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Economic Commission for Europe

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Item 8 (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 2020

Addendum

Report of the Conference of European Statisticians 2021 February Bureau meeting

Note by the secretariat

Summary

The report presents the key outcomes of the CES Bureau meeting which took place 17-18 February 2021 as an online meeting.

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 on 17 and 18 February in Geneva as an online meeting. The following members of the Bureau participated: S. Mnatsakanyan (Armenia), A. Arora (Canada), M. Mägi (Estonia), P. Dalton (Ireland), J. Santaella (Mexico), M. Sowden (New Zealand), D. Rozkrut (Poland) and M. Kovacevic (Serbia). The following permanent observers also attended: A. Kosarev (representing V. Sokolin, CIS-Stat), M. Kotzeva (Eurostat), L.-M. Ducharme (IMF), P. Schreyer (OECD) and L. Bratanova (UNECE). A. Arora (Canada) chaired the meeting.
2. The following persons assisted members of the Bureau: S. Fortier and C. Williams (Canada), P. Keller (Ireland), P. Garcia (Mexico), R. Milicich and C. Jones (New Zealand), M. Nikic (Serbia), and M.-J. Santos (Eurostat). T. Luige (UNECE) served as Secretary of the meeting supported by M. Cwiek (UNECE). C. Boldsen, S. Derivolcov, T. Dimova, V. Etropolska, T. Gjaltema, M. Nagy, R. Peltola, S. Vale, A. Vikat, and F. Willis-Núñez of UNECE participated.
3. S. Dufour, J. Bégin and T. Knighton (Canada), J. Pakarinen (Finland), A. Denneman (Netherlands), R. Bielak (Poland), S. Frankl (Sweden), and K. Walsh and R. Diez de Medina (ILO) participated in selected agenda items at the invitation of the Chair.
4. New Zealand and UNSD sent written comments on the agenda items. The comments were presented to the Bureau and taken into account in the discussion.

II. In-depth reviews of selected statistical areas

A. New forms of employment

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2021/FEB/2 by Canada

5. The Bureau made an in-depth review of new forms of employment based on a paper by Canada. The thorough and comprehensive review document by Canada was highly appreciated. The following comments were made in the discussion:

(a) The survey carried out as part of the in-depth review showed that interest from policy makers in statistics on new forms of employment is increasing, there are challenges with data collection and response burden, and concepts and definitions need to be clarified.

(b) The in-depth review recommends establishing a task force to develop a conceptual framework that identifies and maps the relationships between the 2018 International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-18) and other statistical concepts and frameworks. The changeover to ICSE-18 will be a major challenge for statistical offices. It will have effects beyond employment statistics, e.g., on entrepreneurship statistics and national accounts. It will be important for statistical offices to implement ICSE-18 in a coordinated and efficient way to ensure consistency across statistical domains.

(c) There is big interest in the changing labour market and the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on new forms of employment. Standards and agreed definitions are needed for national purposes and for improving international comparability. ILO is mandated to develop definitions of platform work and can help contact countries from outside the region to share experiences. There is a need for more work on ICSE-18 and for a conceptual framework related to new forms of employment.

(d) New forms of employment have different social and economic implications in countries. In the EU member countries there is debate of how the pandemic has impacted different groups (e.g. employers, employees) and inequality more generally. Therefore, the task force should also consider relationships with social security schemes.

(e) Several initiatives on platform work and new forms of employment are ongoing, involving Eurostat, OECD, ILO and other organizations. The task force should take into account these initiatives and ensure close coordination and consistency in the recommendations.

6. Canada, Ireland, Mexico, Poland, Eurostat, ILO and OECD would like to join the task force. Canada will be chairing. From the Steering Group on Quality of Employment, Finland, Germany, Israel, Singapore, Switzerland and WIEGO (Women in Informal Employment: Globalization and Organizing) have indicated an interest in participating in the task force.

Conclusion

7. The CES Bureau decided to establish a task force on new forms of employment with the aim to develop a conceptual framework that identifies and maps the relationships between ICSE-18 and other statistical concepts and frameworks, as outlined in the in-depth review paper by Statistics Canada.

