

**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE  
CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS**

Second Meeting of the 2011/2012 Bureau  
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For information

Item 7 of the Provisional  
Agenda

**INFORMATION REQUESTED BY EXCOM FOR THE ECE REVIEW  
SUBPROGRAMME 3 – STATISTICS**

*DRAFT*

**Current areas of activity, key results achieved and expected future results**

Total resources allocated to this subprogramme:  
RB posts: 1 D1; 18 P posts; 9 G posts (from 1 January 2012, 2 P-posts are cut); XB posts: none

Current areas of activity	Key results achieved in 2010-11	Expected future results	Priority (H, M or L)
<b>1. Coordination of international statistical work</b>			
1.1. Secretariat for the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) and its Bureau	The UNECE secretariat has provided support to the Conference and its Bureau in executing their <b>key role of coordination</b> of international statistical activities in UNECE region. Statistical work is coordinated and duplication avoided between the UNECE, OECD, Eurostat, UN/DESA, IMF, World Bank, CIS-STAT and other international organizations. The CES plenary session and three annual meetings of the Bureau provided continuous oversight of <b>the statistical work programme</b> and <b>ensured that it reflects the priorities of the member countries</b> . The meetings attracted <b>participation at a high level</b> (heads of national and international statistical organisations). Many <b>countries outside the region participate</b> , such as Australia, Brazil, Chile, China, Columbia, Japan, New Zealand, Mexico, Mongolia, Republic of Korea, and South Africa. The Conference attracted 161 participants from 56 countries and 16 international organizations in 2011, and 161 participants from 55 countries and 14 international organizations in 2010.	The UNECE secretariat will continue to provide high quality secretariat support to the Conference and its Bureau. With the continuous supervision of the CES and its Bureau, <b>resources are redirected flexibly</b> according to the initiatives and priorities of member countries. The activities often lead to outputs with a global impact, for example by creating <b>new standards that solve current problems of the statistical offices</b> . The CES will continue to <b>attract participation at high level, including from outside the UNECE region</b> , to ensure global outreach for UNECE work.	H
1.2. Annual seminars on important topics for national statistical systems	In 2010-2011, the seminars explored the following topics: a) <b>Spatial statistics</b> , in response to greater demands for detailed regional and spatial information and mapping of data; b) <b>Impact of global crises on statistical systems</b> - identifying good practices	In 2012, the seminars will discuss: a) Challenges of <b>future population censuses</b> , drawing on the experience from the 2010 round of censuses, and the implementation of CES recommendations. The outcome of	H

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	<p>how NSOs can react flexibly to new data demands emanating from the crisis;</p> <p>c) <b>Measuring human capital</b> in order to analyse competitiveness of economies, performance of the education and health sectors, and sustainability;</p> <p>d) <b>Innovations in data collection and sharing</b> to gain efficiency savings in statistical production.</p> <p>All of these seminars led to follow-up actions to prepare concrete outputs.</p>	<p>the seminar will feed into the UN Statistical Commission's global analysis of the recent censuses.</p> <p>b) New challenges in implementing the <b>UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics</b> (see 1.5 below).</p> <p>Topics for 2013 seminars will be selected in consultation with member countries.</p>	
1.3. In-depth reviews of international statistical work	<p>The in-depth reviews led to the following specific outcomes to promote innovation and use of best practices in statistics:</p> <p>a) Development of guidelines on <b>statistical dissemination and communication</b>;</p> <p>b) A review of <b>government finance, fiscal and public sector statistics</b> to respond to the data gaps revealed by the financial crisis;</p> <p>c) Development of a wiki tool for sharing information on <b>the use of secondary and mixed sources for official statistics</b> to take advantage of the new kinds of data sources available; and publication of a training manual.</p> <p>d) Preparation of practical guidelines on <b>time-use surveys</b> – an important source of information on living conditions, social changes, gender equality, etc.</p> <p>e) An inventory of current work on <b>measuring information society, and statistics on science, technology and innovation</b>.</p>	<p>In 2012-2013, the CES will review areas where innovation is needed to improve relevance of statistics and efficiency of work. The review of <b>education statistics</b> will explore possibilities to improve comparability and quality of education statistics. The review of <b>global manufacturing</b> will look at possibilities to develop recommendations on how to solve the problem of measuring multinational activities from the view point of the national economy. The Bureau will consider challenges in <b>household surveys</b> to improve efficiency, reduce respondent burden and make use of the data from other sources. Some of the <b>previous reviews will result in outputs</b> during 2012-2013:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>Making Data Meaningful</i>, Part 4, on improving statistical literacy (review a)</li> <li>• Updated <i>Government Finance Statistics Manual</i> led by IMF (review b)</li> <li>• <i>Guidelines on time-use surveys</i> (review d)</li> </ul>	H
1.4. Database of international statistical activities	<p>The UNECE provided a <b>unique annually updated database of international statistical activities</b>, bringing together the work programmes of 30 international organizations to foster cooperation and avoid duplication of effort. The database is a tool for coordination of work in the CES, the countries and international organizations.</p>	<p>Provide <b>updated information on planned work in international statistics in 2012 and 2013</b> for all relevant international statistical organizations in UNECE region.</p>	H
1.5. Promoting Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics	<p><b>The UNECE promoted the implementation of the principles</b> through global assessments of statistical systems, advisory missions and capacity building (see point 3.2). The Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics define the role of official statistics making it clear to governments and users of statistics that a good system of official statistics must meet certain criteria regarding professionalism and independence. When statistics meet these standards, policymakers have access to relevant information, and can develop policies based on evidence rather than assumptions.</p>	<p>A CES seminar will be organised for heads of national statistical offices to <b>mark 20 years since the adoption of Fundamental Principles</b>, and to address new challenges in their implementation. The seminar will identify good practices and support national statistical offices in <b>providing relevant and impartial information</b>. The seminar will also respond to a call from the UN Statistical Commission for regional assessments of the implementation of the Principles.</p>	H

