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Programme of work of the Statistics subprogramme of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe:
Matters arising from the fifty-third session of the United Nations Statistical Commission

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Prepared by the Secretariat

Summary

The document presents the key outcomes the 53rd session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (28 February-2 March and 4 March 2022) that have a bearing on the work of the Conference of European Statisticians.

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I.   Introduction

1.   The document presents the key outcomes of the 53rd session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (28 February-2 March and 4 March 2022) having a bearing on the work of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES).

2.   The following sections include extracts of summaries of discussions and key decisions of the Statistical Commission. For the full text, please consult the report of the UNSC session at https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/53rd-session/.

II.   Decision 53/101: Global indicator framework for the Sustainable Development Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

3.   *"The Statistical Commission:*

(f)   Encouraged the Group to further incorporate data innovation in its work, including using non-traditional data sources, to close data gaps in close cooperation with the expert groups that are technically responsible for setting the respective content-related statistical standards;

(g)   Adopted the SDGs Geospatial Roadmap for statistical and geospatial actors working within the global indicator framework;

(h)   Stressed the need for continued technical and financial support for countries to build capacity for monitoring of the Goals, for the production of Goal indicators and for the modernization of statistical systems;

(j)   Expressed its appreciation for the efforts of the Group and the custodian agencies to improve data flows for global reporting and validation processes, and encouraged a regular dialogue between the Group and the custodian agencies to further strengthen these efforts".

4.   CES is carrying out work to support the global processes reflected in the above decisions. In June 2021, the Conference endorsed the *Second Edition of the Road Map on statistics for SDGs* and supported further work to help countries implement the Road Map, with special attention to (i) automating data transmission, and (ii) 'leaving no-one behind' – how to account for vulnerable groups, and integrate data from different sources taking into account the associated risks. In 2022, the Steering Group on statistics for SDGs will continue to provide guidance and tools to support the implementation of the CES Road Map in countries.

5.   Since 2020, UNECE maintains its regional platform on statistics for SDGs, consisting of a knowledge hub and a dashboard and database of selected SDG indicators. The purpose of the platform is to communicate developments on measuring SDGs in the UNECE region, provide easy access to up-to-date indicators on implementing SDGs, and to disseminate data and metadata. Based on the database, annual reports on the progress towards SDGs in the UNECE Region are prepared as input to the annual Regional Fora on Sustainable Development;

III.   Decision 53/104: Data stewardship

6.   *"The Statistical Commission:*

(c)   Recommended the development of a framework outlining the definition and application of the data stewardship concept, the advantages of assigning the role of data steward to the national statistical office, a glossary of terms related to the data stewardship concept, and maturity models covering different national circumstances;

(e)   Recommended that the Working Group on Data Stewardship maintain links and collaborate with other international and regional groups with a related or common focus."

7.   Starting from 2018, the Conference of European Statisticians has had an ongoing discussion on data stewardship and the role of national statistical offices in the new data ecosystems, taking into account outcomes of similar discussions at regional and global level meetings.

8.   In early 2021, the CES set up a Task Force to to clarify the terms related to data stewardship and public data governance, and the tasks of national statistical offices that this may include in different settings.

9.   The work is planned to be carried out in two stages: first, defining the concepts and looking at possible tasks/responsibilities, and in a second stage adding recommendations. The Task Force has prepared a draft report representing an outcome of the first stage of the work, explaining the context and enabling environment, defining data stewardship and the associated tasks and responsibilities, describing the related models and principles, and how to communicate data stewardship. The report includes a glossary and examples of how statistical offices in different countries have progressed with data stewardship and data governance.

10.   The report was consulted electronically with all countries and organizations participating in the work of CES in June 2022 (the replies are summarised in document ECE/CES/2022/20). The feedback will be taken into account in the further work by the Task Force. In the second stage, a maturity model is planned to be developed. The final report is expected to be available in June 2023.

11.   Coordination of the work between the UNECE Task Force and the global Working Group is ensured through the membership: a number of countries are members in both groups. The materials developed by the UNECE Task Force are available for use by the global community.

