

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE  
CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

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**Workshop on Statistical Data Collection**

03 May 2019

14-16 October 2019, Geneva, Switzerland

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## **INFORMATION NOTICE No. 1**

### **I. PURPOSE AND AGENDA**

1. This workshop will be organized as part of the Conference of European Statisticians' work programme for 2019, within the context of the High Level Group for the Modernisation of Official Statistics. It will take place at the United Nations premises, Palais des Nations, in Geneva, Switzerland from 14-16 October 2019.

2. The objective of this workshop is to identify innovative ways and best practices in statistical data collection, and to provide a platform for practitioners to exchange experiences and foster collaboration in this area. In addition to the more traditional presentations, the agenda of the workshop will include target-driven small group discussions and activities to identify best practices and new opportunities. Delegates will be asked to contribute to the development of internationally-coordinated work in the field of statistical data collection.

3. The world of data collection for official statistics is changing rapidly. The availability of new data sources and new technologies has led to unprecedented possibilities. There is an increased demand for more timely data of higher granularity. At the same time, response rates continue to be under pressure and budgets for data collection keep being constrained. To face these challenges and seize the opportunities, the UNECE Workshop on Statistical Data Collection aims to address these core questions:

- What are promising new technologies and how do we apply them?
- What are the new data sources and how can we use them?
- What are the new technical and people skills we need and how can we obtain them?
- What new management tools and practices do we need in the modern data landscape?

4. Please refer to annex 1 for a list of potential topics in these areas.

5. The target audience for the workshop includes senior and middle-level managers responsible for data collection activities and new data sources, across all statistical domains.

6. The Steering Committee of the workshop will decide regarding the acceptance of proposals for contributions. The Steering Committee consists of the following members:

- Lise Rivais, Statistics Canada
- Irene Saleminck, Statistics Netherlands

- Paulo Saraiva dos Santos, Statistics Portugal
- Zübeyir Özçelik, Turkstat, Turkey
- Ian O’Sullivan, ONS, United Kingdom
- Britta Gauckler, Eurostat

## II. CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

7. Participants are strongly encouraged to consider submitting an abstract that summarises the content of their proposed contribution. These should be covering one or more of the topics of the workshop programme. **For further details on the topics being covered, refer to the annex at the end of this note.** All contributions should be submitted in English only.

8. A short abstract of the proposed contribution should be submitted by email to the UNECE Secretariat, [taeke.gjaltema@un.org](mailto:taeke.gjaltema@un.org) and [gerald.muriel@un.org](mailto:gerald.muriel@un.org), as soon as possible and by Wednesday 18 July 2019 at the latest.

9. The steering committee will notify in due time whether the submission is accepted or not and might request changes. Contributions should normally consist of a paper, plus an accompanying presentation. Other forms of contribution may be proposed. Please note that as we finalize the agenda, it may not be possible to allocate time to all proposed contributions.

10. Any written papers must be provided by **Wednesday 11 September 2019** at the latest. A link will be sent to the authors where documents can be uploaded.

11. Any presentation slides, videos or other electronic materials should be provided by **Wednesday 11 September 2019** at the latest. Any equipment required for practical demonstrations must be provided by the participants. A link will be sent to the authors where presentations can be uploaded.

## III. REGISTRATION

12. Participants should also separately register their security information online at the site <https://uncdb.unece.org/app/ext/meeting-registration?id=WjfsPc> by **Wednesday 14 August 2019**, in order to be permitted access to the workshop venue. Please note that the registration process must be fully completed before a request is generated. (When this happens, a message will be displayed that says “*You successfully submitted your application. The application is pending approval.*”)

13. Representatives of all Member States of the United Nations and of interested intergovernmental organizations are welcome to participate in the workshop. 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.

14. All participants attending the seminar are requested to have a valid passport and, if required, a visa. Applications for visas to Switzerland should be made as soon as possible to the Embassy of Switzerland in the country in which the participant resides, with a reference to the UNECE Workshop on Statistical Data Collection. A letter to facilitate obtaining a visa can also be requested.

15. Participants and/or their offices are requested to make their own travel arrangements and hotel

reservations. The UNECE Secretariat regrets not being able to offer any financial assistance regarding travel and accommodation arrangements.

#### **IV. DOCUMENTATION, METHODS OF WORK AND OFFICIAL LANGUAGE**

16. The official language of the workshop is English. No interpretation or translation will be provided.

17. The workshop will consist of presentations, small group discussions to exchange experiences and to identify lessons learned, and interactive discussions to identify future work in the area of data collection. Participants are expected to actively contribute to the discussions.

18. Abstracts and papers will be made available in pdf format on the workshop website (<https://statswiki.unece.org/x/CI6MDg>). Presentations will be added in pdf format to this web site after the workshop.

