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Economic Commission for Europe

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Item 11(a) of the provisional agenda

Programme of work of the Statistics subprogramme of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

Reports on the work of the Conference of European Statisticians, its Bureau and Teams of Specialists

Implementation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Statistical Programme 2018

Note by the secretariat

Addendum

Report of the Conference of European Statisticians Bureau meeting, 28 February -1 March 2019

Summary

The present report is submitted in compliance with the Rules Governing the Work of the Conference and its Bureau (ECE/CES/2007/8), adopted by the Conference of European Statisticians at its fifty-third plenary session. Referring to the Rules, the Bureau acts as a steering body of the Conference. The report includes decisions taken by the Bureau at its October 2018 meeting on the work carried out under the auspices of the Conference.

The report is submitted to the Conference of European Statisticians for information.



I. Introduction

1. The meeting of the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) was held in Washington, D.C. on 28 February – 1 March 2019, hosted by IMF in collaboration with the World Bank. The following members of the Bureau attended: Ms. M. Bruun (Chair, Finland), Mr. K. Pesendorfer (Austria), Mr. A. Arora (Canada), Mr. M. Kristof (Croatia), Mr. J. Santaella (Mexico), Ms. L. MacPherson (New Zealand), and Mr. J. Pullinger (United Kingdom). The following permanent observers also attended: Mr. V. Sokolin, (CIS-STAT), Ms. M. Kotzeva (Eurostat), Mr. M. Ducharme (IMF), Mr. Paul Schreyer (representing Ms. M. Durand, OECD), Ms. Haishan Fu (World Bank) and Ms. L. Bratanova (UNECE).
2. The following persons assisted members of the Bureau: Mr. Stéphane Dufour (Canada), Mr. A. Kosarev (CIS-Stat) and Ms. M.-J. Santos (Eurostat). Ms. T. Luige (UNECE) served as Secretary of the meeting supported by Ms. M. Cwiek (UNECE). Ms. N. Potok, Mr. M. Dumas and Mr. W. Wiatrowski (United States) participated in the meeting for selected agenda items at the invitation of the Chair. Staff members of the UNECE Statistical Division participated in selected agenda items via a phone conference.
3. Mr. S. Mnatsakanyan (Armenia) and the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) sent written comments on selected agenda items. The comments were presented to the Bureau and considered in the discussion.

II. In-depth reviews of selected statistical areas

A. Various types of satellite accounts

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/2 by Canada

4. The Bureau conducted an in-depth review of various types of satellite accounts based on a paper by Canada. The Bureau made the following comments:
 - The paper is very timely in the light of increasing importance of satellite accounts and proliferation of different types of these accounts. It is a good input to the ongoing debate on the usefulness of the System of National Accounts (SNA), which at the moment does not address the current priorities such as digitalization or sustainable development.
 - Satellite accounts allow to address many user information needs and at the same time keep the core of national accounts intact.
 - Satellite accounts do not decrease the credibility of SNA. The work on satellite accounts should inform the revision of SNA, which need to become more iterative, inclusive and responsive to the changes in economy while maintaining the current strength of the SNA framework.
 - The paper presents a useful typology of satellite accounts. It is important to have general guidance and principles for satellite accounts to follow existing international standards and harmonise the approaches.
 - An inventory of satellite accounts would be very useful but needs to be coordinated by one institution, for example UNECE.
 - The Bureau strongly supported the three recommendations proposed in the paper and stressed the urgency of advancing the work. The Bureau asked for a concrete proposal how to move forward with developing a general guide on satellite accounting and an online inventory of published satellite accounts.

Conclusion

5. The Secretariat will consult with the authors of the in-depth review paper and present to the Bureau a proposal how to move forward on developing a general guide to

satellite accounting and an online inventory of published satellite accounts. The Secretariat will follow up the work of the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts (ISWGNA) on preparing a guidance note on an extended set of satellite accounts (existing or to be developed) that could be presented for endorsement to the UN Statistical Commission.