8. The terms of reference of the task force should be prepared as soon as possible by the countries/organisations that expressed interest in joining the work, in consultation with the Steering Group on Quality of Employment and taking into account the above comments. The draft terms of reference should be circulated to the Bureau members for written consultation.

9. CIS-Stat will translate the in-depth review paper into Russian and Statistics Canada into French. The paper will then be published on the web in the UNECE statistical working papers series.

B. Selection of topics for in-depth reviews in 2021-2022

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2021/FEB/3 by UNECE

10. The Bureau discussed the topics for in-depth reviews to be carried out in October 2021 and February 2022, based on a proposal by the Secretariat. The Bureau noted that “Subjective poverty measures” had already been selected for an in-depth review and will be discussed in October 2021 based on a paper by Poland.

11. There was some support for reviewing machine learning but the topic was not considered mature enough yet for a review. It could be also considered in some other format than a traditional in-depth review by the Bureau.

Conclusion

12. The following topics were selected to be discussed in depth by the Bureau:

(a) Measuring the non-observed/informal economy (to be reviewed in October 2021 (timing to be confirmed), led by Mexico). The in-depth review should benefit from and be coordinated with the work of the Informal Economy Task Team under the SNA Research agenda, led by IMF. Mexico, IMF and UNECE will follow up and agree on timetable for preparation of the in-depth review paper.

(b) Collaboration with private sector data providers (to be reviewed in February 2022, led by Poland with contributions from Canada, Mexico, Eurostat, IMF and ILO). The review could incorporate aspects of how the new data sources can help to improve data disaggregation and “leaving no one behind”, how to determine the quality of such data, and how such collaborations can help NSOs learn new techniques used by the private sector, e.g. machine learning.

(c) How national statistical organizations adhere to the core values of official statistics (to be reviewed in February 2022, led by Ireland and Canada). This review will build on the 2021 CES session on core values organized by Ireland. It may need to go beyond collecting existing practices and look at the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (FPOS) innovatively in the context of data driven economy.

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

A. Data stewardship

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2021/FEB/4 by Estonia and UNECE

13. The Bureau considered the Terms of Reference for a Task Force on data stewardship, proposed to be set up as a follow-up to the CES discussions on this topic in 2019 and 2020. The following points were made in the discussion:

- (a) The work is considered important and strongly supported;
- (b) Clarifying definitions is a necessary starting point for work in this area;
- (c) In addition to Canada, Estonia, Ireland, New Zealand, Poland, Eurostat and OECD, Mexico volunteered to join the Task Force.

Conclusion

14. The Bureau approved the Terms of Reference for a Task Force on data stewardship. The Task Force will take into account in its work the other international activities going on in this area.

B. Exchange and sharing of economic data

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2021/FEB/5 by UNECE

15. The Bureau discussed further work on exchange and sharing of economic data based on a paper by the Secretariat, following the endorsement of the *Guide to Sharing Economic Data* by CES in June 2020. The following points were made in the discussion:

- (a) There are many initiatives related to data sharing in the EU, facilitated by the common legislation for the European Statistical System. Cooperation with and learning from Eurostat work is important;
- (b) Exchange of confidential microdata is a challenge even within a common legislative framework, as some EU countries cannot fully follow the EU legislation due to national limitations. However, it is even a bigger challenge for non-EU countries or countries not covered by common legislation;
- (c) Next steps should focus on “what we can do now”. It is important to remember how much can be done by exchanging non-confidential structural or aggregated data, e.g. in bilateral comparisons to reduce asymmetries. OECD’s ADIMA is a tool based fully on publicly available multinational enterprises (MNE) data;
- (d) A survey of NSOs could help to find operational models for data sharing and enable the exchange of knowledge and best practices. The survey could also examine how NSOs are involved in international data sharing initiatives, and how they plan to implement the recommendations of the *Guide on Sharing Economic Data in Official Statistics*. It should also provide basis for developing a vision for future data sharing in official statistics;
- (e) International organisations should take a leading role to support countries. They can provide secure platforms but countries need to be ready to use them. This requires alignment with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and a legal framework;
- (f) Large cases units (LCUs) and their experts on multinational enterprise groups’ data are key for advancing work in data sharing. The EU MNE coordinators network could be extended to involve interested countries that are members of CES;
- (g) The Steering Group on National Accounts should continue to discuss future work in data sharing, considering issues such as: What are the problems we are seeking solutions for? How to move forward? What can be achieved in near future?