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<b>2. Methodological work: developing international standards, guidelines and recommendations</b>			
2.1. Methodological work in economic statistics	<p>Four <b>handbooks and guides</b> on economic statistics were finalized:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Impact of globalization in national accounts</b> – providing the first international guidelines to national statistical offices on how to compile economic statistics under the influence of the growing cross-border movement of people, capital, goods and services;</li> <li>• <b>Measurement of household income</b> – updated handbook to reflect the developments over the last decade in data sources and methods and to provide the latest practical and quality assurance guidelines;</li> <li>• <b>Seasonal adjustment</b> of key economic indicators – provides practical instructions for using the latest techniques for more timely detection of changes in the economy and improved comparability between countries, in particular in the EECCA and SEE countries;</li> <li>• <b>House price indices</b> – contributing to a new international manual on compilation of house price indices developed under the auspices of the UN Intersecretariat Working Group on Price Statistics.</li> </ul> <p>A survey on the challenges in implementing the new global standard, the <b>2008 System of National Accounts (the 2008 SNA)</b> in EECCA countries was undertaken. A survey on <b>business registers</b> in EECCA countries assessed the quality of this key source of economic statistics and identified the most urgent needs for capacity building in this area. Three <b>capacity building workshops</b> have been carried out to improve economic statistics in EECCA and SEE countries: on short-term statistics and seasonal adjustment, measuring consumer prices and implementation of the 2008 SNA.</p>	<p>New work will be started to develop guidelines and recommendations to improve the quality and international comparability of economic statistics, and to address the common problems of statistical production related to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Global Production:</b> This was identified by the Group of Experts on the impact of globalization on national accounts as a priority area for preparing guidelines as it is currently a particular source of discrepancies in economic statistics;</li> <li>• <b>Globalization in economic statistics:</b> An interactive online wiki based platform for collection of best practices on dealing with the effects of globalization will be established. It will be regularly updated by the countries;</li> <li>• <b>Regional implementation plan for 2008 SNA:</b> A regional implementation plan for the EECCA and SEE countries will be developed at the request of the UN Statistical Commission.</li> </ul> <p>Further work will be carried out to <b>improve key economic statistics</b> in the EECCA and SEE countries, including short-term indicators and implementation of the 2008 SNA through seminars and workshops.</p>	H
2.2. Methodological work in social and demographic statistics	<p>Several <b>handbooks and guides</b> on social and demographic statistics with a global outreach have been finalized:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Manual on gender statistics</b> – guidance on producing and using gender statistics, published in English and Russian; the World Bank translates it into other languages for use outside the UNECE region;</li> <li>• <b>Manual on victimization surveys</b> – methodological guidelines for improving crime statistics based on measuring victimization in the society, first international guidelines on this topic;</li> <li>• Guides on <b>migration statistics:</b> (a) guidelines for exchanging data to improve emigration statistics; (b) toolkit for international migration statistics in the EECCA countries;</li> <li>• <b>Measuring the quality of employment</b> – innovative work in official statistics proposing a set of indicators to facilitate understanding of the quality</li> </ul>	<p>New work is undertaken to develop guidelines and recommendations on social and demographic statistics:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Guidelines on <b>time use surveys</b>, which provide indispensable data on quality of life and well being, by 2013. Time use data has a particularly important role in current international efforts to enhance the measurement of social progress beyond the use of GDP;</li> <li>• Guidelines on the measurement of <b>socio-economic conditions of migrants</b>, by 2013;</li> <li>• Guidelines on <b>improving migration statistics</b> by using household surveys, administrative data, population censuses and other data sources, by 2012;</li> <li>• Principles of <b>classifying crimes</b> – to improve</li> </ul>	H

