

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Meeting of the 2015/2016 Bureau
Luxembourg, 9-10 February 2016

For discussion and
recommendations

Item IV (g) of the Provisional
Agenda

INTERIM REPORT
ON THE VALUE OF OFFICIAL STATISTICS

Note by the Task Force

The document introduces the interim report of the Task Force on the Value of Official Statistics. The Bureau reviewed the recommendations in the Interim Report, advised on further work and suggested issues for discussion at the CES plenary session to seek input from all countries.

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) established the Task Force on the Value of Official Statistics in March 2015 with the objective to define what users, stakeholders and society value in official statistics, and develop ways to measure this value for better understanding and communication of this value to society.
2. The Task Force includes representatives from the United Kingdom (chair), Mexico (vice chair), Canada, Ireland, New Zealand, Turkey, Eurostat and OECD. The Task Force held one face-to-face meeting in June 2015 at the time of the CES plenary session in Geneva, and held several videoconferences and two virtual work sessions.

II. INTERIM REPORT

3. The *Interim Report on the Value of Official Statistics* defines what users and stakeholders value in official statistics (section III), considers our comparative advantage (section IV), analyses current practices in statistical offices and other industries (section V), and explores ways to increase the value of official statistics through partnerships (section VI).
4. The Task Force conducted a survey of national statistical offices jointly with the UNECE High-Level Group Modernisation Committee on Products and Sources in October 2015. The survey provided concrete examples from 49 countries on the use of official statistics for decision making, impact of partnerships on the value of official statistics and current practices in the communication and measurement of the value.
5. **Section VII of the Interim Report provides first thoughts towards developing a measurement framework and a set of indicators** on the value of official statistics. The Task Force suggests using a combination of directly observable (downloads etc.) and subjective indicators (user and stakeholder surveys). The section presents key themes to be measured by these indicators, and a set of issues to be addressed in user surveys.
6. **Section VIII of the Interim Report formulates eight recommendations** for the national statistical offices and international work to continue developing and promoting official statistics as an indispensable asset to societies.

III. FURTHER WORK OF THE TASK FORCE

7. In line with the conclusions and findings of the Interim Report, the Task Force plans to:

- **Task 1: Agree on the measurement framework and select key indicators.** The Task Force will formulate an internationally harmonized minimum set of survey questions that could be used as a basis for user surveys by national statistical offices.
- **Task 2: Create a plug-and-play wiki platform to share best practices** in increasing, promoting and measuring the value of official statistics. The wiki tool could be created on the UNECE platform and be organized according to the eight recommendations of the Interim Report (section VIII). The October 2015 survey provides a good starting point for populating the wiki with practical examples, but will require active maintaining.

8. In line with the terms of reference of the Task Force, the second phase of work is likely to include:

- **Task 3: Pilot testing of the indicators** and the measurement framework.
- **Task 4: Collecting and analysing data to find evidence** of the value of official statistics. This could be done using the results and data from the pilot testing.
- **Task 5: Drafting a convincing narrative** for use by national and international statistical organizations for communicating the value of official statistics.
- **Task 6: Refining the recommendations** based on experience gathered during the pilot testing and data collection.

9. The second phase of work is expected to continue until the CES plenary session in June 2017, according to the following indicative timetable:

Timing	Task
Feb-May 2016	Agree on the measurement framework, select indicators and formulate harmonized survey questions. (task 1)
Mar-Jun 2016	Create a wiki tool and populate it with available best practices, seek comments and updates from countries (task 2)
Jun-Aug 2016	Launch pilot testing of the measurement framework and indicators, analyse the results and refine the framework (task 3)
Sep-Nov 2016	Analyse pilot countries' data and other sources to find evidence (task 4), draft a convincing narrative for communication (task 5)
Nov 2016-Jan 2017	Refine the recommendations and draft the final report (task 6), submit the recommendations and framework to the CES Bureau
Feb-Mar 2017	Consider feedback from the CES Bureau and finalise the recommendations
Mar 2017	Submit the recommendations to the CES members for electronic consultation
May 2017	Submit the recommendations to the 2017 CES plenary session for endorsement

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