



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

CES/2000/26/Add.2
25 July 2000

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

STATISTICAL COMMISSION and ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Forty-eighth plenary session
(Paris, 13-15 June 2000)

**PROGRAMMES OF INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL
WORK IN THE ECE REGION, 2000/2001 and 2001/2002:
AN INTEGRATED PRESENTATION**

(Post-plenary session version)

**PROGRAMME ACTIVITY 2
TECHNICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND OTHER CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES**

The format of this integrated presentation

1. This is intended to be a fully integrated presentation of international work programmes in the ECE region. That is to say it includes not only the statistical work of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), but also the relevant statistical work carried out in the ECE region by the Commission of the European Communities, OECD, the UN Statistical Division (UNSD), ILO, WHO, IMF, the World Trade Organization (ex GATT), the World Bank, The Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT) and many other agencies. The programmes are presented in six separate documents - one for each domain in the Conference's programme of work - as follows:

Programme Activity 1:	Organization and Operation of statistical services (CES/2000/26/Add.1)
Programme Activity 2:	Technical infrastructure and other cross-cutting issues (CES/2000/26/Add.2)
Programme Activity 3:	Economic statistics (CES/2000/26/Add.3)
Programme Activity 4:	Social and demographic statistics (CES/2000/26/Add.4)
Programme Activity 5:	Environment statistics (CES/2000/26/Add.5)

Programme Activity 6: Dissemination and support for secretariat activities
(CES/2000/26/Add.6)

2. The integrated presentation is prepared annually, according to the following timetable:
 - i) December-January: The ECE secretariat obtains information from the other organizations on their programmes of work and prepares a first draft of the integrated presentation for review by the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians at its February meeting of each year.
 - ii) February-May: The integrated presentation is updated and amended to include the Bureau's recommended decisions to the Conference in each field of statistics. This "pre-plenary session version" is presented in draft form for review by the Conference at its annual meeting in June.
 - iii) July-August: The integrated presentation is amended to reflect the decisions taken by the Conference at its May meeting concerning its own work programme. This "post-plenary session version" is issued in its final form for the forthcoming two-year period.
3. Thus, the material presented in the six documents referred to above contains updated text that organizations supplied to the secretariat for inclusion in this updated version of the integrated presentation which was considered by the Conference at its 2000 plenary session. In addition to providing updated information on the planned future work programmes of the different international organizations in different fields of statistics, it lists numerous decisions that the Conference took in these fields of statistics, and identifies various issues that the Bureau brought to the attention of the Conference at the plenary session.
4. Each programme activity is sub-divided into a number of programme elements, and each programme element is described within the following framework:

OBJECTIVES OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS: Broad aims of national statistical offices for international work in that field over the next several years.

EXPECTED COLLECTIVE OUTPUT IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS: Specific outputs expected by countries in the next two years.

ATTENTION OF THE CONFERENCE WAS DRAWN TO THE FOLLOWING: List of issues in each field of statistics that the Bureau of the Conference decided should be brought to the attention of the Conference at the plenary session.

DECISIONS TAKEN BY THE CONFERENCE AT THE 2000 PLENARY SESSION: List of decisions on its programme of work that the Bureau recommends the Conference to take at the 2000 plenary session.

MEETINGS IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS: Sponsoring agency, title, date.

RAPPORTEUR: International organization that the Conference has recommended be assigned responsibility for preparing short issue- and strategic-oriented reports for the Bureau and for assessing on behalf of the Conference progress towards the objectives and outputs specified for a programme element.

ACTIVITIES AND MEANS IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS: Description of the major activities of agencies in that field from mid-June 2000 to June 2001. Information is also given in this section on ECE resource implications for the work to be carried out by the ECE secretariat. The resource implications are classified as follows: minimal (less than 3 work months); moderate (3-6 work months); and substantial (over 6 work months).

List of programme elements in the programme of work of the Conference

5. The list of programme elements in the whole programme of work of the Conference is given in Table 1, together with an indication of the document in which information for that programme element can be found.

Other related information

6. As the Integrated Presentation is being presented in the same format in six separate documents, this explanatory note on the format of the presentation is being reproduced in each of the documents. A separate short document (CES/2000/26) describes the background to the development of the format used here and provides additional information including an explanation of acronyms used.

Table 1. List of programme elements in the programme of work of the Conference (together with an indication of the document in which information for that programme element can be found)

Programme Activity	Programme Element
<u>Programme Activity 1:</u> Organization and Operation of statistical services (CES/2000/26/Add.1)	1.1 Promotion and coordination of multilateral statistical work 1.2 Managerial and policy issues of direct concern to presidents of national statistical offices 1.3 Countries in transition in the ECE region 1.4 Relations with countries outside the ECE region (including countries in the Mediterranean region)
<u>Programme Activity 2:</u> Technical infrastructure and other cross-cutting issues (CES/2000/26/Add.2)	2.1 Management of information technology infrastructure 2.2 Statistical data collection and processing 2.3 Dissemination and interchange of statistical information 2.4 Statistical classifications 2.5 Statistical research and development 2.6 Geographical and regional data 2.7 Human resource development 2.8 Sustainable development indicators NEW
<u>Programme Activity 3:</u> Economic statistics (CES/2000/26/Add.3)	3.1 Implementation of the system of national accounts 3.2 Money and banking, government finance, and balance of payments 3.3 International trade in goods 3.4 Transport and communication statistics 3.5 Distributive trades 3.6 International trade in services 3.7 Tourism 3.8 Other marketed services, and non-marketed services 3.9 Price statistics, including purchasing power parities 3.10 Agriculture, forestry and fishery statistics 3.11 Industrial statistics 3.12 Energy statistics 3.13 Science and technology statistics 3.14 Business registers and administrative records in support of economic statistics 3.XX Other work in the field of economic statistics

Programme Activity	Programme Element
<p><u>Programme Activity 4:</u> Social and demographic statistics (CES/2000/26/Add.4)</p> <p>New numbering of programme elements to achieve better correspondence to the Programme Classification of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC)</p>	<p>4.1 Demographic statistics (including projections, migration, fertility and families and households) (<i>formerly 4.11</i>)</p> <p>4.2a Population and housing censuses (<i>formerly 4.5</i>)</p> <p>4.2b Statistics on population groups of special interest (<i>formerly 4.14</i>)</p> <p>4.3 Human settlements and housing statistics (<i>formerly 4.12</i>)</p> <p>4.4 Labour statistics (<i>formerly 4.10</i>)</p> <p>4.5 Education and training statistics (<i>formerly 4.8</i>)</p> <p>4.6 Culture statistics (<i>formerly 4.9</i>)</p> <p>4.7a Statistics of household income and expenditures, of the welfare of the population, and of poverty and income inequality (<i>formerly 4.13</i>)</p> <p>4.7b Social security statistics (<i>new</i>) NEW</p> <p>4.8 Crime and criminal justice statistics (<i>formerly 4.7</i>)</p> <p>4.9 Health statistics (<i>formerly 4.6</i>)</p> <p>4.10 Gender statistics (<i>formerly 4.2</i>)</p> <p>4.11 Other work in the field of social and demographic statistics (<i>formerly 4.xx</i>)</p> <p>4.11a Social indicators and frameworks (<i>formerly 4.1</i>)</p> <p>4.11b Multi-purpose social surveys (<i>formerly 4.3</i>)</p> <p>4.11c Registers and administrative records for social and demographic statistics (<i>formerly 4.4</i>)</p>
<p><u>Programme Activity 5:</u> Environment statistics (CES/2000/26/Add.5)</p>	<p>5.1 Sectoral concepts, definitions and classifications <i>Themes: emissions, waste, land use/cover, etc.</i></p> <p>5.2 Environmental accounting</p> <p>5.3 Environmental databases and reporting</p> <p>5.4 Meteorology statistics NEW</p>
<p><u>Programme Activity 6:</u> Dissemination and support for secretariat activities (CES/2000/26/Add.6)</p>	<p>6.1 Coordination of international data collection</p> <p>6.2 Other statistically-related activities of the ECE secretariat</p>