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	<p>of employment from the point of view of safety and security of employment, balancing work and family life, work motivation, etc., linked to the ILO “Decent work” initiative;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Guidelines on measuring emerging forms of <b>households and families</b>;</li> <li>Survey module on <b>measuring health status</b> – an innovative tool for better measurement of the health status of the population;</li> <li>Survey module on <b>violence against women</b> to collect data for the globally agreed indicators of violence against women, in response to the General Assembly resolutions on eliminating violence against women.</li> </ul> <p><b>Online inventory of information sources on migration</b> in the ECE region was launched in 2011. UNECE contributed to <b>success of the 2010 round of population and housing censuses</b> by building capacity to implement in the EECCA and SEE countries the Conference of European Statisticians recommendations on population censuses and by monitoring the population and housing censuses in the UN Administered Region of Kosovo.</p> <p>To support EECCA and SEE countries in implementing the UNECE guidelines and recommendations, <b>16 capacity building</b> workshops were carried out on monitoring MDGs, gender statistics, measuring violence against women, population censuses and migration statistics.</p>	<p>international comparability of crime statistics, by 2012.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>UNECE recommendations for the <b>2020 round of population and housing censuses</b> will be completed by 2015; the work will begin in 2012.</li> <li>Enhanced <b>monitoring of MDGs</b> in the UNECE region based on comparable indicators and additional indicators of specific interest to UNECE countries.</li> <li>Set of indicators to measure key aspects of <b>gender equality</b> and to monitor gender-relevant policies, by 2013.</li> </ul> <p><b>Data clearinghouse on international migration</b> immigration in EECCA countries to disseminate data and improve data quality. It will become operational in 2012. UNECE will assess implications of different definitions of <b>migrants’ length of stay</b> on migration estimates, by 2012. In 2012-2013, <b>capacity building</b> workshops are planned in the area of monitoring MDGs, gender statistics and migration statistics.</p>	
2.3. Methodological work in environment and multi-domain statistics	<p>A publication on <i>Measuring Sustainable Development</i> was issued in 2009. <b>Work towards defining a conceptual framework for sustainable development</b> indicators is ongoing.</p> <p>The Committee on Environmental Policy and the Conference of European Statisticians worked together to <b>improve environmental indicators</b> in EECCA and SEE countries. This work identified production methods and constructed time series for half of the new environmental indicators defined in UNECE guidelines. Important new indicators, not currently included in the guidelines have been identified.</p> <p><b>A survey on climate change related statistics</b> was conducted to assess the current state and plans of statistical offices in collecting emission data, compiling greenhouse gas inventories, and producing climate change indicators. UNECE works in close collaboration with Eurostat, the UN Statistics Division, and the UN Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting.</p> <p><b>Work plans for capacity building on environmental indicators</b> were drafted to help EECCA and SEE countries to develop sound and reliable environmental indicators for setting priorities, evaluating policies and assessing compliance with international commitments.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A <b>conceptual framework for measuring sustainable development</b> – publication planned for 2012;</li> <li>Continue to <b>review</b>, jointly with the Environment Division, <b>the UNECE Guidelines for the Application of Environmental Indicators in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia</b> – to improve comparability and availability of environmental indicators;</li> <li>Identify practical steps to support future development of <b>climate change related statistics</b> to meet user needs.</li> <li>Follow-up to new demands emerging from the <b>Rio+20 process</b> in the area of sustainable development including preparations for the summit in 2012.</li> <li>In 2012-2013, <b>capacity building</b> workshops are planned to develop a systematic approach to measuring sustainable development and identifying environmental vulnerabilities in the EECCA and SEE countries. The work will address data gaps in light of analyzing the 2015 goals set for MDGs.</li> </ul>	H

