

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

**Workshop on Statistical Data Collection**  
(The Hague, Netherlands, 3 – 5 October 2016)

**INFORMATION NOTICE No.1**

**I. PURPOSE OF THE WORKSHOP**

1. UNECE seminars and workshops on Statistical Data Collection have been organized at the request of the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians and in response to demand from members of the data collection community. The 2016 data collection event will be a workshop, emphasizing to the greatest extent possible the need for participant involvement and interaction. In addition to the more traditional presentations, the agenda of the workshop will again include target-driven small group discussions, practical demonstrations and short presentations. Delegates will be asked to contribute to the formulation of concrete proposals for internationally-coordinated work in the field of data collection, contributing to the work programme of the Modernisation Committee on Products and Sources.

2. The 2015 workshop was held back-to-back with the workshop on the Communication and Dissemination of Statistics with a joint day with topics of common interest. The two workshops were evaluated very positively and there was a strong wish among participants to continue this setup. The organizing committees for data collection and for statistical communication have therefore elected to hold their 2016 meetings again back-to-back. New in 2016 is a special event on the joint day where experts in data collection and in dissemination and communication will compete in groups in order to develop tangible outputs by bringing together their knowledge from their respective area of expertise.

3. The target audience for the workshop includes senior and middle-level managers responsible for data collection activities and new data sources, across all statistical domains.

**II. AGENDA OF THE WORKSHOP**

4. The workshop will be hosted by Statistics Netherlands, and will take place at their offices at Henri Faasdreef 312, 2492 JP The Hague, Netherlands.

5. The last day of the workshop will be held jointly with the workshop on statistical data dissemination and communication, which will take place at the same venue from 5 to 7 October. For further details, please refer to the information note of that workshop. Delegates are welcome to attend either or both of these workshops. Delegates who wish to participate in both workshops should register for both individually.

6. The programme of the workshop will consist of the following substantive topics:

- (i) Alternative Data Sources
- (ii) Optimizing Data Collection Management
- (iii) New Technologies for Collecting Data
- (iv) Mixed-mode Collection
- (v) Communication with Respondents
- (vi) Interactive work sessions

7. Detailed explanatory notes on the nature and expected outcomes of these topics are provided in Section VI of this Information Notice.

### III. PARTICIPATION AND ACCREDITATION

8. Representatives of all Member States of the United Nations and of interested intergovernmental organizations are welcome to participate in the workshop. Participants representing non-governmental organizations in a consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council may also attend. **All participants must be accredited by the competent authorities of their country or international organization.**

9. All participants attending the seminar are requested to have a valid passport and, if required, a visa. Applications for visas should be made as soon as possible to the Embassy of the Kingdom of the Netherlands in the country in which the participant resides, with reference to the joint UNECE Workshop on Statistical Data Collection and Communication of Statistics. A letter to facilitate obtaining a visa can be requested from the UNECE secretariat.

10. Statistical offices and international organizations should inform the UNECE secretariat **by Friday 24 June 2016** if their organization intends to participate in the workshop.

11. **Participants should register online by Friday 22 July 2016** at: <http://ow.ly/10fFEX>

### IV. TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

12. Participants and/or their offices are requested to make their own travel arrangements and hotel reservations. The UNECE secretariat regrets not being able to offer any financial assistance regarding travel and accommodation arrangements.

### V. CALL FOR PAPERS, METHODS OF WORK AND OFFICIAL LANGUAGE

13. Papers and presentations about any of the topics on the agenda are hereby requested. **Please take note of the deadlines and requirements explained below. For further details on the coverage of the topics, refer to section VI below.** The official language of the workshop is English. Contributions can include papers, presentations, demonstrations, posters and videos. Other forms of contribution may be proposed. *Full guidelines for contribution will be given following the acceptance of abstracts.* Please note that due to the nature of the workshop, it may not be possible to allocate time to all proposed contributions.

14. The following **DEADLINES** and requirements apply:

- A short **abstract** of the proposed contribution should be submitted to the UNECE secretariat by email to the UNECE secretariat, [taeke.gjaltema@unece.org](mailto:taeke.gjaltema@unece.org) and [heini.salonon@unece.org](mailto:heini.salonon@unece.org) as soon as possible or **by Friday 8 July 2016 at the latest**. Information about the selection of contributions for the workshop, guidelines on formatting, and a reminder of deadlines will be sent to authors by email.
- Any written **papers** must be received **by Friday 2 September 2016 at the latest**.
- Any **presentation** slides, videos or other electronic materials should be sent to the UNECE secretariat **by Friday 16 September 2016 at the latest**.
- Any equipment required for practical demonstrations must be provided by the participants.