IV.   Decision 53/106: Regional statistical development

12.   *"The Statistical Commission:*

(a)   Welcomed the comprehensive report of the Economic Commission for Europe on regional statistical development,[1] and commended the significant collaborative work undertaken, under the leadership of the Statistical Division of the Economic Commission for Europe, by countries, international organizations and the United Nations system to advance statistical development in the region;

(b)   Recognized the valuable methodological work, the development of practical tools and the exchange of experiences done in the region of the Economic Commission for Europe, including in areas such as the sharing of economic data in official statistics, statistics for climate change and for disaster risk reduction, measuring the circular economy, and the road map on statistics for Sustainable Development Goals, and stressed the relevance of this work at the regional and global levels;

(c)   Welcomed the report on the work of the High-Level Group for the Modernization of Official Statistics, and stressed the importance of the work of the Group, emphasizing its relevance to the global level;

(d)   Noted that many methodological guidelines and frameworks of the Economic Commission for Europe can be applied in countries with varying levels of statistical capacity, and in that context expressed its appreciation for the coordination within the regional United Nations system, under the leadership of the United Nations regional commissions, acknowledging the importance of international collaboration and sharing of experience and knowledge at the global level."

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[1] E/CN.3/2022/7

13.   The fifty-third session of the Statistical Commission considered the statistical development in the UNECE region based on a report submitted by UNECE. Previously, the UN Statistical Commission considered the regional statistical development in the UNECE region in 2017.

14.   The report submitted in 2022 presented highlights of the work undertaken by CES that may be of interest to the global statistical community. It covered topics, such as core values of official statistics, measurement of value of official statistics, data stewardship, new forms of employment, poverty, social exclusion, statistics on children and youth, circular economy and statistical modernisation. Activities to support member States in meeting the challenges caused by the Covid pandemic and progress in regional statistical work in response to the internationally agreed development goals, such as the Sustainable Development Goals, climate change and hazardous events and disasters, were also presented. The report is available as document E/CN.3/2022/7 at the UNSC fifty-third session web page.

V.   Decision 53/107: Population and housing censuses

15.   *"The Statistical Commission:*

(b)   Reiterated its concern regarding the impact of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic on the implementation of the 2020 World Programme on Population and Housing Censuses, resulting in postponements of national censuses and difficulties in ensuring the quality of census planning and operations as well as the overall quality of the resulting census statistics;

(c)   Urged the undertaking of national censuses in the current round, or otherwise the production of census-like small area statistics, as soon as circumstances allow, and continuing to secure financial and human resources to that end;

(d)   Supported the initiative to encourage national statistical authorities to consider the establishment of national statistical population registers based on the census master file produced in the 2020 round of censuses; the establishment of such registers should be undertaken only in full compliance with the provisions of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics,[2] including the requirement to protect the confidentiality and privacy of individual records, and under clear and unambiguous legal provisions which include permission to exploit the national statistical population register solely for the purposes of compiling aggregate statistics;

(e)   Encouraged modernization in conducting population and housing censuses through information and communications technology and digitization;

(f)   Highlighted the importance of implementing the United Nations recommendation for the 2020 round of censuses regarding the need to georeference housing units during census operations, thus enabling a comprehensive merging of geospatial data and census statistics;

(g)   Requested the Statistics Division, in its role as the secretariat of the 2020 World Population and Housing Census Programme, to continue to monitor the implementation of the Programme; to continue to develop platforms for exchanging national experiences, practices and lessons learned in conducting population and housing censuses during the COVID-19 pandemic, and to continue to develop the components of the methodological framework for population and housing censuses.

16.   In line with the resolution of the Economic and Social Council 2020 *World Population and Housing Census Programme*, UNECE supports countries' preparations for population and housing censuses.

17.   The Covid pandemic continues to have profound impacts on censuses of the 2020 round in the CES member countries. Many of the censuses scheduled for 2020 or 2021 experienced delays from a few weeks to several years. The pandemic has triggered changes in methods, including accelerating some pre-existing trends. Taking into account these

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[2] General Assembly resolution 68/261.

challenges and developments, in 2022 a series of task forces under the CES Steering Group on Population and Housing Censuses will embark on a multi-year effort to develop the *Conference of European Statisticians Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses of the 2030 Round*. In 2022, these task forces will develop their own detailed work plans to enable them to reflect the impacts of the rapid and recent changes in census-taking.

18. An expert meeting and capacity development workshop in September 2022 will provide an opportunity for the entire community of census experts to contribute to this effort, as well as to share their experiences of conducting their censuses of the 2020 round.