Conclusion

16. The UNECE Steering Group on National Accounts, together with a few interested countries (Poland, Estonia, Ireland, Mexico) will prepare a questionnaire for a survey among NSOs taking into account the issues mentioned above.

17. The Steering Group will organize a meeting or workshop of MNE coordinators, including the EU MNE coordinators' network and focal points from other CES countries. The meeting will discuss results of the NSO survey, spread the knowledge gained in the EU countries, promote the establishment of LCUs and define the next steps in data sharing.

18. The Steering Group will report back to the Bureau on the results of the survey of NSOs and outcomes of the meeting.

C. Developing the Conference of European Statisticians Recommendations on Population and Housing Censuses for the 2030 Round

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2021/FEB/6 by the Steering Group on population censuses

19. The Bureau discussed the work plan for developing recommendations for the 2030 round of censuses prepared by the Steering Group. The Bureau noted that the work plan is very ambitious and depends on active participation from countries. Bureau members expressed their commitment to support the work of the thirteen task forces that are planned to be set up under the Steering Group for developing the new census recommendations. The following points were made in the discussion:

(a) In revising the recommendations for the 2030 census round it is important to consider whether entirely new indicators will be required to reflect changes in the way people live;

(b) Continued close collaboration with Eurostat is essential. A bilateral meeting between Eurostat and the UNECE secretariat will be organized to agree on how to cooperate and integrate activities related to the 2030 census round;

(c) Canada will nominate experts to participate in task forces to the fullest possible extent. Poland, Eurostat and Mexico will nominate experts both to participate in and as possible chairs of task forces. Mexico is willing to chair one task force working on topics related to emergency planning, quality, enumeration methods, technology, or georeferencing.

Conclusion

20. The Bureau expressed strong support for the work plan and requested the Steering Group to proceed with the tasks outlined in the document.

D. Measuring circular economy

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2021/FEB/7 by UNECE

21. The Bureau reviewed the terms of reference of the Task Force on measuring circular economy. The Bureau highlighted the importance of developing guidelines in this area. The topic will also be discussed at the ECE Commission Session in April 2021 and at the CES plenary session in June 2021.

22. The Bureau recommended the Task Force as a first step to set priorities and review its timetable. The work should be aligned with the activities of UNCEEA, the London Group on Environmental Accounting and Eurostat to avoid duplication of work. In addition to the members listed in TOR, Poland expressed willingness to participate in the Task Force.

Conclusion

23. The Bureau approved the Terms of Reference of the Task Force on measuring circular economy.

E Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2021/FEB/8 by UNECE

24. The Bureau considered the progress of work of the Joint Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators for countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia and South-East Europe, and renewal of its terms of reference via written consultation.

25. The Bureau supported the renewal of the group's terms of reference. Several countries noted that environment statistics remains to be one of the weakest statistical domains both in developed and developing countries, and there is a need to prepare guidelines for standardized production of environmental statistics to improve quality, overcome data gaps, promote use of new data sources and take into account relevant global frameworks and information needs.

26. There was also support for extending the work of the Task Force to other interested countries when the new TOR will be prepared in 2023 and setting it up as a standing body under the Conference. New Zealand expressed interest to become a member of the Task Force (to be confirmed).

Conclusion

27. The Bureau approved the updated terms of reference of the Task Force on Environmental Statistics and Indicators until June 2023. There was support for extending the Task Force to all interested CES countries and converting it into a standing working group on environmental statistics and indicators under the Conference after 2023.