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2.4. Methodological work on streamlining statistical production	<p><b>A High-level Group for Strategic Developments in Business Architecture in Statistics</b> was set up to oversee international work on streamlining statistical production. The strategic vision, endorsed by the Conference of European Statisticians, is to rethink statistical products and production processes, realise efficiency gains, improve standardisation, and take advantage of the increasing availability of data from different sources including the private sector.</p> <p>The following <b>handbooks and guides</b> were published to improve production and dissemination of statistics in countries. They are also used outside the region as no other such guides exist internationally:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Making data meaningful: Part 3: communicating with the media</b> – to promote good practices in media relations of the statistical offices. The series ‘Making data meaningful’ has proven very popular, the first two issues have been reprinted and translated into other languages to meet the high demand;</li> <li>• <b>Common Metadata Framework</b> – an online compendium of standards related to statistical metadata, a unique information resource for experts in statistical offices;</li> <li>• <b>Generic Statistical Business Process Model</b> – a global standard for the organization and management of statistical production;</li> <li>• <b>Knowledge bases on statistical data editing, and on using administrative and secondary sources for statistics</b> – to improve data collection and processing in statistical offices.</li> </ul> <p><b>Five capacity building workshops</b> were carried out for streamlining statistical production and improving dissemination in EECCA, SEE and other countries.</p>	<p>The series of “Making data meaningful” guides will continue to provide guidance for disseminating official statistics; a new volume will focus on improving <b>statistical literacy</b>.</p> <p>The UNECE plans to make inventories of <b>good practices in human resources management</b> at the request of the statistical offices.</p> <p>Further steps will be taken to facilitate the sharing of software, ideas and experiences between statistical organizations to <b>encourage more efficient and sustainable national statistical production systems</b>.</p> <p>At the request of the CES, new work on data collection and data sources will include the organisation of an expert group meeting in 2012.</p>	H
<b>3. Capacity building</b>			
3.1. Coordination of capacity building activities	To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of technical assistance, UNECE <b>coordinated capacity building</b> in Central Asia, in agreement with Eurostat, OECD and the Interstate Statistics Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT). The needs for support in these countries were identified and discussed to target activities to match the needs.	The UNECE will continue to <b>coordinate capacity building</b> activities in Central Asia, following the agreement with other international organizations. The aim is to ensure that the capacity building is demand driven and to identify synergies between the international organizations involved.	H
3.2. Global assessments of national statistical systems	The Global Assessments (GA) of national statistical systems were carried out in <b>Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine advocated for sound legal and institutional frameworks</b> for national statistics and <b>added transparency</b> in applying the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. Long-term development plans to improve national statistics have been drafted by <b>Armenia and Kazakhstan</b> as a result of GA-s carried out in 2008-2009.	The Global Assessments of national statistical systems will continue, and have been requested by <b>Moldova, Belarus and Tajikistan</b> for 2012, and <b>Kazakhstan and Mongolia</b> for 2013. <b>Implementation of the recommendations</b> of the 2010-2011 GA-s in Azerbaijan, Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine will be monitored.	H

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3.3. Capacity building and advisory services	UNECE was involved in <b>10 statistical capacity building projects</b> either as a leader or a partner. The <b>training workshops</b> carried out under the projects, mainly <b>in English and Russian</b> , focused on promoting the implementation of the UNECE statistical guidelines and recommendations, as well as the regional implementation of global statistical standards. <b>Advisory missions</b> were undertaken at the request of countries (Ukraine, Mongolia, Russian, Kyrgyzstan, Kazakhstan, Armenia and the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia). The missions addressed topical challenges of the countries in economic, trade and industrial statistics, treatment of globalization, population censuses and other overall needs of the countries.	The UNECE Statistical Division will continue to <b>carry out capacity building projects</b> to address countries' needs, depending on the available funding and support for new project proposals. Training <b>workshops will be tailored</b> to the needs of countries and will provide practical exercises in English and Russian. <b>Advisory services will be provided at the request and in response to countries' needs</b> and priorities by making use of the expertise of the UNECE Statistical Division.	H
<b>4. UNECE Statistical Database</b>			
4.1. Provide up-to-date statistics for the UNECE region	The UNECE statistical database provides information on member countries for 33 statistical domains, via a public web interface in English and Russian. Many EECCA and SEE countries do not publish historical time series, thus, the UNECE Database is <b>the only public source</b> for some indicators and countries. The UNECE has streamlined the work by implementing <b>automatic data collection</b> from Eurostat and UNESCO. User services have been improved with a new glossary of statistical terminology, a more user-friendly web interface and automatic notifications of data updates. According to the 2010 user survey, <b>75% of users are satisfied</b> with the quality, timeliness and usability of the database, and 90% are satisfied with the metadata.	The UNECE will continue to provide up-to-date data on member countries for the most relevant statistical domains based on regular monitoring of user needs. <b>A new set of globalization indicators</b> will be published, based on the existing data in the UNECE statistical database. The Division will consider possibilities to respond to user requests <b>for energy, environment and sustainable development data</b> . According the quality improvement strategy, the Division will continuously improve work processes by the <b>further development of automatic data processing</b> .	H
4.2. Develop and publish indicators for monitoring progress towards MDGs	A regional <b>MDG database was launched in summer 2011</b> , including up-to-date indicators <b>for analyzing progress against all eight MDGs</b> related to poverty, education, gender, child mortality, maternal health, diseases, environmental sustainability and global partnerships. Several capacity building projects on MDGs have <b>enabled the availability of suitable data</b> from a wide range of ECE countries.	Further work is needed to <b>fill in the main data gaps and improve the quality</b> of MDG indicators by means of UNECE capacity building projects. The MDG Database will be maintained and <b>improved with new, nationally produced indicators</b> for monitoring progress towards MDGs.	H
4.3. The UNECE statistical database as the basis for methodological guidance	Collecting key statistics for the UNECE database provides <b>up-to-date information on the quality of national statistics</b> and verifies improvements made by countries based on UNECE methodological guidelines and capacity building. Support for EECCA countries is planned based on the national statistics available in the database. This work also ensures that UNECE staff have up-to-date knowledge of national statistics and the related production methodology and are <b>able to contribute to methodological guidelines in substance</b> .	The secretariat will assess the <b>quality of national statistics</b> and address the data gaps by providing support where needed. The database is also used as a source of information on the state of statistics to <b>design support for countries</b> for example in improving methodology and indicators for monitoring progress towards the Millennium Development Goals.	H