VI. Decision 53/115: Environmental-economic accounting

19. *"The Statistical Commission:*

(b) Adopted the implementation strategy for the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) Ecosystem Accounting, welcoming the recommendations of a flexible and modular approach, multi-stakeholder engagement, tiered implementation, South-South collaboration and strengthened coordination between international organizations; encouraged all countries to implement the SEEA Ecosystem Accounting; stressed the importance of adequate funding to support SEEA implementation in countries; and requested the translation of the SEEA Ecosystem Accounting into all United Nations official languages;

(c) Welcomed the Guidelines on Biophysical Modelling for Ecosystem Accounting, and requested the Committee to develop compilation materials, e-learning, and tools such as Artificial Intelligence for Environment and Sustainability for SEEA (ARIES for SEEA), to support greater capacity-building on the SEEA Ecosystem Accounting;

(e) Supported the close collaboration between the Committee, the Advisory Expert Group on National Accounts and the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts on the update of the System of National Accounts 2008 (2008 SNA), noting the importance of taking into account SEEA to reflect environmental issues within the updated 2008 SNA; and further supported the engagement of the Committee in a new working group on SNA valuation principles in order to address methodological issues on the research agenda of the SEEA Ecosystem Accounting, including to resolve the valuation issues in chapters 8 to 11;

(g) Welcomed the progress of the Committee in mainstreaming the use of SEEA in policy, including climate change, circular economy, sustainable finance, and biodiversity policy, and supported the Committee's work in ensuring that SEEA is recognized as the underlying methodological basis for the compilation of the relevant headline indicators of the monitoring framework of the post-2020 global biodiversity agenda;

(h) Welcomed the involvement of the Committee in the proposal for a new Group of 20 Data Gaps Initiative to close climate change data gaps using SEEA accounts for all countries, in particular given the significant demand for climate change indicators;

20. UNECE supports the use of the global System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) in the region, jointly with OECD and in close alignment with the global work programme. This includes building capacity in support of SEEA, providing a forum for exchange of knowledge and experience, assessing data availability and developing methods and sources for the necessary data. In 2022, the work will continue with a focus on identifying new techniques and data sources for compiling SEEA accounts (including Ecosystem Accounts), policy uses, communication strategies and coordination of work in the region. UNECE will also support building capacity for environment statistics and SEEA in countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia.

21. OECD and UNECE jointly organize regular seminars on the implementation of SEEA. These seminars provide a platform for exchange of knowledge and experience and support the coordination of capacity development. The topics discussed at the seminar are aligned to a large extent with the work programme of the Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting (UNCEEA), with a focus on priority issues for the UNECE and OECD regions. The last seminar, held on 28, 30 and 31 March 2022 online,

discussed current national practices and new developments in implementing SEEA, reviews of relevant international standards, current national practices and new developments in the SEEA ecosystem accounts and progress towards measuring circular economy.

22. In 2020, the updated *CES Set of Core Climate Change-related Indicators and Statistics Using SEEA*, its implementation guidelines and accompanying metadata sheets developed by a dedicated Task Force were endorsed by the Conference. The Task referred to the SEEA Central Framework as far as possible and identified some issues for the SEEA research agenda during its work. UNECE continues to coordinate with UNCEEA concerning the use of SEEA to measure climate change indicators, e.g. through the Chief Statisticians' discussion on official statistics for climate action during the 2022 plenary session of the Conference or the annual UNECE Expert Fora for Producers and Users of Climate Change-Related Statistics.

23. UNCEEA also follows the work of the recently launched UNECE Task Force on the role of NSOs in achieving national climate objectives, given the links between the Task Force's mandate and the UNCEEA's work programme.

VII. Decision 53/116: Climate change statistics

24. *"The Statistical Commission:*

(b) Adopted the global set as the framework for climate change statistics and indicators to be used by countries when preparing their own sets of climate change statistics and indicators according to their individual concerns, priorities and resources, while noting the need for further methodological development for selected indicators, taking into account the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

(c) Recognized that, while the global set was designed to meet the needs of all countries following a global consultation, it remained complementary to the Conference of European Statisticians set of core climate change-related indicators and to other regional sets, that may include more region-specific indicators, to encourage harmonization across all levels;

(d) Expressed its support for comprehensively reviewing the global set in five years from its adoption as was done in the Sustainable Development Goal indicators process, and encouraged more regular reviews by the Expert Group on Environment Statistics in view of continuous harmonization with the ongoing development of related statistical areas, such as biodiversity, disasters, environmental-economic accounting and ecosystem accounting, gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls, and related regional sets such as the Conference of European Statisticians set or thematic sets of climate change indicators. At the same time, it can also be considered to prioritize and explain the relationships between different indicators and develop a short list with recommended indicators out of the large number of 158 indicators;

(f) Encouraged national statistical systems to invest in the development of climate change statistics, and strengthen environment statistics and accounts, using the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics and the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting, as a complementary basis for developing climate change information, given their close interrelationship;

(g) Encouraged the enhancement of collaboration between national statistical offices and national authorities responsible for reporting climate change-related information to the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, given the increased and more diverse data requirements for the implementation of the Paris Agreement,3 as well as climate-related Goal indicators;

(h) Expressed its support for the continuation of activities undertaken by the Statistics Division and the secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on

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[3] See FCCC/CP/2015/10/Add.1, decision 1/CP.21, annex.

