from outside the statistical community and give space to users that have a business interest in official statistics (for example, big private companies);
- (f) Some key partners could be represented through a pre-recorded video;
- (g) The panel sessions should be interactive, this is not always easy to ensure;
- (h) The panel could include representatives of: policy makers – key users of statistics, academia, a big user from the private sector, IT business, media, NGOs, a Head of NSO, etc.
- (i) It was proposed to invite Oleksandr Osaulenko (a former CES Bureau member, currently a rector of a university in Ukraine) as a representative of academia on the panel;
- (j) The seminar should allow for sufficient time for discussion from the floor;
- (k) As an outcome, the seminar should identify a way forward and next steps to help countries and international organizations to establish successful partnerships in official statistics.

Conclusion:

51. The seminar will take place on Wednesday, 27 April 2016, from 09:50 to 16:30. The seminar organizers will proceed with the preparations and Canada will present a revised proposal for the seminar in November, taking into account the recommendations by the Bureau.

**D. Organization of the 2016 CES half-day seminar on geospatial information services based on official statistics**  
(*ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/18 by Austria*)

52. The Bureau discussed the organization of the 2016 CES seminar on geospatial information services based on official statistics. The discussion was based on an outline prepared by the seminar organizer, Austria. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

- (a) Geography and statistics are one of the key partnerships. The seminar should allow to synthesize information about the different activities on geospatial data that are relevant for statistics, and identify the way forward, including how to develop the strategic partnerships between the geo-spatial and statistics communities;
- (b) The seminar preparation should be coordinated and aligned with the in-depth review on this topic in February (paper being prepared by UK and Eurostat);
- (c) The seminar should inform about the UN Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM) and discuss ways how to link with this work;
- (d) The seminar will include two sessions. The Chair will summarize the papers according to themes/issues raised, focusing on 2-3 main issues. The length of papers should be restricted;
- (e) OECD offered a paper on defining boundaries of functional urban areas.

Conclusion:

53. The seminar will take place on Thursday, 28 April 2016, from 14:30 to 17:30. The seminar organisers will proceed with the preparations, taking into account the recommendations by the Bureau.

**E. Organization of the 2016 CES discussion on how to implement the monitoring system for Sustainable Development Goals**  
(*ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/19 by UNECE*)

54. The Bureau discussed the organization of the 2016 CES discussion on how to implement the monitoring system for SDGs, based on a paper by UNECE. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

- (a) The idea of small group discussions was not supported, particularly as the meeting is run with simultaneous interpretation in English, French and Russian;
- (b) Three important documents will provide the basis for the discussion: (i) the report on SDG indicators to the UN Statistical Commission (including the list of global indicators expected to be adopted by UNSC), (ii) the UN Secretary General's report on the SDG follow-up and review process, and (iii) a report of the Task Force on adjusting the CES framework to the SDGs. The Conference will also discuss progress with developing a road map for the development of official statistics for monitoring SDGs in UNECE region. The documents will be shortly presented to the Conference, followed up by comments and discussion.

Conclusion:

55. The discussion will take place on Thursday, 28 April 2016, from 9:30 to 12:30. The Secretariat will proceed with the preparations taking into account the comments by the Bureau.

**F. Recommendations on ageing-related statistics to be submitted to the CES 2016 plenary session**  
(*ECE/CES/BUR/2015/OCT/20 by the Task Force*)

56. The Bureau considered the draft *Recommendations on ageing-related statistics*. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

- (a) The Recommendations are very useful and timely. The importance of the topic of ageing is increasing, including in the context of SDGs;
- (b) The Recommendations highlight the challenges in collecting data on older persons, which statistical organizations have to address in the near future;
- (c) The Recommendations would need to discuss the measurement of wealth and consider the recent OECD guidelines on the measurement of subjective well-being;
- (d) The Task Force that prepared the Recommendations is composed of official statisticians, policy makers and academia. This is a successful example of representatives of different stakeholders working efficiently together;
- (e) Eurostat and OECD provided specific comments on the text which will be taken into account in the updated version.

Conclusion:

57. The Task Force on Ageing-related Statistics will adjust the Recommendations based on the comments and issues raised by the Bureau.

58. The UNECE secretariat will circulate the *Recommendations on ageing-related statistics* to all CES members for electronic consultation in view of presenting it to the CES 2016 plenary session for endorsement.

## **VII. PRESENTATION OF UNCTAD ACTIVITIES RELATED TO STATISTICS**

59. The United Nations Conference on Trade and Development presented its statistical activities. UNCTAD undertakes a range of statistical work related to trade as the main driver of development. The topics covered are globalization, international trade and commodities, investment and enterprises, technology, innovation and trade logistics. UNCTAD maintains a statistical database providing data on international trade, FDI, external financial resources, commodities, maritime transport, and information and creative economies. The users are both internal (for research and preparing a number of reports and publications) and external. Work is undergoing to centralise all statistics maintained by UNCTAD in one database (UNCTADStat).

60. Cooperation with other institutions in compiling statistics is very important, especially for data consistency. The main partners are WTO, International Trade Centre, World Integrated Trade Solution, IMF and the UN Statistics Division. UNCTAD is experimenting with different social media and visualisation techniques to solicit interest in statistics. An important part of the work is capacity building and technical cooperation. Lately more emphasis is put on e-learning tools to increase access to the training resources. UNCTAD is taking an active role in the SDG measurement agenda, in particular on Goals 8, 9, 10 and 17.

61. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

- (a) For countries with weak statistical systems, data often needs to be estimated to fill in gaps in the database and ensure international comparability. Any adjustments should be done in a transparent way not to raise concerns about the quality of the data;
- (b) UNCTAD is asking participants of training workshops to take e-learning courses and pass online tests before coming to the workshop. This makes the training more efficient by ensuring that participants have the same level of knowledge about the subject-matter. This idea is worth following also in the capacity building organized by UNECE.

Conclusion:

62. The Bureau thanked UNCTAD for the informative presentation that provoked an interesting discussion.

**VIII. DATES AND VENUE OF THE NEXT CES BUREAU MEETINGS**

63. The Bureau confirmed the dates for its next meetings as follows:

- (a) The next Bureau meetings will take place on 9-10 February 2016 in Luxembourg and 11-12 October 2016 (venue to be decided);
- (b) The Bureau meeting in 2017 is tentatively scheduled to the week of 14-15 February (venue to be decided).

64. The 64<sup>th</sup> CES plenary session will take place on 27-29 April 2016 in Paris, back-to-back with the OECD Committee on Statistics and Statistical Policy, starting at 9:30 on 27 April and finishing at 12:30 on 29 April 2016.

65. The 65<sup>th</sup> CES plenary session will take place on 19-22 June 2017 in Geneva.

**IX. OTHER BUSINESS**

66. The Bureau decided which papers of the CES Bureau meeting will be made available on the web (<http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=40506#/>).

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