F. Modernization of official statistics

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2021/FEB/9 and 9/Add.1 by HLG-MOS

28. The Bureau reviewed the outcomes of the work of the High-level Group for the Modernisation of Official Statistics (HLG-MOS) in 2020, including the Machine Learning Project, and the work plans for 2021. The following points were raised in the discussion:

(a) The Bureau highly appreciated the excellent work done in 2020 by HLG-MOS (chaired by Canada), the Executive Board (chaired by Canada and Ireland), the modernization community and the supporting UNECE secretariat. The experts who participate in the HLG-MOS activities and projects are highly satisfied with the experiences gained through the work;

(b) HLG-MOS needs to keep its strategic orientation. It was suggested to organise a sprint at Chief Statisticians' level to discuss the big strategic issues that official statistics is facing.

Conclusion

29. The Bureau approved the annual report of HLG-MOS and the proposed work programme for 2021, including the projects on Input Privacy Preservation and the Practical Guide to the Use of Synthetic Data. The work is highly relevant and strongly supported.

G. Data collection during the Covid-19 pandemic

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2021/FEB/10 by UNECE

30. The Secretariat summarised the results of the October 2020 online event 'Data Collection in Times of COVID-19', organized under HLG-MOS. Key conclusions were that now, more than ever, it is important to share ideas and good practices in data collection, and that countries that had invested in modernizing their statistical production were better placed to deal with the challenges of data collection during the pandemic.

31. The following points were made in the discussion:

(a) There has been a clear shift to non-survey sources, including administrative data, though access to sources is sometimes a challenge. A digital-first approach to sources is needed, including computer-assisted video interviewing. A new set of principles for data collection should be developed to reflect the changing situation;

(b) A task force could be set up to take stock of approaches to make data collection more resilient;

(c) It is important to sustain the innovations made over the last year, and make the best use of the investments of gathering the data to better understand the pandemic;

(d) Statistical offices that already had a modernisation mindset were able to react quickly and take advantage of new sources. HLG-MOS is well placed to make sure that all countries are supported to avoid the split between those well advanced in modernisation and the rest.

Conclusion

32. This is an important topic that requires attention. The Secretariat will reflect on the points raised and come back to the Bureau with a concrete proposal for further work in this area.

IV. Preparation of the Conference of Europeans Statisticians 2021 plenary session

A. Post-Covid: sustaining innovation in National Statistical Offices' organisation and working arrangements

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2021/FEB/11 by New Zealand and Poland

33. The Bureau discussed the proposal for the 2021 CES session on sustaining innovation in NSOs organisation and working arrangements prepared by New Zealand and Poland. The session deals with key organizational enablers, obstacles and challenges, and innovations. The session proposal was supported. The following issues were raised in the discussion:

(a) The value and outcome of the joint day between CES and OECD CSSP will depend on the complementarity of the two sessions held during this day: the OECD-led session on innovation in NSO products and activities, and the New-Zealand-Poland-UNECE-led session on sustaining innovation in NSOs organisational and working arrangements;

(b) Impact of Covid-19 can be seen in three directions: (1) continuity of operations and data processing (covered in this session); (2) meeting new and additional demands for information (covered in the session led by OECD); and (3) change in concepts to be measured. Many discussions are going on about the changing concepts (e.g. on expenditure patterns, CPI, labour market) – the session could highlight some examples;

(c) It would be interesting to show a range of experiences from different countries. Due to the capacity limitations, not all countries have been able to modernise at the same pace. It will be important to give everybody a chance to benefit from the work that is being done;

(d) There is a lot of competition from private sector in providing data. Private organizations are very good at marketing, NSOs need to step up on that. Timeliness and the timing of releases can play an important role. The group working on the value of official statistics has evidence that the value has increased. It may be good to discuss how to ensure more visibility and appreciation for this value;

(e) Statistical indicators have become quite fragmented: many providers disseminate different kinds of data, both in the government and outside. The role of NSOs is to separate what is good quality and what is not;

- (f) To build resilience, a shift in data sources and the way we are working is necessary. It cannot be done without working with clients;
- (g) Mexico offered to contribute a paper.