Climate Change and other key partners to strengthen the link between statistics and policy, such as joint capacity-building efforts and training with other partners;

25.   The Global Set of Climate Change Statistics and Indicators adopted at the fifty-third session of the Statistical Commission included 34 out of 44 indicators from the Conference of European Statisticians' Core Set of CC-Related Statistics and Indicators (the CES Set), either verbatim or in a related form.

26.   The CES Set was developed between 2015 and 2020 by a dedicated Task Force chaired by Italy and vice-chaired by Luxembourg, and endorsed in 2020 by the Conference of European Statisticians. The CES Set and the Global Set are complementary, as the CES Set focuses on core indicators needed to paint the big picture of climate change in an internationally comparable way and respond to main policy questions relevant in the UNECE region. In line with the mandate of the Task Force, priority was given to SEEA based indicators.

27.   A comprehensive review of the CES Set is planned for 2025. However, some updates will be completed in the meantime in coordination with the work on the Global Set, especially for tier III indicators, for which internationally agreed methodology had not been available when the CES Set was developed.

28.   UNECE will continue working together with UNSD, UNFCCC and all other relevant international organizations on improving the availability and quality of climate change-related statistics and strengthening the link between statistics and policy at the national and international levels in this area. In February 2022, a new CES Task Force on the role of national statistical offices in achieving national climate objectives was established to contribute to bridging the gap between statistics and policy. The Task Force will identify concrete ways in which NSOs can be involved and showcase what the statistical system already offers to support climate action.

VIII.   Decision 53/117: National accounts

29.   *"The Statistical Commission:*

        (a)   Welcomed the report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts,4 expressed its appreciation for the activities undertaken to facilitate the implementation of the System of National Accounts 2008 (2008 SNA) and supporting statistics, and endorsed the programmes of work for 2022 of the Working Group and the Advisory Expert Group on National Accounts;

        (c)   Welcomed the coordination and cooperation between the various economic statistics expert groups in order to ensure that substantive discrepancies were avoided and that consistent terminology was used across manuals, to reduce duplication of effort and lead to optimal outcomes;

        (d)   Expressed support for the outreach, experimentation and testing to facilitate the consultation process of new guidance, encouraged Member States to participate in the evaluation process and experimentation and testing of the feasibility of the recommendations of guidance notes, and stressed the importance of providing financial and in-kind support to countries with limited resources;

        (f)   Welcomed the introduction of supplemental measures that go beyond gross domestic product (GDP) by developing a broader framework of accounts, based on agreed methodology, which can be used to monitor and analyse well-being and sustainability, including a closer linkage with the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting and measures of people's well-being and the sustainability of societal developments to inform various policy goals, including those of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,5 and to address the call by the Secretary-General for new measures of progress to complement GDP.

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[4] E/CN.3/2022/18.
[5] General Assembly resolution 70/1.

(h)   Encouraged the continued reporting and evaluation of the availability and scope of official national accounts data reported by Member States, and noted the importance of quality information in support of international comparisons and a global understanding of the world economy.

30.   The CES work programme on national accounts is closely aligned with the global work process, including the following current work areas:

(a)   UNECE organizes jointly with Eurostat and OECD regular meetings of the Group of Experts on National Accounts. These meetings provide an important platform for discussing common challenges of national accounts, balance of payments and business statistics, and for monitoring the implementation of global standards and related UNECE guidelines. The meetings, which have been organized in close cooperation with the ISWGNA, have provided a forum for discussing progress with the SNA update and consulting draft recommendations and guidance notes. The meetings will also serve for sharing country experience from the testing of the draft recommendations and guidance notes. Eastern member countries are involved in the consultation and experimentation though organization of training sessions and translating guidance notes into Russian;

(b)   UNECE contributes to the global advancing of the 2008 SNA research agenda in the areas of globalization, wellbeing and sustainability, communication and informal economy. This includes the publication of the following guides:

(i)   *Guide to Sharing Economic Data in Official Statistics* (UNECE 2021) aiming at increasing statisticians' ability to analyse multinational enterprises. The UNECE Steering Group on National Accounts will consider a country survey to identify operational models for data sharing and exchange of expertise and best practices. It will also organize a meeting of MNE coordinators, including the EU MNE coordinators' network;

(ii)   *Satellite Accounts for Education and training: Compilation Guide* (UNECE 2020) assists countries in constructing internationally comparable satellite accounts for the education sector and improving cost-based measurement of human capital;

(iii) *Poverty Measurement: Guide to data disaggregation* (UNECE 2020) gives guidance on disaggregation for measuring poverty and helps improve the quality and comparability of poverty statistics. The Guide is designed to enhance methodologies that aim at identifying disadvantaged or vulnerable members of society, who often experience the highest levels of poverty;

(iv)   *Guide on Poverty Measurement* (UNECE 2017) provides practical guidance to statistical offices on poverty measurement. It discusses the availability and comparability of key poverty measures and measurement challenges such as self-employment income, goods and services produced for own consumption, transfers between households, social transfers, and transfers in kind;

(v)   *Guide on Valuing Unpaid Household Service Work* (UNECE 2017) consolidates the existing experience and presents an internationally agreed approach to valuing unpaid household service work. It discusses the concept of unpaid household service work and methodological and implementation challenges;

(c)   UNECE, in collaboration with partner organizations such as EFTA, Eurostat and UNSD, facilitates the implementation of the 2008 SNA and Balance of Payments Manual, sixth edition in the EECCA and SEE countries through the organization of workshops, special sessions, development and translation of training materials.

IX. Decision 53/119: Business and trade statistics

31.   *"The Statistical Commission:*

(b)   Endorsed the update of the strategic view underscoring the importance of a horizontal and vertical integration of business and trade statistics and identifying emerging priority areas, namely digitalization, productivity and innovation, well-being and social inclusion, and green economy; welcomed the new work programme; and requested the Committee to coordinate with relevant committees and groups of experts to avoid duplication of work and strengthen coordination with other statistical domains;

(c)   Encouraged the Committee to share practices on microdata linking and on the development of an integrated data infrastructure to link microdata on people and businesses;

(d)   Took note of the manual on the maturity model for statistical business registers, encouraged the development of a toolkit and endorsed the launching of a regular global assessment on the status of implementation of statistical business registers in countries, encouraged close coordination with the Wiesbaden Group and other relevant groups, welcomed the proposed capacity-building activities for statistical business registers, and suggested developing guidelines for the integration of geospatial information into statistical business registers;

(g)   Supported the development of a global initiative aimed at improving the availability of unique business identifiers in administrative data sources, considered essential to help countries in strengthening statistical business registers and better understanding globalization; and requested the Committee to further elaborate the initiative and to report to the Commission at its fifty-fourth session, in 2023.

32.   UNECE in cooperation with Eurostat and OECD organises the biennial meetings of the Group of Experts on business registers. The Expert Group serves as a forum for sharing experiences and best practices for the development and maintenance of statistical business registers. Through international cooperation the Group aims to improve the quality of statistical business registers as basis for data collection, data integration and efficient production of coherent economic statistics.

33.   UNECE is a member of the Steering Group of the Wiesbaden Group on Business registers, and is involved in work related to the Committee of Experts on Business and Trade Statistics and participates in the task teams on globalization and digitalization and business dynamics, demography and entrepreneurship.

34.   The Conference endorsed the *Guide to Sharing Economic Data in Official Statistics* in 2020. The Guide highlights the importance of data sharing to capture economic stocks and flows correctly in official statistics and introduces practical ideas and common tools to make data sharing possible. In 2022, UNECE will follow up with activities in this area. The Group of Experts on National Accounts serves as a forum for the network of experts on multinational enterprise groups.

X. Decision: 53/123: Informal economy statistics

35.   *"The Statistical Commission:*

(a)   Welcomed the report of the International Labour Organization on informal economy statistics,[6] and expressed its appreciation to the International Labour Organization working group for the revision of the standards for statistics on informality and for the proposal for the new statistical framework on the informal economy being developed by the working group;

(b)   Expressed continued support for the development of a comprehensive set of statistical standards on the informal economy that are more aligned to the System of National Accounts as well as the latest statistical labour standards;

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[6] E/CN.3/2022/24.

