

Distr.
GENERAL

CES/AC.71/2004/1
.. December 2003

Original: ENGLISH

**UNITED NATIONS STATISTICAL COMMISSION and
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS**

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION
STATISTICAL OFFICE OF THE
EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (EUROSTAT)**

**ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC
COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD)
STATISTICS DIRECTORATE**

Joint ECE/Eurostat/OECD Meeting on the Management of Statistical Information Systems (MSIS)
(Geneva, 17-19 May 2004)

INFORMATION NOTICE No. 1

The meeting will be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland, from 17 to 19 May 2004,
starting on 17 May at 9.30 a.m.*

I. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

1. The main objectives of the regular meetings on management of statistical information systems are the following:

- To provide a forum for the exchange of experiences among informatics managers from National Statistical Offices and other government agencies and international organizations undertaking statistical activities;
- To make recommendations in order to coordinate the activities of different international organizations in the area of statistical information processing;
- To collect, discuss and make available practices in the management of statistical information processing, as well as to encourage the exchange of practices in all other particular areas included in Programme Activity 2 of the Integrated Presentation;
- To assess the activities undertaken within all programme elements included in Programme Activity 2 of the Integrated Presentation, and to make recommendations on future directions of work within these programme elements to the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians;
- To facilitate and encourage the implementation of standards and recommendations in the field of statistical computing among national statistical offices and other concerned agencies in the UNECE region.

* New accreditation procedures have been introduced for all delegates attending meetings held at the Palais des Nations. Delegates are therefore requested to complete the attached registration form also available from the Internet Web site of the UNECE Statistical Division (<http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2004.05.msis.htm>) and to transmit it to the UNECE secretariat, at the latest two weeks prior to the session, either by fax (+41-22 917-0040) or by e-mail (juraj.riecan@unece.org). On the first day of the session, delegates are requested to present themselves at the Pass and Identification Unit of the UNOG Security and Safety Section, located at the Villa Les Feuillantines, 13, Avenue de la Paix (a map is attached) for the issuance of an identification badge. In case of difficulty, please contact by telephone the UNECE secretariat (internal extension 73328 or 72241).

2. The Meeting is primarily intended for: informatics managers from national statistical offices and other concerned national and international agencies; and statisticians and informaticians responsible for the coordination, planning and management of complex projects in the field of statistical information processing.

II. AGENDA OF THE MEETING

3. The work programme of the meeting will consist of the following substantive topics:
- (i) Web technology in statistical information systems (covering a broad range of aspects such as collection, dissemination, applications, security, etc.);
 - (ii) Development of IT strategies in statistical offices (fundamental issues such as data integration, architecture, governance, centralization, outsourcing, etc.);
 - (iii) Open source in statistics (including both, the use of open source software, and making the products of statistical offices open source);
 - (iv) Annual review of the Website on IT Practices in National Statistical Offices;
 - (v) Review and follow up to the activities of the Conference:
 - Progress made in the field of statistical metadata;
 - Follow-up to the 2002 review of international data collection issues;
5. Detailed explanatory notes on the nature and expected outcomes of topics (i) to (v) are provided in Section V of the Information Notice.

III. PARTICIPATION AND ACCREDITATION

6. Representatives of all Member States of the United Nations and of interested intergovernmental organizations are welcome to participate in the meeting. Participants representing non-governmental organizations in a consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council may also attend. All participants must be accredited by the competent authorities of their country or international organization, have a valid passport and, if required, a visa. Applications for visas should be made as soon as possible to the Embassy of Switzerland in the country in which the participants reside, with a reference to the Joint UNECE/Eurostat/OECD Meeting on the Management of Statistical Information Systems.
7. The statistical offices and international organizations are asked **to inform the UNECE secretariat before 15 January 2004** whether their organization intends to participate at the meeting and/or submit a contribution on the topics mentioned above. Please indicate the topic to which the paper will refer as well as *participant(s) name(s) and their contact data*.
8. Participants are requested to fill in the attached Conference **registration form** and send it to the secretariat by fax (+41 22 917-0040) by **17 April 2004** so that it may be processed well in advance of the meeting.
9. In order to enter the Palais des Nations, all participants need to obtain a security pass (ID card). For this purpose, please present yourself with your passport at the Villa les Feuillantines (shown on the attached map) by 8:30 a.m. at the latest on Monday, 17 May 2004. Participants are requested to keep this ID card with them at all times for the duration of the meeting.
10. Two gates can be used for entering the UN premises: the pedestrian passage at Place des Nations (buses 5, 8 and 18, stop Nations) and the Pregny Gate (Avenue de la Paix, 14, buses 8 and 18, stop Appia).