15. Abstracts and papers will be made available on the UNECE wiki space for Data Collection at the following location: <http://www1.unece.org/stat/platform/x/rwjqBg>. Presentations will be added to this site after the workshop. Presentations will not be made available to delegates before the meeting, unless requested by the presenters.

16. Participants are encouraged to download the papers from the website and, where feasible, to use electronic devices to read papers in order to minimise paper use. Documents posted on the website before the workshop will **not** be distributed in the conference room.

## VI. EXPLANATORY NOTES TO THE AGENDA

### (i) Alternative Data Sources

**Session Organizers:** Mr Barteld Braaksma, CBS Netherlands ([bbka@cbs.nl](mailto:bbka@cbs.nl)) and Mr Bilal Kurban, Turkish Statistical Institute ([bilal.kurban@tuik.gov.tr](mailto:bilal.kurban@tuik.gov.tr))

17. Technological developments are currently expanding the spectrum of possible tools for data collection in unprecedented ways. To integrate them into data collection processes, innovative and usually automated approaches have to be implemented. Examples include data collection from big data sources, use of mobile devices such as smartphones, tablets and wearables for either crowd sourcing or targeted interviewing, and more. The new technologies bring with them new challenges in such areas as efficient processing, integration into a multi-source environment, privacy and security issues, and cooperation with partners outside official statistics. Since the technologies and associated challenges have a global rather than national character, they present excellent opportunities for international collaboration. This session will focus on strategic issues rather than detailed technical aspects, although concrete examples are very much welcomed. Contributions to the session should address at least one of the following issues:

- The core value of the new tools and methods
- Main issues that are foreseen, and how to solve them
- Opportunities for international collaboration and how to reach them

### (ii) Optimizing Data Collection Management

**Session Organizers:** Mr Martin Karlberg, Eurostat ([martin.karlberg@ec.europa.eu](mailto:martin.karlberg@ec.europa.eu)) and Mr Barteld Braaksma, CBS Netherlands ([bbka@cbs.nl](mailto:bbka@cbs.nl))

18. There are methodological developments, such as survey integration, with a considerable potential to increase the efficiency and reduce costs as well as the burden of data collection. Equally promising opportunities in this regard exist in the form of new secondary data sources held by external stakeholders, be it other authorities or private entities. The successful deployment of solutions is to a high degree dependent on how they are managed at statistical offices. “Management” is here to be understood in a broad sense, to range from negotiations with external stakeholders to the internal management of the day-to-day business of data collection. For some management aspects, resources such as paradata, and tools such as experiments embedded in sample surveys may serve to objectively evaluate measures aimed at e.g. improving response rates or conversely (with “equivalence testing”) to demonstrate that new modes of data collection do not adversely affect key survey features. Contributions to the session should address either of the following topics:

- Use of experimental evaluation to assess measures to improve data collection. *This could mean testing measures aimed improvement (e.g. of response rates) or conversely (with “equivalence testing”) to demonstrate that new modes of data collection do not adversely affect key survey features.*
- Use of paradata to plan or assess measures to improve data collection
- Experiences on the management challenges involved in the integration of multiple surveys into a single streamlined system

- Obtaining (or improving) access to secondary (administrative, big...) data sources – either through negotiation or through third party intervention (from public or private sector actors). *One example of this would be MoUs with MNOs.*
- Improving the quality (standard transmission formats, aggregation, or even upstream data collection improvement...) of secondary (administrative, big...) data sources – either through partnering/negotiation or through third party intervention (from public or private sector actors). *One example of this would be influencing sectorial industry standards of data exchange in order to satisfy needs of the statistical system e.g. to encode details of the aggregations performed.*

Priority will be given to papers, which not only describe office-specific experiences, but also demonstrate how successful experiences could be replicated elsewhere.