PROGRAMME ACTIVITY 2 TECHNICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND OTHER CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

2.1 MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

Objectives over the next several years: To assist in the development of an appropriate strategy in the implementation of information technology (IT) and to improve its management in statistical agencies, including the definition of suitable architectures for computing, communications and information holdings, the choice of appropriate interface standards, the impact of IT development on the organization of statistical services in statistical agencies, the cost-effective management of IT services, strategy of statistical data warehouses, strategy in training and requalification of statistical staff caused by the proliferation of personal computers and networking in statistical agencies. This programme element also oversees the IT-related activities in other programme elements of the programme activity. For the coming period, emphasis should be placed on the following: the impact of IT to reduce costs of statistical production in statistical agencies; the requalification of statistical staff under the conditions of networking and distributed processing of statistical information; the utilization of available broadband and ATM communication technologies; and electronic data interchange to speed up and automate data collection, data exchange and dissemination process.

Expected collective output in the next two years: For the ECE: proposals for future work in programme elements 2.2 -- Statistical data collection and processing, and 2.3 -- Dissemination and interchange of statistical information; use of UN/EDIFACT standards for statistical EDI in transition countries and at the international level; improved computer architecture in national statistical offices with emphasis on client-servers and networking; improved organization of national statistical services under the conditions of networking and distributed processing; improved metadata management in national and international statistical agencies.

For Eurostat: agreement on common architectures for statistical information services (production, reference, dissemination); adoption and integration of open-EDI technologies such as common exchange standards for documents, statistical reports, statistical data, classifications and metadata; agreement on common EDI messages and APIs to couple distributed statistical information services (e.g. locating, extracting and downloading relevant statistical data for a specific domain).

For the OECD: Consolidation of the open-system architecture based on client-server technology and IT standards like SQL and relational databases; implementation of a general data and metadata model; development of a database, client based, on Internet technology.

Attention of the Conference was drawn to the following:

- The management of data warehousing on published and publishable statistics disseminated via Internet.
- The implementation of EDIFACT (GESMES) standards for the transmission of statistical data.
- The integration of statistical disclosure methods and techniques into the production and dissemination of statistics in transition countries.
- The issues of technology transfer in the light of rapid changes in technology.

Decisions taken by the Conference at the 2000 plenary session:

- The Conference approved the activities to be undertaken by the Conference in this programme element (See “Activities and Means” below).
- To include the Seminar on Integrated Statistical Information Systems and related matters (ISIS'2002) in the Conference's work programme for 2001/2002.

Meetings from July 2000 to June 2002:

ECE: Meeting on Management of Statistical Information Technology (February 2001)

ECE- EUROSTAT: Work Session on Statistical Data Confidentiality (Skopje, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, March 2001)

ECE: Seminar ISIS 2002 (April 2002)

EUROSTAT: Working Group: IT Steering Committee 11 October 2000

Rapporteur: ECE

Activities and means from mid May 2000 to June 2002:

Activities of ECE:

- a) Meeting on the Management of Statistical Information Technology 2000/2001 to consider: (i) The impact of data warehousing on the management of statistical offices; (ii) Challenges and opportunities for statistical offices working in a network environment; (iii) Resource management in statistical offices and the role of the IT departments; and (iv) Integration of statistical (survey) data with registers (administrative) data.
- b) Work Session on Statistical Data Confidentiality (jointly with Eurostat, Skopje, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 2000/2001) to consider: (i) Applications of statistical data confidentiality (SDC) methodology and software in statistics; (ii) Impact of new technological developments in software, communications and computing on SDC; (iii) Progress in the implementation of SDC methods and techniques in transition countries; and (iv) Attitude of users and respondents towards SDC.
- c) Seminar on Integrated Statistical Information Systems and related matters (ISIS'2002) 2001/2002 to consider: (i) Application of web technology to integrate statistics; (ii) Secure communications and data confidentiality; (iii) Object oriented technologies, component architecture; (iv) Ways of making statistical information systems more responsive to users.

Secretariat resources: Substantial.

Recommended decisions by the Conference at the 2000 plenary session:

To include the Seminar on Integrated Statistical Information Systems and related matters (ISIS'2002) in the Conference's work programme for 2001/2002.

Activities of OECD:

(i) Consolidation of the open-system architecture; (ii) Development of a web, client based, to main databases; (iii) Enhancing methods and procedures for exchanging statistical information using world-wide networks and direct computer-to-computer links with statistical agencies in member countries.

Activities of Eurostat: (*Themes 13 - Electronic data processing, 14 - Information technologies (141, 142)*):

The year 2000 will be marked by continued and expanded efforts to achieve the objectives proposed in earlier years: improved operation of data processing services; improved standardisation and consistency of the data processing organisation model at Eurostat; further development of joint solutions, especially concerning the handling of multidimensional data, publications, reference and dissemination environments, administrative information systems, external trade; closer contacts between and with the Member States and the CEEC countries on data processing technologies; infrastructure and level of the current internal service for data processing to be maintained; a "quality" approach for data processing services to be developed; data processing services and procedures to be documented; new part of the production environment dealing with multidimensional data to be introduced; new Eurostat data processing architecture modules for publications, nomenclature management and dissemination to be introduced; sectoral development to be continued; GED (electronic data management) and workflow applications to be introduced on a limited basis.

The year 2001 will be marked by continued and expanded efforts to improve the computer services through a better definition and a better frame of the proposed services, the development of a new architecture of the statistical information systems, a better consistency and interoperability of the existing systems: maintenance and consolidation of the infrastructure and of the current internal service level; continuation of the rationalisation of the infrastructure by leaning as much as possible on the services offered by the informatics central units of the Commission; finalisation of the migration towards the new electronic mail system and development of the office automation configuration; implementation of a quality plan regarding the planning of informatic work, the coordination of sub-contracted developments and management of equipment; continuation of the development of the common modules of the production environment; development of the metadata part of the new architecture of the statistical information systems.

Activities of other organizations:

The ILO:

- (i) Maintenance of the ILO databases hosted at the UN/ICC mainframe;
- (ii) upgrade of the ILO Statistics LAN hardware and software configuration and necessary retraining of staff;
- (iii) use of Computer Assisted Translation (CAT) the trilingual publications in the Sources & Methods: Labour Statistics series as well as for the reports prepared for meetings;
- (iv) particular attention will be given to the possible problems of transition from 2000 to 2002.