Conclusion

34. The session organisers will continue with preparations for the session taking into account suggestions by the Bureau. UNECE and OECD Secretariats will work together to ensure that the two sessions during the CES-CSSP joint day are complementary.

B. How national statistical systems adhere to the core values of official statistics

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2021/FEB/12 by Ireland

35. The Bureau discussed the proposal for the 2021 CES session ‘How national statistical systems adhere to the core values of official statistics’ prepared by Ireland. The following points were raised in the discussion:

- (a) Fundamental Principles, statistical laws and rules are not always sufficient to ensure independence of NSOs. There are recent examples where an erosion of the core values and NSOs’ independence can be seen;

- (b) To use better the limited time, the discussion should be well focused, demonstrating concrete behaviours that can support NSOs’ independence and make the core values a reality;

- (c) Examples of how core values can support NSOs in the competitive market of information providers would be welcome. The session should demonstrate behaviours and solutions that NSOs can use in their own country context. Exchange of experience on strategies, practices in countries, how to raise awareness among other stakeholders, what to do in different situations, etc. would be very useful;

- (d) NSOs can play a leadership role and lift the whole data ecosystem up based on their strong values. They can help set standards in areas like data ethics, scientific integrity, necessity, proportionality, etc.;

- (e) The roles and behaviours can also change in time because of changing context, including in relation to the new data steward role. Speakers who can push boundaries in these areas and inspire to change the way how we look at the core values in the context of the whole data ecosystem would be welcome;

- (f) The core values are linked to trust which is linked to statistical quality. NSOs are judged by the things they do rather than things they say. It would be good to have a paper explaining the possible reasons for lack of trust in official statistics. Often this can be linked to mistrust towards all government bodies, fake news and social media;

- (g) The topic has two aspects: core values and communication of these values; the communication aspects can be tackled separately. Some statistical offices are investing greatly in communicating the core values while the communication channels are changing and becoming more sophisticated.

Conclusion

36. The session organisers will continue with preparations for the session taking into account suggestions by the Bureau. It is important to present concrete examples of behaviours and solutions that countries could use taking into account their specific context.

C. Official statistics for climate action

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2021/FEB/13 by the Steering Group on climate change related statistics

37. The Bureau supported the proposal for the CES session on “Official statistics for climate action” prepared by the Steering Group. The following points were made in the discussion:

(a) The topic is extremely important. The session should be a high-level discussion for Chief Statisticians and provide a holistic view on the policy perspective, state of the art and the different needs for statistics. There could be also reference to the 2030 agenda which has a huge emphasis on climate change;

(b) The keynote speaker should be a policymaker using the data who can speak on how relevant the existing official statistics are to the policy debate. Mr. Michał Kurtyka, the COP24 president and current Minister for Climate and Environment in Poland was proposed. *[Note: in the meantime, Poland has initiated consultations with the Minister.]* Another option could be Mark Carney, the former Governor of the Bank of Canada and the Bank of England, and the current UN special envoy for climate action and finance. Poland and Canada offered to help contacting them. An option to consider is a panel of two or three speakers who bring different perspectives;

(c) Country papers about improving the use, usefulness and timeliness of indicators and how official statistics can contribute to the conversation around climate change are very welcome;

(d) The session could also reflect on how well the existing statistics address the increasing information needs of businesses and financial institutions, which try to be more sustainable and look for statistics to inform their decisions. A speaker from business or finance community could present their user perspective;

(e) IMF offered a paper or a presentation on their climate change dashboard to be launched in the spring. Among others, the dashboard will cover quarterly GHG emissions, green finance and carbon footprint. It will also look at the cross-border dimension by providing a tool for countries to calculate the consumption-based emissions using an input-output matrix;

(f) Eurostat offered a paper or presentation on a link between policies and the statistical response. This would also build on recent discussions around the European Green Deal;

(g) It is crucial to consider the increasing importance of sustainable and green finance and investment. The scope of traditional climate action discussion is expanding to include the financial aspects. Financial community is proposing new indicators and there should be a cohesion between the new initiatives and the work of the climate change-related statistics community so far.