### (iii) New Technologies for Collecting Data

**Session Organizers:** Mr Bilal Kurban, Turkish Statistical Institute ([bilal.kurban@tuik.gov.tr](mailto:bilal.kurban@tuik.gov.tr)) and Mr Taeke Gjaltema, UNECE ([taeke.gjaltema@unece.org](mailto:taeke.gjaltema@unece.org))

19. Statistical organizations aim to collect and process data more quickly, more accurately and more effectively than before. For this reason, they have tried to utilize paperless data collection tools extensively in recent years. Developing technology has certainly a major role in achieving this by contributing to the diversification of both data collection modes such as CAPI, CATI, Web (both online and offline), EDI, etc. and tools such as computers, tablets, smartphones, other mobile devices. Furthermore, new technologies together with new data sources require new skills. As data collection shifts to secondary sources due to the emergence of new data sources, the lack of skills in statistical organizations may become a serious problem. In order to prevent this and to be prepared in advance, in the future organizations need to have a new employee profile, which combines capabilities of statisticians and IT specialists. In this context, subtopics are as follows:

- Paperless data collection tools
- Data collection with smartphones and other mobile devices
- Bringing together and training of IT staff and statisticians
- Data Science in official statistics

In this session, best practices are very much welcomed.

### (iv) Mixed-mode Collection

**Session Organizers:** Lise Rivais, Statistics Canada ([lise.rivais@canada.ca](mailto:lise.rivais@canada.ca)) and Mr John Eltinge, United States Bureau of Labor Statistics ([eltinge.john@bls.gov](mailto:eltinge.john@bls.gov))

20. In response to decreasing response rates, the need to adapt to societal and technological changes and increasing financial pressures, surveys have explored alternative methods to improve survey quality and reduce costs, such as the introduction of mixed- mode collection methods to collect respondent information. The use of the internet to conduct surveys has become increasingly popular and more surveys are using this as one of the modes of collection in addition to the traditional interviewer assisted methods (CAPI and CATI) and mail out, mail back. The purpose of this session is to understand better the different ways the modes have been mixed and what lessons have been learned to date and the sharing of best practices. The focus of the session is on mixed mode designs, where some part of the sample are interviewed or provide data using one mode and another part is done using another mode. What have been the experiences of other organizations to date when using multi-mode collection? What methods are used to make contact to promote the use of the internet as a mode of providing data? What collection strategies have been used when using mixed-modes? How are cases escalated from one mode to the next? What has been the impact on data quality?

- Overcoming challenges of mixed-mode surveys in practice
- Effects of using mixed mode on response rates
- Mode effects
- Transition to web based approaches
- Effects of mixing of modes on organization of data collection and on IT infrastructures of NSIs

- Paperless data collection

**(v) Communication with respondents**

**Session Organizer:** Ms Frances Comerford, Central Statistics Office, Ireland ([frances.comerford@cso.ie](mailto:frances.comerford@cso.ie))

21. Effective communication is a cornerstone of many aspects of Data Collection, communication with respondents is ultimately aimed at getting accurate, complete and timely responses. In this Session we will look at effective communication with respondents and how that communication can positively affect response rates and facilitate the successful management of a survey campaign. The Session will focus on different aspects of communication with respondents but in order to guide the presentations I have put together the following list of areas on which the focus of presenters would be of particular value:

- Relevance of survey outputs to business. *An example would be how response rates increase if respondent is made aware of the value of their response.*
- Examples of survey communication strategies and how they increased response rates, how they are monitored and what metrics are used.
- Incentives as a means to increase response rates. *For example, providing respondents with value added content for submitting their data and costs and benefits of such an approach.*
- Measures we should focus on in order to get accurate, timely and complete responses
- The use and effects of social media in survey communication

**(vi) Making data collection and communication work: an interactive session**

**Session Organizers:** Steering Committees of both workshops.

22. An innovative interactive activity has been planned for this joint session between the Communication Workshop and the Data Collection Workshop. It will entail working in small groups to develop tangible output in the area of communication and data collection. Outputs will be judged by a panel of users and producers of statistics who will select the best product. Participants will receive more detailed information about topics and procedures before the workshop.

**VII. VENUE**

23. The workshop will take place at:  
 Statistics Netherlands (CBS)  
 Henri Faasdreef 312  
 2492 JP The Hague  
 The Netherlands

A second information notice will be issued and made available on the meeting website in due time, giving details for locating and entering the building, along with additional logistical information.

**VIII. FURTHER INFORMATION**

24. For further information, please contact:

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