

**TERMS OF REFERENCE
OF THE SPECA PROJECT WORKING GROUP ON
STATISTICS**

PREAMBLE

1. The Project Working Group on Statistics (PWG on Statistics) is a subsidiary body within the governing structure of the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA). The countries of the Programme are Afghanistan, Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP) provide overall support to the Programme.
2. The PWG on Statistics was set up in Paris in 2006, following a decision of the SPECA Regional Advisory Committee on 27 May 2005 in Astana, recognising that timely, reliable and internationally comparable statistics are crucial for the monitoring of economic and social reforms in SPECA member countries.
3. The PWG on Statistics operates strictly in accordance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, adopted by the UNECE in 1992 and the UN Statistical Commission in 1994.

OBJECTIVES

4. In line with the overall objectives of SPECA to support its member countries in developing subregional cooperation and integrating their economies into the world economy, the PWG on Statistics shall, in cooperation with major international and bilateral partners in the region, (i) promote and coordinate capacity-building programmes and activities in SPECA member countries; (ii) promote the compliance of national statistical methodology and dissemination practices with international guidelines and recommendations; (iii) stimulate the exchange of best national practices among SPECA member countries; and (iv) secure funds and technical assistance for statistical capacity-building operations from multilateral and bilateral donors.

PARTICIPANTS

5. The PWG on Statistics shall comprise Heads of the National Statistical Offices of SPECA member countries in their capacities as main national producers of official statistics and coordinators of their respective national statistical systems.
6. Heads of National Statistical Offices of SPECA member countries may also nominate, on a permanent or an ad hoc basis, experts participating in activities and meetings of the PWG on Statistics as required.
7. United Nations bodies as well as other multilateral and bilateral agencies and organizations involved in statistical capacity-building activities in the SPECA region are invited to participate in the work of the PWG on Statistics and to nominate liaison officers on matters related to its work.

PROGRAMME OF WORK AND ACTIVITIES

8. The PWG on Statistics, in consultation with major international and bilateral partners, shall develop, agree upon and oversee the implementations of its annual work programmes covering economic, social, demographic and environmental statistics as well as organizational and technical aspects of statistical production processes, including dissemination.

9. The PWG on Statistics shall, to the extent possible, seek extrabudgetary resources and technical assistance from multilateral and bilateral donors for the implementation of specific capacity-building projects falling under the scope of the approved annual work programmes.

MODALITIES OF OPERATION

10. The PWG on Statistics shall elect two co-Chairpersons among the Heads of the National Statistical Offices of SPECA member countries.

11. The UNECE Secretariat will provide secretarial support to the PWG. The Secretariat will facilitate the preparation and organization of the sessions of the PWG on Statistics and will maintain records of its activities.

12. The UNECE and ESCAP shall, within their available resources, provide inputs to seminar, training and meeting activities of the projects and the functioning of the PWG.

13. The PWG on Statistics shall hold annual sessions at a date and venue agreed by the participating countries. In order to reduce participation and organizational costs, sessions and other meetings organized by the PWG on Statistics can be held back-to-back with other international events in the field of statistics.

14. The PWG on Statistics reports to the SPECA Governing Council and the competent UNECE and ESCAP sectoral committees, respectively the Conference of European Statisticians and the Committee on Statistics.

FUNDING

15. The costs of participation of National Representatives and experts in sessions of the PWG on Statistics shall, to the extent possible, be borne by the Government of the participating countries. In addition, the UNECE and ESCAP shall support, within their available resources, the functioning and logistics of the PWG on Statistics.

16. The PWG on Statistics shall also seek funds and technical assistance for its operations from multilateral and bilateral donors.

OTHER MATTERS

17. The current Terms of Reference shall be reviewed after 3 years, or sooner if the PWG on Statistics and/or the SPECA Governing Council so decide.