IV. DOCUMENTATION, METHODS OF WORK AND OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

11. The documents and their summaries may be submitted in any of the official languages of the UNECE (English, French, Russian). The following deadlines and requirements apply:

- Authors must submit a two-page summary of their paper in one of these languages to the UNECE secretariat by **27 January 2004 at the latest** for translation into the other two languages. The secretariat cannot guarantee that summaries submitted after this deadline will be translated into the other languages.
- The full versions of papers, not exceeding 10 pages, should be sent to the UNECE secretariat by **27 February at the latest**.
- Papers should be submitted in electronic format (e-mail, diskette or CD-ROM) to Mr. Juraj Riecan (juraj.riecan@unece.org).
- The UNECE secretariat is able to process documents submitted in **MS Word**. Templates in Word containing the header and format will be sent to authors or may be requested by e-mail (diane.serikoff@unece.org).

12. The Steering Group preparing the meeting has asked selected countries to prepare invited papers and appointed discussants to lead the discussion on individual agenda items. The Discussants are indicated in the Explanatory Notes to the Agenda below. For each substantive item on the agenda, the discussants will invite 2-3 speakers to write an **invited paper** and to present them at the Meeting. All other participants are welcome to submit a **supporting paper** to any topic of the agenda. The supporting papers will be distributed to the delegates.

13. Authors of invited papers will have about 20 minutes per paper for the presentation. Authors of supporting papers may be given (time permitting) about 5 minutes to highlight main issues raised in their papers. Presenters may use PowerPoint presentations, Adobe Acrobat full screen presentations or A4/letter transparencies. UNECE secretariat cannot provide translation of the presentations.

- PowerPoint and Adobe presentation should be sent to the UNECE secretariat by **5 May 2003 at the latest**, so that these can be installed on the presentation computer prior to the meeting.
- The UNECE secretariat will post the presentations on the website after the meeting. Therefore, the files should follow strict naming conventions: NNname.ppt or NNname.pdf, where NN is the number of the paper and name is the name of the author.

14. Invited and supporting papers along with their summaries will be made available on the website of the UNECE Secretariat at the following location:

<http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2004.05.msis.htm>

Delegates are encouraged to download the papers from the website and bring their own copies to the meeting. Documents posted on the website before the meeting will not be distributed in the conference room.

15. Simultaneous interpretation from and into English, French and Russian will be provided. The draft conclusions of the meeting will be available in all three languages.

V. EXPLANATORY NOTES TO THE AGENDA

Topic (i): Web technology in statistical information systems

(Discussant: Marton Vucsan (Statistics Netherlands), Tel: +31-70 337-5071; mvcn@cbs.nl)

16. In NSO's web technology has become a prominent means to many ends. In many respects web technology is still in a development phase. New technologies are being tested and the Internet is maturing

slowly. Participants are encouraged to report their findings or the research going on in their organizations. All uses of web technology are of interest for this item. It is primarily intended to obtain a good insight into what areas web technology assists the statistical process. Possible areas of interest are: survey technology or data collection using the web; the use of the web in customer relation management; the use of web technology inside NSOs for the statistical process (web forms, etc.); the use of web technology in data dissemination; security in web applications and policy changes forthcoming out of this.

Topic (ii): Development of IT strategies in statistical offices

(Discussant: Dayantha Joshua, (Office for National Statistics, UK), Tel: +44 70 7533 5301; dayantha.Joshua@ons.gov.uk)

17. This topic encompasses experience and practice in developing strategies for informatics within statistical agencies. Informatics is a primary enabler of statistical program objectives within NSOs and international statistical agencies; it is also a significant determinant of costs in information management (IM), information systems (IS) and information technology (IT) services. Contributions are requested that reflect current strategies in governance, enterprise architecture, infrastructure consolidation, development methodologies, data integration, human resources and organizational issues. The focus of this session is on the management perspective of developing, communicating and implementing changes at a strategic level, including reports on results from recent activities of this nature.

Topic (iii): Open source and software consortia in statistics

(Discussant: Richard Swartz (US Census Bureau) Tel: +1-301 457-2117; richard.w.swartz@census.gov)

18. Open source products have become popular in the last few years. In particular, they have their greatest market shares in public administration. This concerns not only the stars such as Linux and Apache but specialized software as well. Statisticians are interested in which products exist and under which conditions they can be acquired, customized and distributed. The answer to this question depends on the specific underlying copyright and licence conditions. Another important issue to be addressed is the support that can be obtained in relation to the chosen product. As statistical offices are specialized users they often develop software for their own purposes. There are several examples when such specialized software is shared with other offices. The sharing often takes the form of software consortia rather than open source, where members of a consortium have to cover part of the development costs and commit themselves to participating actively in developing various modules. Sustainability of open source and software consortia is a key issue. Solutions for development, customization, integration, maintenance, documentation and support have to be identified.