(c)   Highlighted the importance of the development of a statistical framework on the informal economy that strives towards increased harmonization between countries by the introduction of improved definitions, while ensuring sufficient flexibility to reflect the different conditions of the informal economy across countries;

(g)   Highlighted that the concept of informal economy has relevance for all countries independent of level of development, and recognized the importance of integrating dependent contractors in the framework due to the increase in digital platform employment and gig employment;

(h)   Encouraged agencies to continue the work to develop improved practical recommendations relating to data sources, compilation methods, production and dissemination of relevant indicators as part of the implementation of the proposed standards, and recognized the need for agencies to support countries in their implementation of the future standard.

36.   The Bureau carried out an in-depth review of measuring the non-observed/informal economy at its October 2021 meeting based on a paper produced by Mexico, International Monetary Fund (IMF) and UNECE (submitted to the Conference as document ECE/CES/2022/10).

37.   The Bureau expressed support for the work on developing a framework for measuring informal economy as part of the SNA and BPM Updates. Informality affects a large number of countries, and the policy implications are huge. Once the framework is adopted, there will be a need for further work on testing and providing compilation guidance. The Bureau requested the UNECE Steering Group on National Accounts to consider the best way to collect, analyse and share the experiences of UNECE member countries and identify good practices and develop practical guidance on how to apply the framework for measuring informal economy.

XI.   Decision 53/124: Big data

38.   *"The Statistical Commission:*

(b)   Supported the proposed direction of future work of the Committee, in particular regarding mainstreaming big data and data science in the daily work of national statistical offices taking into account the local circumstances, prioritizing case studies on strategic issues related to main policy agendas, creating a network of data science leaders of national statistical offices, and strengthening the collaboration with the geospatial community;

(c)   Commended the work of the joint task team on the global facilitation of access to privately held data and its innovative ways of advancing access to new data sources on global value chains and e-commerce, while expanding the dialogue with stakeholders from the private sector, academia and policymakers, and creating a community of practice;

(d)   Supported the capacity development programme for big data and data science, especially the international mentoring programme; and empowering the regional hubs as centres for training and project implementation for the statistical community, while encouraging close collaboration with universities and other educational institutions and to acknowledge regional initiatives on big data collaborations;

(g)   Supported the creation of the United Nations Privacy-enhancing Technologies Lab to demonstrate the value of the use of privacy-preserving techniques for official statistics, noting that this would increase the possibilities of accessing privately held data;

(h)   Reiterated the importance of modernization of official statistics, and encouraged all Member States to take part in the work of the various task teams under the Committee, especially small island developing States and other developing countries."

39.   The CES work on modernization of official statistics is steered by the High-Level Group for the Modernization of Official Statistics (HLG-MOS)[7] consisting of thirteen committed Chief Statisticians, led by Canada. The work is implemented by four Modernization Groups through annual projects, workshops, and sprints. Some of the recently implemented projects related to the above-mentioned topics are:

(a)   Input Privacy-Preservation Techniques: to access, combine and analyse privacy sensitive data sources held by different parties;

(b)   Synthetic Data Guide for National Statistical Organisations: a starter guide to provide rich data while respecting integrity and confidentiality imperatives;

(c)   Machine learning for official statistics: to advance the sound and efficient use of Machine Learning in the production of official statistics.

40.   The work on machine learning continues under a newly established Machine Learning Group led by the Data Science Campus of the United Kingdom's Office for National Statistics with support from UNECE. The objectives include providing a platform to facilitate research to modernise official statistics, building capacity in machine learning and sharing knowledge. It is community driven, and all activities are led by members. It is open to all official statistical bodies and accessible to various levels of expertise. Resources are available to the wider community as the aim is to offer open, shareable, and easily accessible resources to the community and facilitate machine learning capacity building for official statistics.

41.   In 2022, three projects will be implemented: i) Input Privacy-Preserving Techniques project extension, ii) Data Governance Framework to Achieve Data Interoperability, and iii) Meta-Academy for the Modernization of Official Statistics.

42.   These projects aim to improve data interoperability, secure data sharing, and training and capability development, which are enablers for new national data stewardship roles and continuous modernising and implementing new tools and technologies. The outcome of the projects will allow accessing external data sources, for example, held by other national and international agencies, and integration of data sources without direct access to sensitive information. It will also provide guidance on setting up a framework to access, share and combine all data produced throughout the organisation in an easy way and with the metadata needed to understand the data using common standards. Additionally, it will show how training initiatives can be shared and co-created to develop the capabilities needed.

43.   More detail about the recent and upcoming work of HLG-MOS is presented in document ECE/CES/2022/12 and its addenda.

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[7] https://statswiki.unece.org/display/hlgbas/High-Level+Group+for+the+Modernisation+of+Official+Statistics