International Monetary fund (IMF):

- (i) Upgrade of the information technology architecture for data collection, management and dissemination, to increase the efficiency of its systems and to leverage proven technologies such as client/server computing, inter-and intranet technology, CD-ROM, browsers, and electronic data interchange (EDI).

- (ii) Encourage correspondents to use the GESMES/CB standard UN/EDIFACT message for electronic interchange of monetary, balance of payments, and other statistics from countries in the ECE region.

Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States:

- (i) Improving the standards for electronic exchange of statistical data among the CIS countries and coordinating work on the establishment and keeping of national registers of business activity in the CIS countries.
- (ii) Continuation of work on improving information technology within the framework of CIS-STAT.
- (iii) Development of an open network architecture for the processing of CIS-STAT statistical data; choice of standards for the interface and local area network components (network servers, workstations, database servers, etc.); assembly and installation of network equipment, including network servers, network boards and communicating equipment (cables, concentrators, connectors, etc.); gradual replacement of obsolete workstations by more modern machines; procurement and installation of network software (operating systems for servers and workstations); improvement of software tools for the collection and database storage of CIS-STAT data; training of staff for work in a distributed processing environment."

2.2 STATISTICAL DATA COLLECTION AND PROCESSING

Objectives over the next several years: To promote the use and sharing of efficient methodology and software in the common collection and processing operations carried out by statistical agencies (e.g. sampling, data entry, editing, coding, estimation); best practices and best software tools are to be identified and made available. For the coming period, emphasis should be on the following objectives: (i) to support the identification of innovative approaches to cost reduction through technology being undertaken in 2.1; (ii) to assess the current status of the useful work already accomplished in this area and to identify further work that would be of benefit; (iii) to promote the automation of the data collection/processing cycle using new digital communication technologies and structured data architectures; (iv) to diminish manual intervention in the production process; (v) to monitor the development of applicable standards and of IT technologies of the respondents.

Expected collective output in the next two years: For the ECE: established programme for further work in this programme element; assessment of statistics related to data editing assessment of new approaches to data editing; recommendations for techniques used to limit over editing.

For EUROSTAT: Agreement on the use of EDI messages to specify the statistical requirements to the economic operators and their declarants; production of documentation on EDI projects for decision-makers, key partners in data collection, key technological players such as software houses, EDI providers, and standardization bodies, etc.

For the OECD: Implementation of UN/EDIFACT standards in data collection. Further consolidation of data collection activities across data sets.

Attention of the Conference was drawn to the following:

- The investigation of quality indicators for measuring the impact of statistical data editing.
- The efficiency and timelines involved in collecting data from business enterprises.

- The Workshop on Electronic Data Reporting that Canada will organise 25-27 September 2000 in Ottawa..

Decisions taken by the Conference at the 2000 plenary session:

- The Conference approved the activities to be undertaken by the Conference in this programme element (See "Activities and Means" below).

Meetings from July 2000 to June 2002:

ECE: Work Session on Statistical Data Editing (Cardiff, United Kingdom, October 2000)

ECE: Work Session on Statistical Data Editing (May 2002)

EUROSTAT: Working Group: EDICOM 28 - 29 September 2000

EUROSTAT: Committee on statistical confidentiality 13 November 2000

Rapporteur: ECE

Activities from July 2000 to June 2002:

Activities of ECE:

- a) Work Session on Statistical Data Editing (2000/2001, Cardiff, United Kingdom) to consider: (i) Management and evaluation of the editing/imputation procedures; (ii) Propagation of knowledge of statistical data editing methods and techniques to users; (iii) New techniques and tools for editing/imputation.
- b) Finalization and reproduction (2000/2001) of the methodological material "Common terminology on statistical data editing", and distribution of it to interested statistical offices.
- c) Work Session on Statistical Data Editing (2001/2002) to consider: (pending recommendations of the Work Session on Statistical Data Editing Cardiff, United Kingdom, 18-20 October 2000).

Activities of OECD: (i) Consolidation of the new client-server based statistical tools. (ii) Further rationalisation of data collection methods and procedures.

Activities of Eurostat: (*Themes 14 - Information technologies (144), 15 -Reference databases, 25 - Data security and statistical confidentiality*):

Promotion and assistance to Eurostat users in the implementation of monitored data exchange; follow-up and support of the corresponding systems (Stadium, Ediflow) in collaboration with the Member States. Support to Intrastat primary data collection by maintenance of IDEP/CN8 and IRIS; support to the competent national administrations, and preparation and delivery of the DOS and Windows versions of IDEP/CN8 and IRIS for 2001. The helpdesk and installation support of Stadium/Statel will be ensured. The administration of the Stadium system will be improved in two ways. An Intranet version of the client for the Member States will be developed within the year 2000. The central administration in Eurostat will be facilitated.

SERT: Eurostat will continue its efforts to contribute to reducing the statistical burden on enterprises by a series of pilot operations on the automation of statistical inquiries. The pilot operations will be oriented to enterprises having strongly invested in IT as well as to small and medium-sized enterprises.

Maintenance of standardised statistical EDI-messages, and implementation of standardised EDI-messages in the exchange of data within the European Statistical System. Adaptation of EDI-messages to new technologies based on the existing data models for the generic messages.

It should be possible in 2000 to develop and expand the objectives proposed in earlier years: Improvement of services offered by reference environment (including external bases) (user-friendliness of tools developed; upgraded process for information search; quality of meta-data describing proposed data). A reference environment statistics users' group will be set up and meet regularly. Setting-up of a working party for co-operation with the Member States and the candidate countries on the European reference environment and meta-data Implementation of research projects and seminars in support of this action. Study of workflow techniques in collaboration with producers in order to provide clients with better information. Initial introduction of a new upgraded Production-Reference-Dissemination architecture allowing wider coverage of customer requirements, together with computerised procedures for the dispatch of electronic and print publications. Standardisation of data and meta-data representation with all domain administrators (harmonisation of dictionaries, standardisation of data models and different meta-data).

The technical infrastructure at Eurostat and the Computer Centre of the data processing department will have to cope with the extra workload (which cannot be estimated before the completion of the architecture studies).

Regarding *data security*, partial implementation of the conclusion of the 1998-1999 audit is foreseen. A report will be produced detailing the strengths, weaknesses and applicability of the disclosure control software currently available for the protection of micro-data and tabular data outputs. This should allow the recommendation of common tools to be applied to various types of confidential data. Further work will take place towards developing protection methods for the release of micro-data, including the development of software for micro-aggregation that can be generalised. A report on these developments will be prepared for the SPC. An international seminar addressing research in statistical confidentiality and disclosure control is planned. A TES course introducing concepts of statistical data protection is also foreseen.

Implementation of the *confidentiality principles* with regard to the scientific community, establishing the criteria for access; intensive co-operation in the Task Force for determining the legal conditions of access to confidential data; this action is underway and should normally be accomplished by early 2000. Based on the progress of the previous item, establish a coherent and systematic approach on implementation of Chapter V of the Statistical Law. Participation in the CSC and follow necessary "comitology" procedures, contribute to uniform interpretation of all relevant confidential matters; ongoing. Preparation of an updated manual on rules and criteria on statistical confidentiality – second half of 2000; Advice and expertise to operational units of Eurostat on legal aspects of confidentiality; interservice co-ordination and co-operation with other European institutions; ongoing. Ensure co-ordinated interpretation and implementation of the Data Protection Directive with the Statistical Law.