Conclusion

38. The Steering Group will continue with preparations for the session taking into account suggestions by the Bureau.

D. Preparation for the Conference of European Statisticians in 2022: 30th anniversary of Fundamental Principles; 70th Conference of European Statisticians plenary session

39. The Bureau took note that in 2022 there will be the 70th anniversary plenary session of the Conference and the 30th anniversary of the endorsement of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics developed under the Conference. The following comments were made:

(a) Thirty years of FPOS are particularly worth celebrating as people who were personally involved in their development are still around. For CES, perhaps 75th anniversary

should be celebrated more than 70th. An extension of the publication on 50 years of the Conference could be considered now and a new publication prepared in 2027;

(b) In addition to updating the publication on 50 years of CES, we should explore modern ways of celebrating. It would be powerful to get recognition at the political level and testimonies from outside the region;

(c) Preparations take time and should start early by brainstorming what CES and FPOS mean to the statistical community and through its services to society in general. A possibility could be to prepare a series of articles, one on each Fundamental Principle in build up towards the anniversary;

(d) Poland offered to sponsor an event given its role in chairing and supporting the development of FPOS.

Conclusion

40. The Secretariat will take the comments into account in planning the 2022 CES plenary session. A proposal will be submitted to the Bureau at its next meeting.

E. Draft agenda and timetable for the 2021 Conference of European Statisticians plenary session

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2021/FEB/14 by UNECE

41. The Bureau discussed the provisional agenda of the CES 2021 plenary session based on a proposal by the Secretariat.

Conclusion

42. The Bureau approved the provisional agenda. The meeting will be held in two parts: an informal session online only, and a formal session in a hybrid format (allowing in-person participation in Geneva) with English-French-Russian interpretation. The logistical details about the platform for the meeting, timing, etc. will be clarified later.

F. Focused discussions for groups of chief statisticians in the run-up to the Conference of European Statisticians 2021 plenary session

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2021/FEB/15 by UNECE

43. The Secretariat outlined a proposal for a series of “sprint” sessions for Chief Statisticians in preparation for the CES 2021 plenary session. These sessions are intended to partially compensate for the lack of time for detailed discussions during the online plenary session. Organisational arrangements and potential topics were proposed.

44. The following points were made in the discussion:

(a) There should be two, or maximum three sprint sessions, and it is important to limit the number of participants to a small number of Chief Statisticians. Other staff could be invited to follow the sprints as observers;

(b) The sprints could be repeated if necessary to allow more participants;

(c) The sprints should focus on what is unique about the Covid-19 pandemic period and what should be retained in the future;

(d) Proposed topics 2 and 3 could be combined, clarifying that not all offices were closed due to the pandemic. Topic 4 could consider the challenge of privacy versus access to data.

Conclusion

45. The Bureau decided to go ahead with the proposed sprint sessions and asked the Secretariat to make the necessary arrangements.

V. Conference of European Statisticians Guidelines and Recommendations for endorsement in 2021

A. Statistics for Sustainable Development Goals: *Conference of European Statisticians Road Map on statistics for Sustainable Development Goals* (second edition); forthcoming rotation of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goals and the High-Level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building members

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2021/FEB/16 by the Steering Group on statistics for SDGs; ECE/CES/BUR/2021/FEB/17 by UNECE

46. The Bureau reviewed the draft *CES Road Map on statistics for SDGs* (second edition). The Bureau considered it a very comprehensive document and expressed strong support for it.

47. The Bureau was informed about the upcoming rotation of the members of IAEG-SDGs and HLG-PCCB from the UNECE region. The Bureau emphasised the importance of having a transparent process and rules for the rotation.

Conclusion

48. The Secretariat will circulate the draft *CES Road Map on statistics for SDGs* (second edition) for an electronic consultation to all CES members [*Note: sent out on 26.02.2021*]. Subject to a positive outcome of the consultation, the Road Map will be submitted to the 2021 CES plenary session for endorsement.