B. Measurement of gender identity

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/3 by Canada and the United Kingdom

6. The Bureau reviewed in-depth measurement of gender identity based on a paper by Canada and the United Kingdom. The Bureau made the following comments:

- The topic is very important but sensitive and difficult both conceptually and statistically. The challenge is to collect data on a community which is very little understood. The community needs to be identified and categories defined, while the terms used by the community itself remain fluid.
- The topic is statistically difficult because groups are small and false responses can create a large variance, particularly in self-completed questionnaires.
- An important question is how to approach this issue in the upcoming 2020 census round. This is particularly challenging for countries with register-based censuses as gender identity is usually not captured in the registers.
- The paper is related to a broader debate on diversity. For further work it may be useful to exchange experience with the statistical work on other minority groups and on sensitive topics like ethnicity and religion.
- For further work it is necessary to look beyond the UNECE region. For example, among the most advanced countries in this area are India, Nepal and Pakistan. It is also important to engage closely with the communities with non-traditional gender identities.
- The topic is evolving and it is necessary to keep following the developments and sharing experiences in this area.

Conclusion

7. The Secretariat will consult with the Steering Group on Gender Statistics and the authors of the paper and present a concrete proposal on further work at the next Bureau meeting.

C. Selection of topics for in-depth reviews in 2019-2020 and proposals for the 2020 CES seminars

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/4 and 5 by UNECE

1. In-depth reviews in 2019-2020

8. The Bureau discussed the topics for in-depth reviews in October 2019 and February 2020 based on a proposal by the Secretariat.

9. An additional topic for an in-depth review was proposed: measuring statistical capacity. The review could build on the work of HLG-PCCB on statistical capacity, Eurostat's peer reviews, OECD work on assessments, and UNECE/Eurostat/EFTA global assessments of statistical systems in countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. Following an in-depth review, there could be a CES seminar on this topic.

Conclusion

10. The following topics were selected to be discussed in-depth by the Bureau in October 2019 and February 2020, including the countries and organizations responsible for preparing the papers that will provide basis for the discussion:

- International migration and cross-border mobility (Mexico to lead; in October 2019)
- Measuring well-being in the era of “digital society”: implications for official statistics (Canada to lead with input from the United States; first discussion in October 2019, full review in February 2020)
- Role of statistical community in climate action (Steering Group on climate change related statistics; planned in February 2020)
- Subjective poverty measures (New Zealand to lead (tbc) with input from the United States; planned in February 2020)
- Measuring statistical capacity (timing and lead author to be confirmed).

2. Possible topics for 2020 CES seminars

11. The Bureau reviewed the list of possible seminar topics for the CES plenary session in 2020. The list will be sent for an electronic consultation to all CES members before the 2019 CES plenary session. The Bureau made the following comments on the list:

- The topics on ‘Innovation in statistical organizations’ and follow-up to the 2019 CES seminar on ‘Emerging role of NSOs as offices for statistics and data’ can be combined. HLG-MOS could lead preparation of a possible seminar on this topic.
- A topic dealing with the practical implementation of the models developed under HLG-MOS can be added to the list of topics.

Conclusion

12. The Secretariat will update the list based on the Bureau discussion and circulate it for electronic consultation to all CES members. The results of the consultation will be presented to the Bureau at its short meeting on 26 June 2019. The Bureau will then make a proposal to the Conference for the 2020 CES seminar topics under agenda item 8 on 27 June 2019.

III. United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Statistical work and Conference of European Statisticians teams of specialists

A. Gender statistics

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/6 and Add.1 by the Steering Group on gender statistics)

13. The Bureau reviewed the progress report and new terms of reference of the Steering Group on gender statistics, and made the following comments:

- The Bureau strongly supported the continuation of the Steering Group and pushing the boundaries of gender statistics. The work in this area is more important than ever in light of growing policy emphasis on gender issues.
- In future work, the Steering Group should explore using georeferenced data for gender statistics and continue the focus on dissemination and communication.
- IMF is increasing its involvement in gender statistics, in particular through a survey on access to financial services.
- The World Bank is working on gender issues related to land ownership, which also requires georeferenced data and is linked with measurement of poverty. The

challenge is to integrate different types of data to allow for deeper analysis while protecting confidentiality.

Conclusion

14. The Bureau approved the progress report and updated terms of reference of the Steering Group on gender statistics and extended its mandate until 2024.

B. Circular migration

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/7 by the Steering Group on migration statistics

15. The Bureau discussed the progress in the implementation of the guidance on defining and measuring circular migration and made the following comments:

- The phenomenon of circular migration is complex. Further testing of definitions and analysis are encouraged when the EU data will be available to verify whether the current small estimates for circular migration reflect the reality or the definition does not allow to fully capture the phenomenon. Most suitable for testing would be countries with a register-based system and a significant scale of migration.
- New Zealand has just moved to model-based estimates of migration flows using tax data, health data and other available sources, and is building longitudinal datasets.