Activities of other organizations:

The ILO:

The ILO will continue its gradual shift to electronic means of data collection for its dissemination programme. With the expected expansion of Internet in the years to come, ILO will increasingly rely on this technology when collecting data from countries and territories. Two approaches are considered: direct feeding into ILO's databases by the national statistical offices, or entry by ILO of data received in electronic form through e-mail or on diskette. A gradual approach in this area is foreseen, starting with an examination of similar developments in other international and regional organizations, followed by a pilot collaborating experience with a selected number of both statistically advanced countries and developing ones.

Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States:

-Collection and exchange of statistical data between the statistical services of CIS countries and CIS-STAT at monthly and quarterly intervals using standardized tables (questionnaires) in Excel format (217 tables). Information is exchange via the Internet with the statistical services of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Russia, Tajikistan and Ukraine. The exchange of information with the national statistical services of Armenia, Belarus, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan is effected via e-mail (switched channels).

- During the period 2000-2002, work will continue on standardizing electronic exchange of statistical information with national statistical services and international organizations and on improving the reference database with a view to enhancing the services available to users (more comprehensive data coverage and inclusion of harmonized classifications and a range of catalogues and manuals). With a view to improving data protection and confidentiality, an analysis will be made of new technology."

2.3 DISSEMINATION AND INTERCHANGE OF STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Objectives over the next several years: To build up an information and a technological infrastructure for dissemination of statistical data corresponding to the needs of different users groups; to disseminate statistical information through various electronic media that meet the clients' requirements; to promote the full use of electronic information highways, e-mail facilities and point-to-point connections to disseminate statistical products to end-users and to exchange structured statistical data between the producers of statistics; to build up a reference environment on the availability of statistical information at national and international levels (this requires emphasis on metadata architecture and designing and developing of methodologies for a standard description of statistical data and metadata).

Over the next two years, emphasis should be given in this programme element to the following: implementation of metainformation systems at national level and harmonization of metadata systems of international organizations; further spreading of use of Internet for dissemination of statistical data; implementation of EDIFACT standards for statistical data dissemination; dissemination of market-sensitive economic data to mass media.

Expected collective output in the next two years: For the ECE: publication of the methodological materials "Common terminology of statistical metainformation system"; better awareness of NSOs regarding possibilities of dissemination of market-sensitive economic data to mass media; improved knowledge of NSOs in the development of output databases; assessment of metadata needs in relation to building up statistical data warehouses; widening of EDI based on EDIFACT standards with transition countries.

For EUROSTAT: Agreement on concentrated efforts, investments and resources on DSIS 6 priorities (metadata, reference environment, raw data collection, design and integration of EDI technologies, multimedia and information highways, integration with networking technologies); agreement on use of standardized EDI messages as a corner to exchange data and metadata between reference environments; implementation of reference and dissemination environments conforming to common recommendations, requirements and memorandum of understanding (including access rights, copyrights, accounting practices); feasibility studies on how statistical information services can benefit from EDI and multimedia technologies.

For the OECD: Implementation of on-line dissemination on the Internet; Revision of the presentation of the main statistical publications, with the view of expanding the metadata content.

Attention of the Conference was drawn to the following:

- The integration of the IMF Statistical Data Dissemination Standards (SDDS) in the practice of the National Statistical Offices.
- Eurostat adopted SDDS for its Euro-Indicators site.
- ECE has set up a new web site on best practices for dissemination of statistical output to information media. Its address is: <http://www.unece.org/stat/documents/0000.15.media.htm>
- The co-operation among IMF, OECD, Eurostat and other relevant international organisations in the development and implementation of statistical metadata for the collection and dissemination of statistical information.

Decisions taken by the Conference at the 2000 plenary session:

- The Conference approved the activities to be undertaken by the Conference in this programme element (See "Activities and Means" below).

Meetings from July 2000 to June 2002:

ECE: Work Session on Statistical Output for Dissemination to the Information Media (September 2000)

ECE: Work Session on Statistical Metadata (Washington, USA, November 2000)

ECE: Work Session on Statistical Output for Dissemination to the Information Media (Voorburg, Netherlands, September 2001)

ECE: Work Session on Statistical Metadata (October 2001)

EUROSTAT: Working Group: STNE 4 - 6 October 2000

EUROSTAT: Working Group: Dissemination of statistical Information 09 - 10 October 2000

EUROSTAT: Data Shop Network Meeting 23 October 2000

Rapporteur: ECE

Activities and means from July 2000 to June 2002:

Activities of ECE:

- a) Preparation of the methodological material "Recommendations on formats relevant for the downloading of statistical data from Internet". /2000/2001)
- b) Preparation of the methodological material "Best practices in web site design". (2000/2002)
- c) Publication of the material "Guidelines for statistical metadata on the Internet" in the Conference's "Statistical Standards and Studies" series.

- d) Publication of the material " Common Terminology on Statistical Metainformation Systems" in the Conference's " Statistical Standards and Studies" series.
- e) Work Session on Statistical Output for Dissemination to Information Media (Voorburg, Netherlands, 2000/2001) to consider: (i) Media crises management;(ii) Making use of new technological developments to better meet the needs of the media and get their feedback; (iii) How to build a corporate design as a modern information provider; (iv) Costs and benefits to consider when planning to outsource public and media relations work; (v) Improving data sets and information released through the Internet to the media.
- f.) Work Session on Statistical Metadata (Washington, USA, 2000/2001) to consider: (i) Statistical metadata for dissemination; (ii) Metadata modelling and terminology issues; (iii) Needs and responsibilities of international organisations for metadata; (iv) Impact of the IMF SDDS on statistical practice.
- g.) Work Session on Statistical Output for Dissemination to Information Media (2001/2002) to consider: (pending recommendations of the Work Session on Statistical Output for Dissemination to Information Media Voorburg, Netherlands, 25-27 September 2000).
- h) Work Session on Statistical Metadata (2001/2002) to consider: (pending recommendations of the Work Session on Statistical Metadata Washington, USA,28-30 November 2000).
- i) Participation in the Group EEG6 of the European Board for EDI Standardization). (2000/2001 and 2001/2002)

Secretariat resources: Substantial

Activities of OECD: (i) Streamlining publication processes; (ii) Expanding the metadata content and functionality of statistical electronic products; (iii) Developing on-line dissemination on the world wide web.

Activities of Eurostat: (*Themes 14 - Information technologies (143), 16 - Information, 17 - Dissemination*)

Administration of the Eurostat site of CIRCA, support to the corresponding interest groups, to the Steering and Technical Committee. Support of Cybernews and the Pages on Research in Official Statistics. Maintenance of the Euro-SICs site containing a series of important national indicators to be shared by a series of privileged users. Two new releases of the web-based repository CIRCA will be developed and tested. The new facilities will reflect the requirements of all Commission services using the system. Major importance will be given to enhanced ease of use and administration. Transfer of technology and research validation: the European Statistical Laboratory will launch first practical exercises in domains identified by the Statistical Offices of the Member States in October 1999.