49. The Secretariat will send out an e-mail to all UNECE member countries to invite them to express interest in becoming a member of IAEG-SDGs or HLG-PCCB. Based on the feedback, the Secretariat will make a proposal to the Bureau for the new membership of the groups, taking into account the principles for the rotation agreed by the Bureau and the criteria explained in the paper.

B. Assessing the quality of administrative sources for use in censuses

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2021/FEB/18 by the Task Force

50. The Bureau reviewed the draft *Guidelines on Assessing the Quality of Administrative Sources for Use in Censuses* via written consultation. The Bureau supported sending the Guidelines for wide consultation. The document was highly appreciated as a long awaited, timely, useful, excellent, high importance, practical and illustrative guide to countries as they move towards register-based censuses and the pandemic accelerates changing census methods.

Conclusion

51. The Secretariat will circulate the draft *Guidelines on Assessing the Quality of Administrative Sources for Use in Censuses* for an electronic consultation to all CES members [*Note: sent out on 03.03.2021*]. Subject to a positive outcome of the consultation, the Guidelines will be submitted to the 2021 CES plenary session for endorsement.

C. Waste statistics

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2021/FEB/19 by the Task Force

52. The Bureau reviewed the draft *Waste Statistics Framework* via written consultation. The Bureau supported sending the document for wide consultation. Its importance was emphasised for improving waste statistics at national and international level. It was also noted that waste statistics should be in line with the SEEA waste accounts, ensuring that those

remain complementary to each other also in future. Some caution was raised about suggestions for future work to collect statistics on the monetary value of waste.

Conclusion

53. The Secretariat will circulate the draft *Waste Statistics Framework* for an electronic consultation to all CES members [*Note: sent out on 03.03.2021*]. Subject to a positive outcome of the consultation, the document will be submitted to the 2021 CES plenary session for endorsement.

VI. United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Statistics Programme of work documents

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2021/FEB/20 and 21 by UNECE

54. The Bureau reviewed via written consultation two documents related to the implementation of the UNECE Statistics subprogramme prepared in the context of the United Nations secretariat's planning and reporting process: report on the implementation of the Statistical Programme 2020, and draft programme of work for 2022.

55. Adoption of the report on implementation of Statistical Programme in 2020 was supported. The Bureau highly appreciated the efforts of the Secretariat to keep up the work during the Covid-19 pandemic and adapt the activities to the new situation. It was emphasised that the hybrid and online meetings were successful because their content, preparation and duration were adapted to fit the new format. The endorsement of a number of guidelines and recommendations was welcome. Canada suggested to incorporate additional text about HLG-MOS outputs and some other small corrections.

56. Adoption of the draft Programme of Work for 2022 was supported, including selecting 'increasing the number of countries that report statistical indicators with a gender breakdown' as one of the expected results in 2022. It was pointed out that the storytelling approach cannot showcase the full extent of the work undertaken by the Secretariat, and does not allow to provide information on its wide scope, leaving out important areas like modernisation, economic statistics, etc.

Conclusion

57. The Bureau approved the Report on the implementation of the Statistical Programme 2020 (ECE/CES/BUR/2021/FEB/20), subject to the amendments resulting from the written consultation. The Bureau adopted the draft Programme of Work for 2022 (ECE/CES/BUR/2021/FEB/21). Both documents will be submitted to the CES 2021 plenary session for adoption.

VII. Dates and venue of next meetings

58. The Bureau confirmed the dates of its next meetings as follows:

- 13-14 October 2021;
- 16-17 February 2022;
- 12-13 October 2022;
- 15-16 February 2023.

59. Ireland offered to host a future Bureau meeting. The meeting venues will be decided when physical meetings become possible again.

60. The 69th CES plenary session will take place on 23-25 June 2021, back-to-back with the OECD Committee on Statistics and Statistical Policy (CSSP). The meeting will take place online on 23 June 2021, and in a hybrid format on 24-25 June (with physical presence possible in Geneva).

61. The 70th CES plenary session is planned to take place on 20-22 a.m. June 2022 in Geneva. The meeting will be held back-to-back with the OECD CSSP meeting.
