

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Meeting of the 2015/2016 Bureau  
Geneva (Switzerland), 21-22 October 2015



Item 4 (a) of the Provisional  
Agenda

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE TASK FORCE ON DATA INTEGRATION FOR  
MEASURING MIGRATION**

**Note by the Steering Group on Migration Statistics**

*The CES Bureau reviewed the proposed terms of reference for a Task Force on Data Integration for Measuring Migration in February 2015. The Bureau asked the secretariat to revise the terms of reference to emphasize the practical improvements that this work can bring to the quality of migration statistics. **The Bureau approved the updated the terms of reference for the Task Force.***

**I. BACKGROUND**

1. Data integration has been a topic of great interest in recent years, especially as data needs have grown under constrained fiscal climates, combined with increased respondent burden and privacy concerns. Eurostat has supported research on methods to improve data integration, such as the ESSnet project in the area of Integration of Survey and Administrative data in 2008, which was an initial attempt to create a common methodological basis for integrating different data sources. However, this work did not specifically address data integration for the purposes of migration measurement.
2. The use of administrative data to improve the measurement of international migration is of interest to many countries in the region. This includes methods to integrate different administrative data sources within a country (e.g. population registers, health, work, taxation, or education records) to supplement information missing from various sources (e.g. to measure outmigration for those who fail to deregister), and ways to use non-administrative data sources to provide information missing from administrative sources (e.g. use of household surveys to collect information not included in registers). Further, given the difficulty of accurately measuring migration, data integration could include methods to reconcile different migration figures as derived from different sources, for example “triangulating” (assuring validity through the use of more than one method to collect data on the same topic) results from different data sources to develop estimates for “hard-to-count” migration populations, such as irregular migrants or emigrants.
3. In addition to integration of data, communication between statistical agencies and the actual producers of administrative data is key to improving the quality and timeliness of such information to be used to measure migration.

4. In 2014, the joint UNECE-Eurostat Work Session on Migration Statistics discussed the utilization of administrative data sources to measure international migration, based on presentations from ten countries. The discussion focused on the opportunities and challenges faced when using administrative data, particularly given the differing levels of development of administrative data systems across the region. Ways to improve cooperation between national migration services, statistical agencies, agencies in charge of registers, and other producers of administrative data were discussed, as well as who should be responsible for which tasks. The Work Session further discussed how to integrate various administrative data sources to improve measurement of migration.

5. The Work Session also emphasised the need for practical advice and guidance on the production of metadata. This would enable users of migration data to make appropriate international comparisons between migration estimates produced by different countries.

6. Based on these discussions, the Work Session recommended pursuing further methodological work on the topic of integration of multiple data sources for measuring international migration, including data sources within a country and between different countries, and good practices in communication between national statistical offices and producers of administrative data.

7. In follow-up to the Work Session's recommendation, the Steering Group on Migration Statistics developed the present terms of reference for methodological work leading to a practical outcome that would help countries in producing better migration estimates.

## **II. MANDATE**

8. The work of the Task Force is conducted within the framework of CES and its Bureau. The Task Force will be created for a period from October 2015 to April 2018.

## **III. OBJECTIVE**

9. The objective of the Task Force is to prepare a set of guidelines and description of good practices for integrating different data sources to improve the measurement of immigration, emigration and net migration. The work will take into account the varying capacity of member countries' administrative data systems throughout the region and sketch possibilities for improving their quality.

## **IV. PLANNED ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS**

10. The Task Force's will produce the following outputs:

- (a) Practical guidance on the compilation of migration statistics using a range of administrative and non-administrative data sources;
- (b) Guidance on presenting and interpreting comparisons of immigration, emigration and net migration data by country of origin and destination, using integrated data sources;
- (c) Metadata standards for integrated migration statistics.

11. The Task Force will carry out the following activities:

- (a) Review of methods used or under study by countries to integrate administrative sources to measure migration, including a list of potential administrative sources;

- (b) Review of methods used or under study by countries to combine administrative and non-administrative data sources to measure migration, including statistical modeling;
- (c) Review of methods used or under study by countries to reconcile migration figures derived from different data sources for improving final migration estimates;
- (d) Development of guidelines, based on practical examples, on how data integration can be used to improve the measurement of immigration, emigration and net migration;
- (e) Development of guidelines on the production of metadata/documentation for integrated migration statistics;
- (f) Description of good practices for improving communication between statistical agencies and the actual producers of administrative data related to migration.

## V. TIMETABLE

12. The activities of the Task Force are planned for the period from October 2015 to April 2018, according to the following tentative schedule:

Oct-Dec 2015	Form the Task Force and draft a work plan with activities, timing and division of work
Jan-Sep 2016	Review of methods (activities <i>a-c</i> )
May 2016	Meeting of the Task Force and presentation of its intermediate results to the joint UNECE-Eurostat Work Session on Migration Statistics
Oct-Dec 2016	Collect and finalise good practice case studies from countries (activity <i>f</i> )
Jan-Apr 2017	Draft practical guidelines based on the review and good practices
May-Sep 2016	Completion of the draft guidelines on how data integration can be used to improve the measurement of migration (activities <i>d</i> and <i>e</i> )
Oct 2017	Review of the full draft guidelines by the CES Bureau
Oct-Dec 2017	Revise the guidelines to take into account comments by the CES Bureau
Feb-Apr 2018	Electronic consultation among all countries in CES
Apr 2018	Expected endorsement by the CES plenary session

## VI. METHOD OF WORK

13. The Task Force will primarily work via email, wiki workspace, and telephone conferences. A face-to-face meeting of the Task Force is planned back-to-back with the UNECE Work Session on Migration Statistics in May 2016.

## **VII. MEMBERSHIP**

14. The following countries and international organizations expressed interest in participating in the Task Force: Italy, New Zealand, Norway, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Switzerland, Tajikistan, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, United Kingdom, CIS-Stat, Eurostat and OECD. Other countries and organizations will be invited to join the task force after the terms of reference are approved by the Bureau.

15. UNECE will act as Secretariat to the Task Force.

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