Communication/Press: External communication will be improved by further euro-indicators covered by news releases and a calendar of availability on the Internet, by the development and continuation of relations with media (press releases, lock-up or ad-hoc system, "Eurostat media services", meetings of groups of journalists, etc) and by training of Eurostat staff in press relations. There will be exchange of experiences and better co-operation to ensure that NSIs are prepared for the demands made on their Press offices following the release of Eurostat press communications and new publications. *Statistics in focus* will be available on the Eurostat internet server. The consolidation of activity indicators will also be achieved. The internal communication will

be continuously improved using the output of the survey on quality of communication realised in 1999.

Summary publications: Actions are foreseen in order to achieve the rationalisation of the summary publications, the use of various dissemination media and to look for partnerships to promote the development of products with added value.

Publications programme: The work will be oriented to the use of various media for the production and management of a rational programme designed to answer to well defined user needs (collections), and to the consolidation of solutions involving desktop publishing tools in order to simplify and automate the production of manuscripts. The policy of collections introduced in 1998 will be evaluated. The development of the range of products produced in co-operation with Member States under the marketing name of "Statistics Europe" and the consolidation of the new version of the Eurostat web site that allows the electronic management of orders is foreseen. The consolidation of activity indicators will be essential.

Dissemination policy: The management of subscriptions, right access, copyrights and contracts together with the management and development of a range of products/services based on the "electronic first, paper second" principle is at the core of the activity. In this framework the running in of a new tool for dissemination (EDEN) is expected. Eurostat will look for partnerships with the European Statistical System (joint development of products and services under the "Statistics Europe" logo) and for co-operation between data producers and businesses in the information market, in particular in conjunction with the INFO 2000 programme. The presence of Eurostat at major events concerning information and statistics will be assured and promotional activities for Eurostat products will be foreseen. Monitoring of users will be fundamental to improve the offer and to adapt the dissemination policy. The consolidation of activity indicators will be essential.

Dissemination networks: The main activity will be the development, support and management of the Data Shop network. Priority is given to the extent of the commitment to the quality charter for Data Shops and to improve the offer of training to the network, in order to have a better use of dissemination tools (NewCronos and EDEN). The new contract for the management of Data Shops Brussels, Luxembourg and Madrid will be implemented. In Brussels: development of services towards the European Parliament. The consolidation of activity indicators and the follow-up of the quality charter are important elements of the management of the Data Shop network. Partnership between the Data Shop network, Eurostat and the MIDAS network of the INFO 2000 programme will be maintained.

The Euro-SICS project

The launch of the single monetary policy from January 1999 and its subsequent monitoring calls for the compilation and dissemination of a series of statistical indicators, in particular to meet the needs of the European Central Bank, of the Commission and of the preparation of the Ecofin decisions. In view of the importance attached to these indicators for short-term analysis and the monitoring of the single currency, Eurostat is setting up a statistical site called **Euro-SICS** (Statistical Indicators Common Site). This site is intended to supply institutional users with a set of time series data, available at a high level of frequency and able to give an overall picture of the short-term economic situation of the euro zone and the EU. The indicators on this site refer to various themes of the Statistical Programme covering national accounts, external trade, balance of payments, prices, industry, services, labour market, short-term business surveys, money and finance.

The main **requirements** of the information included in Euro-SICS are: capability of covering all areas of interest for short-term analysis; consistency between different measures of the same phenomenon; time consistency between series observed at different frequencies; availability of long time series (15 years and

more); high reliability of the information (use of harmonised data where possible); efficient and comprehensive system of meta-information associated to the indicators.

Content: starting from the Euro-indicators and the SPC initiative, the site will eventually contain about 350 indicators with data for the individual Member States and wherever possible with the corresponding aggregations for EU-15 and EUR-11. These indicators can be: fully harmonised (based on EEC legal acts); national data not fully harmonised; country specific indicators. The content of the site will be defined and continuously reviewed by Eurostat in close co-operation with the Member States, the main users in the Commission and the ECB.

Updating and meta-information: Eurostat, the Member States, Commission services and the ECB will update the site. Eurostat is responsible for: the calculation of the aggregations EU-15/EUR-11 and for the updating of all the indicators for which the data are transmitted to Eurostat on a regular basis; this represents roughly 90% of the total information so that the direct involvement of the Member States and the other partners is reduced to a minimum; the reconstruction of the long time series (15 years and more where possible) with the help of the other partners; drafting the meta-information on the basis of the SDDS standard of the IMF (definition, characteristics, methodological issues, release calendar of the indicators). The partners of the project will be asked to verify and complete this information for the national indicators and to provide the information for the specific country indicators.

Milestones in the short term (year 2000): Euro-SICS is conceived as a phased project with gradual availability of the data and comprising in the short-term two major milestones: Euro-SICS 1 with about 100 indicators (already supplied to ECB), updated daily by Eurostat and with the corresponding meta-information; Euro-SICS 2 with about 300 indicators updated by Eurostat, the Member States and the other partners comprising harmonised, not harmonised and specific indicators as well as detailed meta-information.

Activities of other organizations:

UN Statistics Division:

- a) UN Economic and Social Information System (UNESIS): (i) design and implementation of systems to collect and disseminate the national accounts data electronically, including use of Internet. (ii) implementation of standard data and metadata formats in the Common Database (CDB);(iii) extension to the demographic database.
- b) Further development of the electronic publications programme: (i) text of the population census recommendations and related materials on Internet; (ii) expansion of the WWW site to include newsletters, working papers and official documents; (iii) Monthly Bulletin of Statistics subscription service on Internet; (iv) license agreements for use of databases with the non-profit and private sector users; (v) maintenance of the quarterly Population and Vital Statistics Report on Internet; (vi) Development of a new Statistical Yearbook interface using Windows.

The ILO:

The meta-information traditionally published in the Sources & Methods series will gradually be made available on the ILO Web site and thus become directly accessible through Internet. The information published in this way will be selective, and the printed publication will continue to be issued. LABORSTA is available to the public through Internet.

International Monetary Fund (IMF):

- (i) Encourage correspondents to use the GESMES/CB standard UN/EDIFACT message for electronic interchange of monetary, balance of payments, and other statistics from countries in the ECE region.
- (ii) Increased use of CD-ROM and the Internet for electronic dissemination of the IMF's statistical publications.

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO):

With respect to data dissemination media, in addition to hard-copy publication and diskette/tape versions, a CD-ROM version of the databases (and related indicators) is planned to be developed. UNIDO will continue to maintain and improve its data presentation on its web site.

Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States:

The work will continue on broadening the electronic dissemination of statistical information, including on CD-ROMs, and access to CIS-STAT databases, as well as on updating the CIS-STAT home page (<http://www.unecce.org/stats/cisstat>), which will be done on a monthly basis.

2.4 STATISTICAL CLASSIFICATIONS

Objectives over the next several years: Promote: the implementation of international classifications throughout the ECE region; continued co-operation of Europe with the USA and Canada; and the ongoing improvement of CPC and particularly the CPC services; a schedule showing when member countries plan to implement the latest vintages of international classifications; an inventory of current deviations from international classifications annotated with measures of the relative importance of such deviations; a list of deviations from the major classifications which are suggested for adoption by countries in transition. Support: the work of the United Nations Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications.