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4.4. Provide a service for statistical data work in other UNECE Divisions	The UNECE statistical database currently provides a platform for preparing and disseminating data of other UNECE sub-programmes. For example, <b>forestry statistics</b> provide data on forest resources and biological diversity, and <b>transport statistics</b> cover traffic on roads, railways and waterways, road accidents and transport infrastructure. Internal users <b>benefit from streamlined tools and methods</b> for data collection, processing and disseminating.	Continue to provide database services for <b>forestry and transport statistics</b> . Provide <b>database services for any UNECE Division</b> that needs to collect and maintain data for their work. Streamline and develop the database tools further for the benefit of the users to enable <b>efficient and easier data management within UNECE</b> .	H
<b>5. Public outreach and communication</b>			
5.1. Improved public outreach of ECE work	A web-based <b>library of training materials</b> was set up to improve public outreach of UNECE training activities in statistics. The library brings together all training materials prepared by the Statistical Division for different capacity building activities. Several <b>knowledge bases using wiki technology</b> have been set up to enhance sharing of information between ECE and member states across statistical domains. The UNECE plays a leading role in an initiative called <i>Geneva – Hub of International Statistics</i> to improve collaboration between the organizations engaged in statistical work in Geneva and to improve the visibility of their work. The Division <b>analyses its public outreach</b> by an annual user survey and through web usage statistics.	The <b>knowledge bases</b> on different aspects of statistical production and the <b>library of training materials</b> will be continuously maintained to provide the latest up-to-date information on best practices. The Division will carry out an annual user survey and prepare quarterly reports on web usage. <b>Measures will be taken to meet user demand</b> and improve public outreach continuously.	H
5.2. Increase knowledge of the economic development of UNECE countries	The UNECE Statistical Database was <b>used for several UNECE reports</b> , i.e. regional analytical papers, MDG regional reports, environmental reviews etc. The Division produced about 50 <i>Facts &amp; Figures</i> articles to <b>increase knowledge of the economic development</b> of UNECE member countries. The biennial <i>Countries in Figures</i> publication provides an <b>overview of each UNECE country</b> , both in printed and electronic formats, and has proved to be very popular, enhancing the visibility of the whole UNECE, including key statistics from several UNECE Divisions.	The Statistical Division will provide and verify <b>data for UNECE reports</b> , MDG reports and environmental reviews by using the UNECE statistical database. About 50 <i>Facts &amp; Figures</i> articles are planned to be published during the next biennium to inform about <b>the progress in different economic and social areas in UNECE member countries</b> . A new edition of <i>Countries in Figures</i> will be published in 2013.	H
5.3. Support the public outreach of national statistical offices	The expertise and know-how accumulated with the UNECE is used to support <b>the EECCA and SEE countries</b> in improving their public outreach and dissemination statistics. As a result, Albania, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova and Mongolia <b>have started using PC-Axis</b> , to improve dissemination of national official statistics. This non-commercial software is widely used in European national statistical offices. Other regional commissions have also relied on the ECE expertise on dissemination tools in their capacity building projects.	<b>The Division's expertise</b> in databases and dissemination tools will continue to <b>support the EECCA and SEE countries</b> in improving the public outreach of their statistics.	H