Conclusion

16. The Secretariat in collaboration with Eurostat will report back to the Bureau in October 2020 on further progress in the implementation and testing of the developed methodology.

C. Measuring social exclusion

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/8 by Task Force

17. The Bureau reviewed the first steps planned by the Task Force on measuring social exclusion.

Conclusion

18. The Bureau expressed support to the work and encouraged the Task Force to continue as proposed in the paper.

D. Statistics for Sustainable Development Goals

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/9 by UNECE

19. The Bureau was informed about a UNECE annual Regional Forum on Sustainable Development which this year will include a focus event on statistics and data (22 March 2019, Geneva).

20. The Bureau discussed the preparation of an annual report on the regional progress towards SDGs based on existing statistics and data, starting from 2020, which is requested by the UNECE Executive Committee. The Bureau made the following comments:

- The Bureau supported the production of the report using national data. It recommended limiting the additional burden to countries, which are already receiving many uncoordinated requests from the custodian agencies that are responsible for different SDG indicators. The data should be drawn as much as possible from the national reporting platforms
- The report should explain which approach was followed for obtaining the data and why

- The report should highlight good practices in providing statistics for SDGs
- Agenda 2030 advocates for country driven provision of data for measuring progress towards SDGs. The report can be an opportunity to highlight the challenges in the global reporting system, particularly from the perspective of countries.

Conclusion

21. The Secretariat will take the Bureau comments into account in planning for the provision of data for the UNECE annual report on progress towards SDGs in the region.

E. Modernisation of official statistics

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/10 and 10/Add.1 by HLG-MOS

22. The Bureau reviewed the report on outcomes of the projects overseen by HLG-MOS in 2018 and the priority projects for 2019. The Bureau raised the following points:

- HLG-MOS has undertaken an impressive amount of work and developed products that are widely used in the statistical community, including at the global level. The challenge is to balance the maintenance of established products while continuing to innovate
- It is challenging to reconcile the level of ambition with the available limited resources, including the human resources in the Secretariat. Many countries offer contributions in kind but financial contributions are limited. It is important to prioritise activities
- A strong link between the Bureau and HLG-MOS allows to ensure the strategic orientation of the modernization work. The modernization work should also provide benefits to the traditional work in other statistical areas
- Models, standards and other products developed under HLG-MOS should be presented to the Conference for endorsement following the established process, including review and approval by the Bureau and electronic consultation with all CES members.

Conclusion

23. The Bureau approved the annual report of HLG-MOS and strongly supported the work. HLG-MOS will further discuss prioritization of work and how to balance the new work and maintenance of the existing models.

24. HLG-MOS will submit the revised versions of GSBPM and GAMSO to the 2019 CES plenary session for endorsement accompanied with a note explaining how the revisions were organized and consulted.

25. The models, standards and frameworks developed under HLG-MOS should be consulted with CES members and submitted to CES for endorsement.

F. Modernising statistical legislation

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/11 by UNECE

26. The Bureau reviewed the concept note for a meeting of experts on statistical legislation. The following comments were made:

- Accessing data sources would be a particularly important topic to consider
- For OECD accession countries, the most important topics are related to the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, such as guaranteeing the professional independence of NSOs
- Eurostat offered to be a co-organizer of the meeting

- United Kingdom, OECD and the World Bank would like to be part of the Organizing Committee for the meeting.

Conclusion

27. The Bureau approved the concept note for the meeting. It will be co-organized by UNECE and Eurostat. The United Kingdom, OECD and the World Bank will be members of the Organizing Committee.

G. Measuring what matters

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/12 by Poland and UNECE

28. The Bureau reviewed the concept note and draft outline of electronic guidance on measuring what matters prepared by Poland and UNECE. The Bureau noted that the timeline is very ambitious.

Conclusion

29. The Bureau approved the concept note and outline. The Bureau recommended that the guidance should mainly take the form of principles and not be too detailed. The guidance should be sent for electronic consultation to all CES members before presenting it to the CES plenary session.