19. Participants are encouraged to download the papers from the website and, where feasible, to use electronic devices to read papers in order to minimise paper use. Documents posted on the website before the workshop will **not** be distributed in the conference room.

#### **V. VENUE**

20. The workshop will be held at:  
Room XXI  
Palais des Nations  
8-14, Avenue de la Paix  
Geneva, Switzerland

A second information notice will be issued and made available on the workshop website nearer to the dates of this workshop, giving details about the location of the workshop, along with additional logistical information.

#### **VI. FURTHER INFORMATION**

21. For further information you may contact the following organisers:

Mr Taeke Gjaltema, tel: +41 22 917 1272, email: [taeke.gjaltema@un.org](mailto:taeke.gjaltema@un.org)

Mr. Gerald Muriel, tel: +41 22 917 3323, email: [gerald.muriel@un.org](mailto:gerald.muriel@un.org)

Statistical Division, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

#### **DEADLINES**

17 July 2019	<b>Abstract</b> or proposal for intended contribution
14 August 2019	<b>Registration</b>
11 September 2019	<b>Paper</b> or detailed abstract if no paper is provided
11 September 2019	<b>Presentation</b> or other material to be presented (draft)
7 October 2019	Final versions of presentations
9-11 October 2019	Workshop

## **ANNEX: EXAMPLES OF TOPICS**

The main focus of the workshop is on innovative methods and tools in data collection. A non-exhaustive list of examples of suggested topics is provided below.

### **Communication with respondents and data providers**

National Statistical Offices (NSO) should keep up with the improvements in data collection techniques to manage the conversions of communication and increase response rate and accuracy of information. To achieve this, NSO's should decrease the workload of interviewers such as households and other data providers such as accountants of firms and ensure the confidentiality of data on individuals and institutions. Hence, NSO's need to determine a certain strategy to maintain the contact with respondents and data providers and try to find ways to make good relationships permanent.

This topic could include the following sub-topics:

- Using new communication strategies to reach respondents
- Managing relationship with respondents
- Providing incentives to respondents
- Managing social media
- Preparation of contracts with data providers
- Creating standard IT infrastructure for data providers
- Profiling firms
- Provide customized feedback to respondents
- Extra efforts for increased response quality
- Good example on social behaviour practices

### **Topic: Online/Internet and electronic Data Collection (CAWI)**

Making contact with households to conduct social surveys is becoming increasingly difficult as respondents increasingly screen incoming calls. Providing multiple collection options is one way to increase the potential for response. Is online collection the future for social surveys and can we do away with interviewer assisted interviews. This session aims to share experiences with the use of online surveys, to identify barriers and challenges, and strategies used to maximize online response and to share thoughts on future trends.

This topic will include the following sub-topics:

- Techniques used to increase response using CAWI as the main mode of collection
- Take up rates for social surveys using CAWI
- Does survey length and topic sensitivity matter for on-line surveys
- Methods used to entice respondents to accept, use this new technology. How do we bring people to this mode?
- How do we get interviewers to accept, promote self-response surveys for respondents? What is their role (if any) as we move to the use of new technologies such as CAWI and use of other data sources?

- Strategies used to overcome lack of email sample frames; of getting respondents to go from e-mails or paper letters to the web to complete the questionnaire
- Para data analysis to gain insights on how the respondent interacts with the questionnaire; lessons learned

### **The changing data landscape and official statistics. Innovative data collection**

Future data landscape is developing in two directions: Firstly, the presence and use of alternative data sources and secondly smart technologies applied for effective and efficient trusted smart surveys.

Concerning the use of smart technologies for smart surveys, the question is which smart technologies and smart devices are available, and what is their possible use? Are there other supportive technologies related to passive and interactive data collection modes, apps or platforms of services that could help innovate the area of data collections (cloud technology, S2S data communication, privacy preserved analytics, app technology, IT platform)? What are the relevant privacy issues, and how can we tackle them? Which experiences, skills (citizen science, IT) do we need to bring on board to enhance the effectiveness of data collections engaging with the data subjects? Are there any quality issues that we need to consider and at what stage of the process?

Although the use of new (secondary, sensor) data sources will be increasing, the question remains how to conduct the remaining primary data collection as efficient and cost effective as possible? Which methodology is needed, for example, the use and experience of adaptive designs, what procedures are in place, and what are the future needs for surveys?

Last but not least the question arises on how data that is not originally designed for statistics can be used for official statistics, and how can the change to using alternative and/or new data sources be implemented in the national offices and the ESS producing official statistics?

This topic will include the following sub-topics:

- The use of alternative and/or new data sources – the future of data collection
- New data sources and how to remove silo thinking
- How is the new data collected and for which purpose?
- Using Big Data sources for official statistics
- Use of modern technology