Expected collective output in the next two years: Consideration of a mechanism for updating ISCO-88 on the basis of the experiences of countries developing new revised national occupational classifications based on the ISCO-88 model; conclusions of a review of the conceptual basis for and experience with the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-93).

Attention of the Conference was drawn to the following:

- To the outcome of the discussion that took place at the 1999 session of the Statistical Commission concerning the non-existence of a unique "international" classification of products that major industrial countries such as Canada, the USA, Japan and EU countries view as being adequate to meet their needs.
- The formation of an inter-secretary working group, to be chaired by the United Nations Statistics Division, to prepare the strategy for orchestration and timing of revisions for a core group of international and multinational classifications, including, but not limited to, activity and product classifications.
- To the decision of the 2000 session of the Statistical Commission concerning the proposals by the UN Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications on the update of ISIC Rev.3, for the revision of ISIC, the revision of CPC Version 1.0 and the completion of the review on EBOPS.

- The rapid introduction and use of ISIC rev 3 in the national statistical practice.
- The development of new classifications, definitions and measurement indicators for the Information Communication Technology (ICT) sector. Classifications of ICT commodities, goods and services, electronic commerce, and the role of enterprises in the New Economy are the target tasks. The international co-operation among OECD, Eurostat, the Voorburg Group on Service Statistics, the Nordic Group and other active players in this field was seen an important vehicle to accelerate a progress in this development.
- The UNSD Classification Website (www.un.org/Depts/unsd/class/class.htm) has online access to ISIC Rev.3, CPC Version 1.0, and to the Classifications of Expenditure According to Purpose (COFOG,COICOP,COPNI and COPP) as well as to the Classification Newsletter.

Decisions taken by the Conference at the 2000 plenary session:

- The Conference approved the activities to be undertaken by the Conference in this programme element (See "Activities and Means" below).

Meetings from July 2000 to June 2002:

EUROSTAT: Task Force: SPC NACE/CPA - Nomenclatures 13 - 15 September 2000

EUROSTAT: Task Force: Methodological Coordination 21 - 22 September 2000

EUROSTAT: Committee: SPC NACE/CPA Nomenclatures 25 - 27 October 2000

EUROSTAT: Committee: Customs Code Committee Nomenclature 6-8 November 2000

EUROSTAT: Task Force: SPC NACE/CPA Nomenclatures 13 - 15 December 2000

UNSD: United Nations Expert Group to review the Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services (July 2000);

UNSD: Technical Subgroup meeting of the United Nations Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications (October 2000);

UNSD: United Nations Expert Group meeting on International Economic and Social Classifications (June 2001).

Rapporteur: Eurostat

Activities and means from July 2000 to June 2002:

Activities of ECE: None

Activities of OECD: The final draft versions of the functional classifications COICOP, COPNI and COFOG were approved by the Statistical Commission in March 1999. Redrafted versions of Chapter XVIII and the relevant parts of Annex V based on these new versions of the functional classifications are being presented to the 2000 meeting of the Statistical Commission for consideration. The correspondence between COICOP (Divisions 01 to 12) and the CPC will be published by OECD in 2000.

Activities of Eurostat: (*Themes 11 - Classifications, 18 Statistical co-ordination*):

Business statistics: The Classification Sector will focus on the year 2000 together with the Member States to finalise the draft update of CPA and NACE ("Operation 2002" as decided by the SPC) in order to have, on 1

January 2002, an adopted and published updated CPA, with explanatory notes and conversion keys to CPA 96 and to latest CPC as well as to have, on 1 January 2002, an adopted and published updated NACE Rev.1, with explanatory notes and conversion keys. Increasing availability of NACE and CPA and related product classifications by improving the process of dissemination and the computerisation of the management of electronic interchange of classification sets. At the same time the Classification Sector will finalise the work with UN and the sub-committee of the Voorburg group to have on 1 January 2002, an adopted and published updated CPC and an adopted and published updated ISIC Rev.3 in 2007.

Social statistics: The project to harmonise a set of core variables on persons and households deals with the social classifications. Main activities in this harmonisation project will concentrate on the implementation in Eurostat and NSI statistics of the selected set of core variables. The development of a meta-documentation database as a tool for harmonisation will continue with gathering Member State specific information on the definition and measurement of the core variables. The classifications are linked to the core variables. The main existing classifications in social statistics are ISCED (education), ISCO-88 (COM) (occupation) and ICD (health). Work will continue on a European Socio-economic Classification (E-SEC) and on Fields of education (1999).

Trade statistics: the product nomenclature is to be managed and developed with a view to the following objectives: optimising dissemination of the Combined Nomenclature and related products, improving the dissemination process, computerising management and developing EDI; further steps to intensify contacts with the candidate countries and round off the work to adapt the Combined Nomenclature to the Harmonised System as of 1 January 2002; and pursuing the studies aimed at developing tools to assist classifying goods in the CN.

Other Activities of the European Commission:

Work on the Combined Nomenclature is to be carried out in close collaboration with the customs nomenclature administered by the Taxation and Customs Union DG.

Activities of other organizations:

UN Statistics Division:

- a) To translate the Central Product Classification (CPC), Version 1.0 which is now published in English (Series M, No. 77, Ver. 1.0), in all UN languages.
- b) To publish a complete set of Classifications of Expenditure According to Purpose (ST/ESESTAT/SER.M/84) (pending decision of the 2000' session of the Statistical Commission).
- c) To reconcile together with ECE, FAO and Eurostat Commodity Nomenclatures for the collection of industrial production statistics.
- d) To continue a maintenance and publication of the Classifications Newsletter;
- e) To update ISIC Rev.3 by the end of 2000 (pending decision of the 2000' session of the Statistical Commission)
- f) To revise ISIC, first draft to be prepared for 2004 (pending decision of the 2000' session of the Statistical Commission).
- g) To update non-produced assets of CPC Version 1.0 (pending decision of the 2000' session of the Statistical Commission).

- h) To complete the review of a correspondence between the CPC and the Extended Balance of Payments of Services Classifications (EBOPS).

The ILO: The ILO will continue to provide direct short-term advisory services to countries developing or revising a national classification of occupations on the basis of the International Standard Classification of Occupation (ISCO-88) or on similar basis, through direct contacts with the custodians and users of such classifications as well as through the relevant Web site. It will follow national development in this area and start work to update ISCO-88 in accordance with the advice provided by the 16th ICLS. Based on the 1997 review of national experiences with the use of classifications of status in employment work, National Statistical Offices will be invited to carry out small-scale in-depth studies according to a design provided by ILO. The ILO databases and the corresponding questionnaires are being redesigned to accommodate national statistics provided according to the revised classifications of industry, occupation, status in employment and education.

Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States:

Elaboration of model classifications harmonized with their international counterparts and of recommendations for their use. Holding of consultations in the course of the universal introduction in the Commonwealth countries of classifications of types of activity on the basis of the third revised version of ISCED and the first revised version of NACE, of a statistical classifier for products on the basis of CPA and the PRODCOM list and of the International Classification of Individual Expenditure by Purpose. Elaboration of conversion keys between the groups of the new harmonized classifications and those of their old counterparts. Maintenance of a base of problems arising in the introduction of the new classifications and notification of changes in that base to the Commonwealth's national statistical services. The base contains CIS-STAT recommendations for the resolution of the problems; those recommendations are examined at the annual meetings of the working party on statistical tools and standards and that body takes the final decisions for application by all the national statistical services in the Commonwealth. Those decisions provide the basis for the elaboration of CIS-STAT model classifications.

2.5 STATISTICAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Objectives over the next several years: To promote an active program of research, technology development and transfer within the region on statistical and methodological issues that cut across other P.E.s in the Work programme (e.g. seasonal adjustment; data quality measurement; non-sampling error; sampling and estimating; questionnaire design; confidentiality protection; longitudinal surveys); to ensure that the results of this work are accessible to statistical offices throughout the region; to develop guidelines for statistical agencies on policies and practices for managing data quality in statistical programs, including the definition, control, measurement, and description of data quality, and its implications for data release.

Expected collective output in the next two years: An active network of information exchange between interested member countries.

Attention of the Conference was drawn to the following:

- The development of the projects that are included in Eurostat's 5th Research and Development Programme and their implementation in practice.

Decisions taken by the Conference at the 2000 plenary session:

- The Conference approved the activities to be undertaken by the Conference in this programme element (See "Activities and Means" below).

Meetings from July 2000 to June 2002:

EUROSTAT: Working Group: EPROS (DOSIS) 16 - 18 October 2000

EUROSTAT: Working Group: Evaluation of quality of statistics 20 October 2000

Rapporteur: Eurostat

Activities and means from July 2000 to June 2002:

Activities of ECE: None

Activities of OECD: None

Activities of Eurostat: *(Theme 22: Statistical research):*

Statistical methods and scientific activities: The measurement of quality of statistics will progress in several domains, including the national accounts. Based on the thematic research and scientific networks, a methodological support is provided to Eurostat's units according to the needs, in particular in the fields of survey design, variance estimates, imputation, seasonal adjustment, comparability. Eurostat and ESS interest in methodological and scientific work will be encouraged with the organisation of internal seminars and external conferences (e.g. ISBA conference) and with the promotion of co-operation with research centres.

Data Analysis Services and Data Analysis Centre: We anticipate an increase of work due to additional demands from researchers. Action will be taken to enhance the usefulness of statistics by seeking authorisation from Member States to allow researchers access to raw data in a way which does not endanger the confidence of data suppliers. In order to provide a better service, a more detailed identification of the users needs for data analysis will be conducted.

R&D in Statistics: Eurostat will participate actively in the implementation of the Fifth Framework Programme, in particular through the cross-programme action and clusters of the Specific Programme on the Information Society. This activity will contribute to the reinforcement of the quality of the information produced by the European Statistical System. An advisory scientific committee might help Eurostat in the implementation of this activity. There will be further calls for proposals for Fifth Framework projects in statistics. Project management activities will increase following the evaluation of an increasing number of proposals. If resources permit, this function will be reorganised on a thematic basis. There will continue to be considerable constructive communication with the Information Society DG in its role as co-ordinator of the overall research programme. A full assessment of the previous Fourth Framework Programme research and development projects in official statistics will continue after completion of the final projects. As regard the exploitation of the results, the Research in Official Statistics web site will be further developed/improved in response to comments from users. The benefits of the research programme will be publicised via conferences, journals, etc, and will become one of the inputs of the technology transfer activity.

Activities of other organizations:

UN Statistics Division: UNSD has constituted a work unit on statistical development and analysis, which will study measurement issues, in particular for new statistical fields (e.g. disability statistics). It will also review work done on data quality, both at the international as well as national level.

2.6 GEOGRAPHICAL AND REGIONAL DATA

Objectives over the next several years: To promote the development and integration of statistics for sub-national and supra-national regions. To improve the efficiency, quality and comparability of the geographic dimension of official statistics. To facilitate the measurement and reinforcement of economic and social cohesion of the European Union using high-quality statistical information on the European regions. To put at the disposal of users the necessary regional data for the definition, follow-up and evaluation of regional policies (both national and European Union) and the evaluation of the socio-economic situation and evolution of the region of Europe. To design and develop concepts and standards, new tools and technology (GIS), dissemination of geographical products and spatial analysis.

Expected collective output in the next two years: For ECE, Work Sessions on Methodological Issues Involving the Integration of Statistics and Geography; preparation of guidelines on cartography for statistical purposes; presentation of the survey on the use of GIS in NSOs.
For Eurostat, statistical yearbook "REGIONS", complete classification of regions for the new member states, publication of methodology for regional household accounts, and first results of the screening exercise.

Attention of the Conference was drawn to the following:

- **Problems in joint data collection to be resolved:** UNSD to suggest action and timetable for the winter 2000 meeting of the Bureau.
- The use of mapping technologies for cross-sector statistical analysis.
- The Guidelines on Cartography for Statistical Purposes are available on ECE web site (<http://www.unece.org/stats/mapping>).

Decisions taken by the Conference at the 2000 plenary session:

- The Conference approved the activities to be undertaken by the Conference in this programme element (See "Activities and Means" below).
- To include the Work Session on Methodological Issues Involving the Integration of Statistics and Geography in the Conference's work programme for 2001/2002.
- To agree that the secretariat organise a half-day training session on GIS implementation for interested countries back to back with the Work Session on Methodological Issues Involving the Integration of Statistics and Geography in 2000/2001.
- To approve the methodological guidelines, and agree that the secretariat should install them on the UN/ECE Website as soon as possible; and to encourage NSOs of ECE and other interested countries to use the Guidelines and to inform the secretariat on their experience in using them.

Meetings from July 2000 to June 2002:

ECE: Work Session on Methodological Issues Involving the Integration of Statistics and Geography (September 2001)

EUROSTAT: Working Group: Geographical Information Systems for Statistics 11 - 12 October 2000

EUROSTAT: Working Group: Geographic Information Systems for Statistics, October 2001

EUROSTAT: Working Group: Regional accounts, May 2001, May 2002

EUROSTAT: Working Group: Regional accounts, May 2001

EUROSTAT: Working Group: Regional accounts, May 2002

EUROSTAT: Working Group: Local data and urban statistics, November/December 2000

Rapporteur: Eurostat.

Activities and means from July 2000 to June 2002:

Activities of ECE:

- a) Work Session on Methodological Issues Involving the Integration of Statistics and Geography 2001/2002, to consider: (i) New opportunities created by cooperation and partnership; (ii) New technological solutions, including those based on on-line data access; (iii) Spatial analysis; (iv) Standards and metadata.
- b) Half day training session on GIS implementation for interested countries back -to back with the Work Session.

Secretariat resources: Substantial

Activities of OECD: none

Activities of Eurostat: (*Theme 72 - Regional and geographical information*):

Regional statistics: Regular updating of the REGIO database and dissemination of results; definition of an overall framework for the collection of Community regional statistics (following CEIES report); reflection on the introduction of a legal basis for NUTS; integration of the candidate countries in the Community system of regional statistics. Improvement and extension of regional statistics. In particular, development of the project "quality of key indicators for regional policy"; better coverage of the "industry", "services" and "environment" fields; continued introduction of the information system on urban conurbations.

