



**Economic and Social  
Council**

Distr.  
GENERAL

CES/2003/3/Add.9  
30 May 2003

ENGLISH ONLY

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**STATISTICAL COMMISSION and ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS**

Fifty-first plenary session  
(Geneva, 10-12 June 2003)

**ANNUAL UNECE STATISTICAL PROGRAMME: PROPOSAL FOR A PROCEDURE TO  
BE ENDORSED BY THE CONFERENCE**

Paper prepared by the ECE secretariat

**I. IN THE PAST**

1. The Conference of European Statisticians and its secretariat, the UNECE Statistical Division, are asked by the Economic Commission for Europe to provide guidance to other ECE Principal Subsidiary Bodies on statistically related activities. The need for such guidance was emphasised by the Economic Commission for Europe already back in 1987 and later re-affirmed in 1990 and 1997. The main purpose is to avoid duplication and excessive burden on countries.

2. So far, the UNECE Statistical Division has collected information on the statistical activities of the other ECE divisions for inclusion in the Integrated Presentation of International Statistical Work. The Integrated Presentation was thus considered as the Programme of work of the ECE secretariat. At each plenary session, the Conference was asked to approve the activities of the ECE Statistical Division and the Population Activity Unit and take note and endorse the statistical activities undertaken by the other ECE Divisions. However, in recent years the ECE divisions have significantly developed their statistical activities in areas such as timber, transport, human settlements and environment statistics, which requires the strengthening of the coordination of the various statistical activities.

## **II. THE PROPOSAL**

3. The ECE secretariat developed a proposal, to be reviewed by the Bureau, for compiling an Annual UNECE Statistical Programme similar to the Statistical Programmes prepared by its main partners – Eurostat and OECD. It is proposed that the Programme be compiled for a calendar year rather than for the period between the two plenary sessions as is currently the case for the Integrated Presentation. The main purpose of the Annual ECE Statistical Programme will be to serve internal needs of the ECE and other UN users. It is also believed that the compilation of the Statistical Programme will facilitate the coordination role of the Statistical Division within the ECE.

4. The Bureau reviewed the proposal at its meeting in February 2003 and agreed that the preparation of an annual ECE Statistical Programme would be an important tool for the ECE Statistical Division to be able to coordinate the statistical activities carried out in ECE and in this way to fulfil its mandate. The Programme would represent a subset of the Integrated Presentation focusing on the statistical activities carried out by all ECE divisions. It will be prepared by the Statistical Division, and will be discussed at a meeting of ECE Directors. Subsequently, a draft of the annual ECE Statistical Programme will be submitted to the Bureau for review and endorsement.

5. It is proposed that a draft of the first Annual ECE Statistical Programme starting from January 2004 be prepared for review by the Bureau at its meeting in October 2003.