Topic (iv): Annual review of the website on IT practices in national statistical offices

(Discussant: Lars Thygesen (OECD), lars.thygesen@oecd.org)

19. The website may need a more user-friendly indexing and structure, so that IT experts in national statistical offices would be able to benefit more from the information located at

<http://cs3-hq.oecd.org/scripts/stats/itp/index.asp>

Long-term goals and updating procedures for this joint website are also planned to be discussed under this topic. Suggestions are welcome on how to encourage a broader use of this website for exchange of experiences in areas related to statistical information processing, computing and related areas.

Topic (v): Review and follow up to the activities of the Conference

(Discussant: Juraj Riecan, Tel: +41-22 917-3328; juraj.riecan@unece.org)

20. Following the traditions of the former UNECE Working Party on Electronic Data Processing, the Meeting is invited to review the activities in the field of statistical information processing in which the

Conference is active and to make suggestions for the future work. Presently, the activities of the Conference are focused on the following areas:

- Management of statistical information systems (jointly with OECD and Eurostat) (P.E. 2.1)
- Survey on use of information technology in national statistical offices (e-Statistics) (P.E. 2.1)
- Statistical data confidentiality (jointly with Eurostat) (P.E. 2.1)
- Statistical data editing (P.E. 2.2)
- Electronic data reporting (jointly with Eurostat) (P.E. 2.2)
- Statistical Metadata (jointly with Eurostat and OECD) (P.E. 2.3) – the participants may wish to discuss this topic in greater depth based on the outcome of the February 2004 joint work session on statistical metadata (METIS).
- Participation in the development of standards for statistical EDI (P.E. 2.3)
- Geographical information systems (GIS) (P.E. 2.6)

21. The discussion on this topic is also expected to review the progress made on international data collection and data sharing activities, as a follow-up to the decision of the 2002 plenary session of the Conference.

VI. ACCOMMODATION

22. Participants are requested to make their own hotel reservations. As Geneva is often quite busy with international meetings, it is advisable to make the hotel reservation as early as possible. For more information on accommodation please consult the Internet website <http://www.unece.org/stats/geneva.e.html> (follow the link “Hotels in Geneva”). This site also provides useful information on Geneva and the UN.

VI. FURTHER INFORMATION

23. For further information, please contact the following organizers:

UNECE:

Mr. Juraj Riecan
Team Leader, Dissemination and Statistical Information Systems
Statistical Division,
United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Tel.: +41 22 917 33 28
Palais des Nations Fax: +41 22 917 00 40
1211-GENEVA 10, Switzerland e-mail: juraj.riecan@unece.org

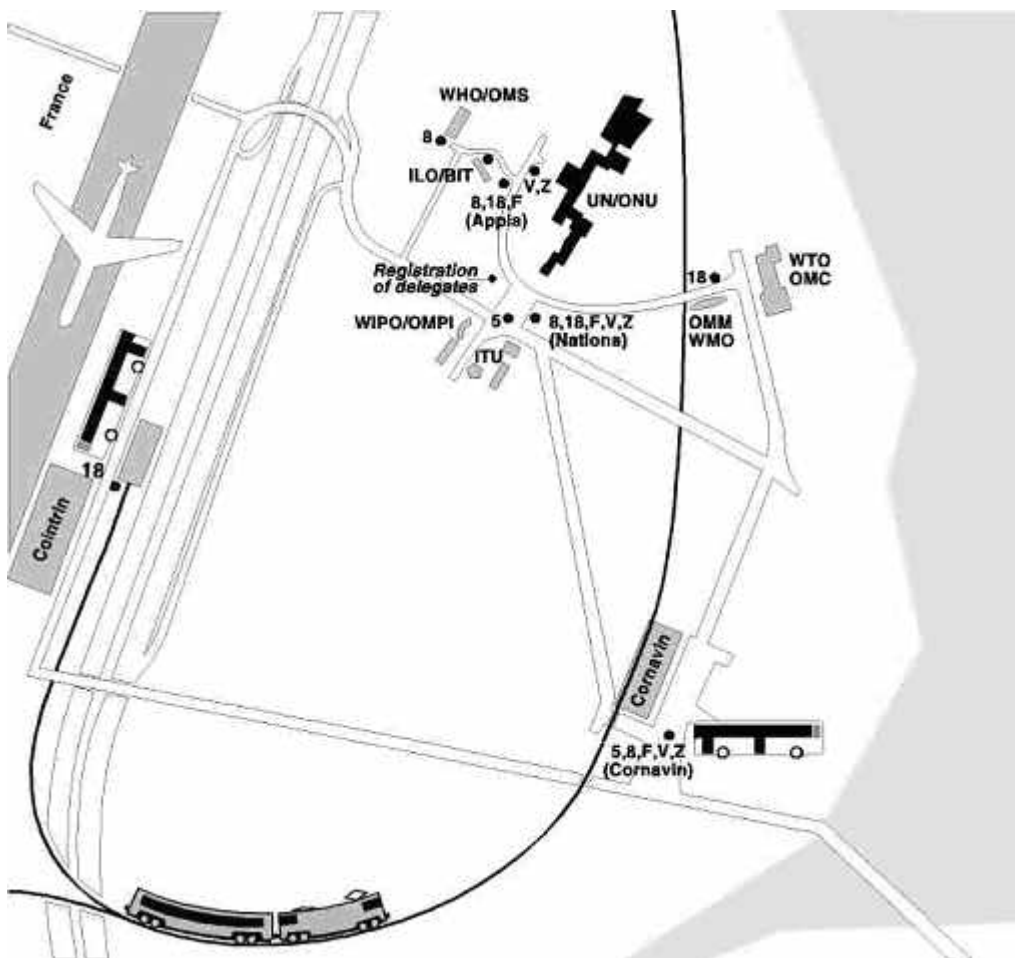
Eurostat:

Mr. Georges Pongas
Statistical Office of the European Communities Tel: 352 4301 33917
Rue Alcide de Gasperi Fax: 352 4301 32999
L-2920 Luxembourg e-mail: georges.pongas@cec.eu.int

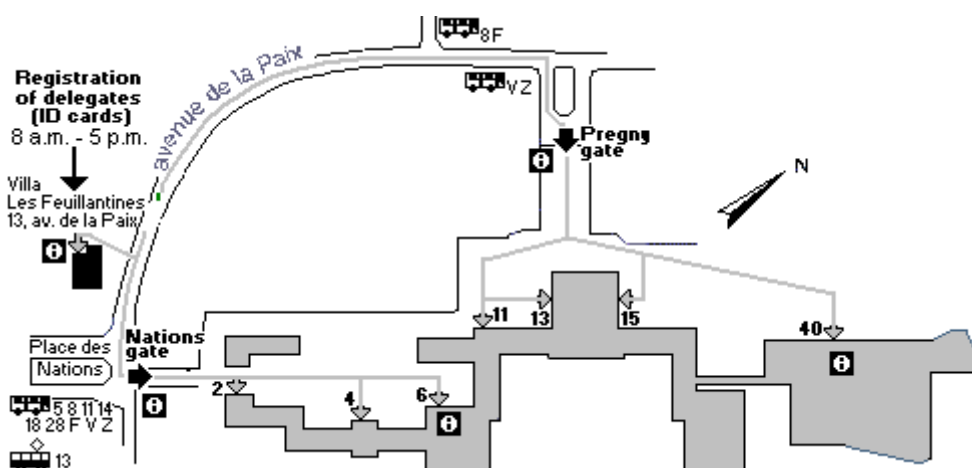
OECD:

Mr. Lars Thygesen
Head of Division, Statistical Information Systems and Support
Statistics Directorate
OECD
2, rue André Pascal
F-75775 Paris Cedex 16 Tel. +331 4524 8402
France e-mail: lars.thygesen@oecd.org

How to find the UN building in Geneva:



Where to obtain the entry pass (Security Identification Office, Villa les Feuillantines, 13 avenue de la Paix):



Entry for delegates with valid ground pass: "Place des Nations gate" and "Pregny gate"
Entry for visitors: "Pregny gate" only
Note: a valid photo ID is needed to obtain the ground pass and to gain the entry to the UN premises.

Please send this form by fax to the UNECE Statistical Division: +4122 9170040 and bring this original with you to Geneva
An additional form is required for spouses.



UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA

Meeting Registration Form

Only for meetings organized by the UNECE Statistical Division

Please Print

Date

Title and dates of the meeting

UNECE/Eurostat OECD meeting on Management of Statistical Information Systems (MSIS)
(Geneva 17-19 May 2004)

Delegation of country, Organization or Agency

Participant

Family Name

First Name(s)

Mr.
Mrs.
Ms.
Date of birth (DD/MM/YYYY) / /

Participation Category

Head of delegation (member country) Observer (international organization) Other (Please specify)
Delegation member (member country) Non-governmental organization
Observer (country) (in observer status with ECOSOC)

Participating From / Until

From Until

Do you have already a valid (at the time of the meeting) badge for entry to the UN Office at Geneva? (leave blank if not sure)

Document language preference

English French Russian

Place of issue of the passport or ID	Passport or ID Number	Valid Until
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Official occupation (in own country)		
<input type="text"/>		
Permanent official address		
<input type="text"/>		
Official telephone N°	Fax N°	E-mail address
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>
Address in Geneva (if known at the time of registration)		
<input type="text"/>		

I intend to submit a paper on (working title and topic)

On Issue of ID Card

Participant Signature

Date

Security Use Only

Card N°. Issued

Initials, UN Official