IV. Preparation of the Conference of European Statisticians 2019 plenary session

A. Organization of the 2019 CES seminar on “New data sources – accessibility and use”

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/13 by Switzerland and United States

30. The Bureau reviewed the updated outline of the seminar and made the following comments:

- The skills required to work with new data sources can be acquired also through partnerships. For example, academia may have good technical skills to work with the new data sources and may be interested in partnering with a statistical office to get access to its data. One way could be to establish centres of excellence on specific themes
- The difficult issues concern the context of access to new data sources, such as social licence, how to communicate the value proposition of access, privacy issues, etc.
- The seminar should consider examples of different types of new data sources which all require different skills, such as social media data, commercial sources and geospatial data
- The seminar should conclude with concrete decisions on how to move forward in this area.

Conclusion

31. The seminar organizers will proceed with preparations according to the presented outline. The seminar will take place on Wednesday 26 June 2019, starting at 09:40.

B. Organization of the 2019 CES seminar on “Emerging role of NSOs as offices for statistics and data”

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/14 by Canada, New Zealand and United Kingdom, and 15 by Estonia et al.

32. The Bureau reviewed the updated outline of the seminar and made the following comments:

- It would be very useful to define the key terms used in the seminar, such as data stewardship, data clearinghouse, data broker
- NSOs are in different situations, even in EU where they operate under the same regulatory framework. Some NSOs are invited by the governments to work on digitalization and data strategies while others are not, some offices are more proactive, etc. It will be good to hear about the experiences from countries in different situations. Eurostat will share with seminar organizers the outcomes of the relevant discussions from the Director Generals (DGINS) meeting in Vienna
- The seminar organizers need to incorporate the background paper prepared by Estonia et al. into the seminar. The paper will be of great help to NSOs on how to position themselves in the new environment and a good basis for moving forward in this area
- Developing guidance on how to deal with the new role of NSOs as offices for statistics and data will be very useful to many countries and is going to set the stage for years to come. The challenge is to have a balanced guidance applicable to countries with different circumstances
- Some of the recommendations in the current version of the background paper by Estonia et al. are quite far reaching. They could be rather called “observations”
- Given the complexity of the issues, we still need to exchange best practices and collect case studies before making recommendations and developing guidance. The CES seminar should consider some intermediate steps before concrete recommendations can be developed.

Conclusions

33. The seminar organizers will proceed with preparations according to the presented outline. The seminar will take place on Thursday, 27 June 2019, starting at 09:30.

34. The Bureau expressed support for the background paper developed by Estonia et al. and recommended to adjust the paper to take into account the issues raised by the Bureau.

35. For both CES seminars, the Bureau considered important to encourage active discussions and engagement during the seminar, including through interactive electronic tools (such as tweets and online questionnaires). The secretariat will share its experience with using such tools at its recent meetings.

C. Draft agenda and timetable for the 2019 CES plenary session

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/16 by UNECE

36. The Bureau reviewed the provisional agenda of the CES plenary session in 2019.

Conclusion

37. The Bureau approved the provisional agenda of the CES plenary session in 2019 subject to changes resulting from the decisions of the current Bureau meeting.

V. Rules governing the work of the Conference of European Statisticians and its Bureau

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/17 by UNECE

38. The Bureau discussed the proposed changes to the following three documents: Rules governing the work of the Conference of European Statisticians and its Bureau, Guidelines for the establishment and functioning of teams of specialists within CES and Procedure for adopting products and recommendations by CES (ECE/CES/2007/8). Some adjustments to these documents were needed in view of alignment with the 2009 UNECE rules and recent developments in the work of the Conference. As the Rules have worked well and there have been no issues in their implementation, the proposed amendments to the text are kept minimal.

Conclusion

39. The Bureau approved the proposed changes to the Rules governing the work of the Conference of European Statisticians and its Bureau, Guidelines for the establishment and functioning of teams of specialists within CES and Procedure for adopting products and recommendations by CES (ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/17). The updated documents will be presented in June 2019 to the Conference for adoption.

VI. Conference of European Statisticians Guidelines and Recommendations for endorsement in 2019

A. Measuring hazardous events and disasters

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/18 by the Task Force

40. The Bureau reviewed the draft Recommendations on the role of official statistics in measuring hazardous events and disasters and made the following comments:

- The Bureau supported the Recommendations. The document will be very useful for statistical offices in communicating with the other agencies involved in the work related to hazardous events and disasters, and explaining what official statistics can and can not do in this area
- Improving the related data is part of a more strategic discussion on improving the quality of administrative records, in particular on land, buildings and dwellings
- In a longer-term perspective, the frameworks and classifications referred to in the Recommendations should go through a formal process with the UN Statistical Commission to be adopted as international statistical standards
- For future work in this area, it may be worth exploring whether to link with an initiative on an index for risk management ('Inform' initiative).