Geographical information: Gradual introduction of the new architecture for the geographical reference data base (GISCO); continuation of work to improve its content; spatial analysis work for the Commission; first phase in the development of a European GIS network for statistics. Start of introduction of the minimum Commission infrastructure for geographical information (several DGs; budget to be decided).

Activities of other organisations:

2.7 HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Objectives over the next several years: To increase participation in training. In order to promote this, to make available systematically to countries the information relating to training policies and programmes in both Member countries and in Eurostat; to help co-ordinate international training seminars and workshops and ensure that subjects addressed are in line with statistical priorities as defined by SCEs and Eurostat; to assist member countries in developing staff exchange policies where comparative advantages make such exchanges effective, to facilitate countries making wise choices for training.

Expected collective output in the next two years: Consolidated catalogue of training courses in statistics offered by AEU and EFTA Member countries and in the framework of Training for European Statisticians (TES); bulletin with notices of openings for training in statistical agencies abroad; and an annual review of training gaps and suggestions on how to address them.

Attention of the Conference was drawn to the following:

Decisions taken by the Conference at the 2000 plenary session:

- The Conference approved the activities to be undertaken by the Conference in this programme element (See "Activities and Means" below).

Meetings from July 2000 to June 2002:

EUROSTAT: Working Group: TES, 8 December 2000

Rapporteur: Eurostat.

Activities and means from July 2000 to June 2002:

Activities of ECE: None

Activities of OECD: None

Activities of Eurostat: (*Theme 12 - Statistical training*):

The aim of statistical training is to draw up a general programme based on foreseeable training requirements taking into account the development and needs of European Statistical System and the needs of transition economies in statistics. Training is facing new challenges because of the enlargement of European Union, the implementation of new technologies in communication and data exchange and new sources of information and new agents in economic and social life.

The main objectives of statistical training are:

- To help to raise the quality of European statistics
- To offer professional training, which has a dimension of surpassing national boundaries
- To enhance the use of new methods and tools
- To promote transfer of technology
- To contribute to the harmonisation and comparability of European statistics
- To support the co-operation and exchange in the ESS
- To promote integration of candidate countries into the ESS.

The main foreseeable user groups are management, statistical methodologists and the users of statistics. Mainly they come from the EU/EFTA countries, the Candidate countries and the Western Balkan Countries but in special cases also from other countries with which the Commission has assistance programmes and from the Commission. Supply of training courses will be based on statistics core programme, tailor-made special programmes and management training.

Statistical training is a programme of Eurostat. Its financing and practical organisation will be based on call for tenders from 2001 onwards. Funds for training will come from the Eurostat/EFTA budget and from various technical assistance budgets. A Working Group with EU/EFTA and CEC countries will be organised once a year.

Activities of other organizations:

The ILO: An ILO Training Compendium on Labour Statistics will be produced as a multi-part modular training tool in a joint project by the Bureau of Statistics and ILO International Training Centre in Turin, Italy, and be available in 2000. This tool will be useful for international training courses in labour statistics

undertaken by the Bureau at the Training Centre in Turin or workshops organized, upon request, on behalf of other international or regional agencies. It will be also made available to National Statistical Offices for in house training. Bureau staff will serve as resource persons for training seminars and training components of other organisations, technical cooperation projects in the regions and support other related training activities carried out by the Training Centre.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF):

(i) Annual six weeks training courses (in English, French or Spanish) at the IMF Institute in Washington on: (1) balance of payments; (2) government finance; (3) money and banking; and (4) national accounts (not in 2000; English only) statistics are offered.

2.8 SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS

Objectives over the next several years: To develop a set of indicators useful for monitoring sustainable development. These indicators will cover the economic, social and environmental spheres and will often represent ratios showing the interaction of key variables drawn from different spheres. There will be a high level of integration with other sets of indicators notably on the economy (including short-terms indicators), social indicators (including issues related to health and education) as well as environmental indicators. The objective is to devise a theoretical framework which allows integration across the three areas, allows expansion of detail into areas of particular interest and allows the presentation of a small number of "headline" indicators with popular appeal.

Expected collective output in the next two years:

- OECD will develop a set of sustainable development indicators for inclusion in a report to Ministers in mid-2001.

Attention of the Conference was drawn to the following:

- The co-operation among OECD, Eurostat, European Environment Agency and other relevant international organisations on the development of indicators useful for monitoring sustainable development.

Decisions taken by the Conference at the 2000 plenary session:

- The Conference approved the activities to be undertaken by the Conference in this programme element (See "Activities and Means" below).

Meetings from July 2000 to June 2002:

Rapporteur: OECD

Activities and means from July 2000 to June 2002:

Activities of ECE: None

Activities of OECD:

A major three-year horizontal programme on sustainable development is underway in OECD due to culminate in mid-2001 with a report to Council of Ministers. One aspect of this work is the derivation of indicators to measure sustainable development. Our distinctive contribution will be to devise a framework which encompasses economic, environmental and social aspects of development in such a way that the interactions of these three areas are clear and trade-offs can be examined. Constructing the framework will call on work underway in the London group on Environmental Accounting, the Canberra group on capital stocks and capital services, the Canberra group on Income Distribution. It is intended to incorporate clear links also to work within OECD on health and education statistics and also ongoing work on the measurement of human capital. Co-operation is ensured with other international organisations (Eurostat, European Environment Agency, World Bank and UN-CSD) and relevant institutes.

Activities of Eurostat: (*Theme 71 - Environmental statistics and indicators (716)*):

The Amsterdam Treaty establishes as a Community principle integrating environment and sustainable development into all Community activities. The European Council in Cardiff and Vienna has made policy commitments for better integration and follow-up through indicators. As a result of these decisions, the need for environment and sustainability indicators have gained considerably in importance. This will highly influence the work on environment statistics as well the statistics on transport, energy, agriculture, industry, tourism, regional policies and national accounts in the years to come. Eurostat, in consultation with the Environmental Agency and the Environment DG, will prepare a strategic document for the SPC in March 2000.

The following tasks will be undertaken with the help of the Environment DG: dissemination of an improved set of the environmental pressure indicators; dissemination of a publication on Indicators of Sustainable Development; improvement of basic data needed for environmental and sustainability indicators (Environment DG).

Activities of other organizations:

WHO-Euro:

Major components include the development of and agreement on:

- core set on environmental health indicators, that can be used by the countries and at the same time represent significant trends in the European Region;
- basic structure of the system to allow harmonization of data collection among the countries and acceptable level of the information exchange.

Initially, a tentative list of environmental health indicators together with an information system general framework will be elaborated by a steering group of selected experts. The proposal will then be evaluated in countries in terms of feasibility and compatibility with the existing national monitoring systems. The result will be a core set of indicators including definitions, methodologies for data collection and computation, and a common system framework for information exchange. A WHO consultation will be convened to agree on it and to select the countries for the pilot implementation. The principal aim of the latter is to check whether the national objectives and international commitments are actually translated into concrete actions and whether the system can be promoted throughout the WHO European Region.