Conclusion

41. After editing the draft *Recommendations on the role of official statistics in measuring hazardous events and disasters* for language and clarity, the Secretariat will circulate the document for electronic consultation to all CES members. Subject to a positive outcome of the consultation, the Recommendations will be submitted to the 2019 CES plenary session for endorsement.

B. Waste statistics

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/19 by the Task Force

42. The Bureau discussed the draft *Framework on Waste Statistics* and made the following comments:

- The Bureau is concerned that there are still doubts about the definition of waste which is a very important part of the conceptual framework
- There are differences between the scope and definitions used in the draft framework and in the international questionnaires of Eurostat/OECD and UNSD/UNEP. These have to be clarified
- The formulation of recommendations has to be adjusted and made more precise (e.g. the recommendations can not ask for reviewing the existing legal frameworks in EU countries)
- The draft framework is not ready for electronic consultation and submission to the CES plenary session for endorsement
- The coverage of illegal and unmanaged waste in the framework is welcome as substantial volumes of such waste are generated in countries where waste management is not sufficiently well organized
- It is recommended to include cost criteria in further discussions on recycled wastes.

Conclusion

43. The Task Force will continue the work to clarify the key terminology and submit the updated draft to the next CES Bureau meeting, which will decide if it can be sent for electronic consultation to all CES members in winter/spring 2020. The Framework is planned to be submitted to the 2020 CES plenary session for endorsement.

C. Satellite accounts for education and training

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/20 by the Task Force

44. The Bureau reviewed the draft Satellite Account for Education and Training: Compilation Guide and made the following comments:

- The Bureau commended the Task Force chaired by Statistics Norway for the excellent work
- The development of an extended system of accounts on measuring wellbeing and sustainability is one of the priorities on the SNA research agenda. The in-depth review of satellite accounts (based on a paper by Statistics Canada) concluded that there was a need of a system of “recommended” satellite accounts that would complement the current SNA. We need to think how to link the Satellite Account for Education and Training (SAET) to this system
- There is a need to consider the next step: how to integrate human capital estimates in national accounts
- The pilot testing helps to reveal data gaps and identify areas that should be further developed
- Testing the developed framework was important to check if the available data sources support the concepts. Eurostat has started to implement the guide in a number of countries. The Bureau needs to discuss in future how to extend the compilation of SAET to more countries
- The bibliography and cross-references in the compilation guide should be checked before circulating for electronic consultation
- UNSD recognizes the importance of this work and would extend the consultation of the guide to the global level.

Conclusion

45. The Secretariat will circulate the draft *Satellite account for education and training: compilation guide* for electronic consultation to all CES members. Subject to a positive

outcome of the consultation, the Guide will be submitted to the 2019 CES plenary session for endorsement.

46. UNSD will circulate the Guide to all other countries for a global consultation.

47. The Secretariat will present a proposal to the Bureau how to follow up on this work in October 2019.

D. Measuring older populations in institutions

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/21 by the Task Force

48. The Bureau reviewed the draft *Recommendations on measuring older populations in institutions* and strongly supported it as a very timely and useful document for obtaining more data on vulnerable populations.

Conclusion

49. The Secretariat will circulate the draft *Recommendations on measuring older populations in institutions* for electronic consultation to all CES members. Subject to a positive outcome of the consultation, the Recommendations will be submitted to the 2019 CES plenary session for endorsement.

E. Strategic communications framework

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/22 and Add.1-2 by HLG-MOS

50. The Bureau reviewed the draft *Strategic Communications Framework* and made the following comments:

- As communication is a cross-cutting topic, it is important that the material is widely shared and used also in subject-matter areas of statistics
- Some elements of the framework are more developed than others. It would be useful in future to have more detailed guidance on specific issues, such as initiating strategic communications and establishing enduring relationships
- The result of the second phase of the project (by 2020) should also be submitted to the Bureau and eventually for endorsement to the CES plenary session. This will ensure that the good outcomes of the work under HLG-MOS are widely shared.

Conclusion

51. The Secretariat will circulate the draft *Strategic communications framework* for electronic consultation to all CES members. Subject to a positive outcome of the consultation, the Framework will be submitted to the 2019 CES plenary session for endorsement.

VII. United Nations Economic Commission for Europe statistics Programme of Work documents

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/23 and 24 by UNECE

52. The Bureau reviewed the documents related to the implementation of the Statistics subprogramme prepared in the context of the United Nations secretariat's planning and reporting process. The draft programme of work document for 2020 is prepared in a new format in line with the change of the UN budget planning from biannual to annual budgets on a trial basis, beginning in 2020.

Conclusion

53. The Bureau approved the Report on the implementation of the Statistical Programme 2018 (ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/23) and the Draft programme of work document for 2020 (ECE/CES/BUR/2019/FEB/24).

VIII. Meeting with the World Bank

54. The World Bank (WB) presented its activities related to statistics and data. The WB Development Data Group is undertaking a wide array of activities on three sets of priorities (i) pursue fundamentals and frontiers at the same time: promote new data technology, support statistical systems and forge new data collaboratives; (ii) balance the offer for more detailed data with data protection; (iii) support the use of data by policy makers and government agencies as well as by ordinary people. The World Bank strongly promotes an open data policy providing free and open access to global development data.

55. Some of the activities and products include:

- World Bank data hub to bring together the offer and demand for data
- World Bank's own data products, such as wealth accounting, World Development Indicators, SDG atlas, data on poverty, etc.
- Managing the International Comparison Programme (ICP)
- Managing World Bank's own data assets, including the debt statistics on countries that borrow from the Bank
- Providing global financing to promote data collaboratives, innovations and use of innovative sources (such as geospatial data and big data)
- Supporting countries through technical advisory services to build their capacity to produce better data (e.g. supporting household surveys on poverty, food security and agricultural productivity; projects on human capital, natural capital, digitalisation, etc.). A very important part of this is institution building, especially in countries where statistical offices are in a weak position
- Data collaboratives with private companies.

56. The Bureau noted that the World Bank is an important partner to build statistical capabilities in countries and improve both the supply and use side of statistics. The subregional project used in Russian speaking countries with the support from the Russian Federation can serve as a model to be followed in other regions.

IX. Dates and venue of next meetings

57. The Bureau is expected to confirm the dates and venues of the next Bureau meetings and the next CES plenary sessions.

58. At its February 2019 meeting, the Bureau decided on its next meetings as follows:

- 16-17 October 2019 (venue tbc)
- 18-19 February 2020 (Geneva)
- 14-15 October 2020
- 17-18 February 2021.

59. The 67th CES plenary session will take place on 26-28 (a.m.) June 2019 in Paris, back-to-back with the meeting of the OECD Committee on Statistics and Statistical Policy (24-25 June 2019).

60. The 68th CES plenary session is planned to take place in the week of 22-24 a.m. June 2020 in Geneva, back-to-back with the meeting of the OECD Committee on Statistics

and Statistical Policy (24 p.m.-25 June 2020) and the plenary session of UN-GGIM: Europe, as decided by the 66th CES plenary session (ECE/CES/95).

61. The 69th CES plenary session is proposed to take place in the week of 14-18 June 2021.

X. Reform of the United Nations Development System and a strategic review of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe work

62. The Bureau was informed about the ongoing reform (repositioning) of the UN Development System that covers a number of UN entities, including the five Regional Commissions. The reform has entered into a second stage focusing on the regional assets of UN and includes a review of the Regional Commissions. The aim is to identify options for the UN Secretary General for the longer-term re-profiling and restructuring of the regional assets of the United Nations. The recommendations will be presented to ECOSOC in May 2019.

63. In parallel, the UNECE Executive Secretary has initiated an internal strategic review of UNECE based on a report prepared by an external consultant hired for this purpose.

64. The Bureau made the following comments:

- From country viewpoint, problematic are the custodian agencies responsible for data in subject-matter areas and the fact that country data in international databases are in many cases different from the data that countries themselves provide
- HLG-PCCB prepared a paper for the UN Statistical Commission with proposals on how to improve the coordination of statistical work in the UN system. The paper offered different options and did not intend to reduce the role of Regional Commissions.

Conclusion

65. The Secretariat will keep the Bureau informed about the outcome of the repositioning of the UN Development System and its impact on UNECE.
