

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Meeting of the 2022/2023 Bureau
Geneva, Switzerland, 15-16 February 2023

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I. OPENING BY PADRAIG DALTON

1. The meeting of the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) was held on 15-16 February 2023 in Geneva. The following members of the Bureau participated: S. Mnatsakanyan (Armenia), A. Arora (Canada), P. Dalton (Ireland), G. Márquez (Mexico), D. Rozkrut (Poland), M. Kovacevic (Serbia) and I. Diamond (United Kingdom). C. Jones (representing M. Sowden, New Zealand) participated through an online connection. The following permanent observers also attended: K. Laykam (CIS-Stat), M. Kotzeva (Eurostat), P. Schreyer (OECD) and L. Bratanova (UNECE). P. Dalton (Ireland) chaired the meeting.

2. The following persons assisted members of the Bureau: O. O'Gorman (Ireland), A. Diaz-Castillo (Mexico), M. Nikic (Serbia), O. Mahoney (United Kingdom), A. Kosarev (CIS-Stat), M.-J. Santos (Eurostat). T. Luige (UNECE) served as Secretary of the meeting supported by M. Cwiek (UNECE). C. Boldsen, T. Gjaltema, M. Nagy, S. Vale, A. Vikat and S. Wang of UNECE participated.

3. M. Truszczynski (Denmark) for agenda item 2a, A. Yagur-Kroll (Israel) for item 2b, F. Schüller (Germany) for item 3a, U. Lee (Estonia) for item 6b, J. Pakarinen for item 6c, and A. Ferruzza (Italy) for item 6d participated through online connection at the invitation of the Chair.

4. Armenia, Latvia and UNSD sent written comments on selected 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. Hard-to-reach groups in administrative sources

(ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/2 by Denmark with contributions from Canada, Italy, New Zealand and the United States)

5. The in-depth review of hard-to-reach groups in administrative sources was based on a paper by Denmark, with contributions by Canada, Italy, New Zealand and United States. The following comments were made in the discussion:

(a) The paper gives a very good overview of the issues related to this very important topic;

(b) A conceptual framework could help to identify what we know and what we do not know about hard-to-reach groups. For some groups we may have very limited information such as the total number of persons belonging to the group, or have no information at all;

(c) Work could be useful on some basic principles, and focusing on certain policy relevant groups, such as people with a disability, migrants, ethnic minorities, homeless, children, and older persons. The policy perspective is important. Who are these groups? What are their characteristics? How are they integrated?

(d) Administrative sources do not capture some people because they do not meet the conditions for inclusion. We need to be mindful of the design of the sources, and that they may be imperfect. The experience of countries with register-based statistical systems will be particularly important. All sources should be considered, not just administrative sources. Data integration is key;

(e) Some people do not want to be included and may try hard not to be identified. Special methods should be developed to identify those people, and multiple sources should be used.

Conclusion

6. The CES Bureau supported further work in this area and agreed with the establishment of a new task force, as recommended in the paper. Denmark will chair the new task force. In addition to the countries that already contributed to the paper (Canada, Italy, New Zealand and United States), Ireland, Mexico, United Kingdom, Eurostat, OECD and UNSD expressed interest in joining the task force. The Secretariat will prepare the terms of reference for the new task force, for review by the Bureau at the October 2023 meeting.

B. Measurement of well-being

(ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/3 by Israel)

7. The in-depth review of measurement of well-being was based on a paper by Israel, with contributions by the Netherlands, Mexico, OECD and UNECE. The following comments were made in the discussion:

(a) The report is comprehensive and helpful in directing further work on measurement of well-being. The survey that was carried out as part of the review was useful in providing information about country practices. The document should be forwarded to the groups that deal with relevant issues, such as Beyond GDP and the UN network of economic statisticians, because it is a good overview of the current state-of-art of well-being measures;

(b) Several frameworks for measuring well-being exist, including OECD's Framework for measuring Well-being and Progress, Eurostat's Quality of Life Indicators, SDGs and the 2025 System of National Accounts (SNA). Hence, there is no need for a new framework. Further work should take existing frameworks as a starting point and focus on synthesizing these into operational guidelines to assist countries in producing well-being indicators;

(c) The guidelines should focus on a limited number of core indicators across the dimensions of well-being where harmonisation and improved international comparability is possible. The guidelines should clarify typology, provide definitions and give guidance on data sources, compilation methods and communication. The challenges in producing composite indicators and their limitation in providing information for policy making were highlighted;

(d) National well-being frameworks are developed to serve national purposes and adapted to specific conditions and needs in countries. The guidelines should give leeway to national frameworks to adapt to country needs and inclusion of country specific indicators;

(e) The guidelines should be forward looking. In the drafting of the guidelines, it will be important to coordinate with ongoing work, including on Beyond GDP, the SDGs and the SNA update;

(f) The following countries and organisations expressed interest in joining a task force to draft the guidelines on measuring well-being: Canada, Ireland, Israel, New Zealand, Poland, United Kingdom, OECD, UNSD and Leiden University (Netherlands).

Conclusion

8. The CES Bureau supported establishing a task force to develop guidelines on measurement of well-being for countries that produce or consider producing well-being indicators. The Secretariat will reach out to countries and organisations that expressed interest in joining the work to initiate the drafting of the terms of reference of the task force. Israel will chair the task force. The terms of reference should be submitted to the 2023 October Bureau meeting for approval.

C. Social cohesion

(ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/4 by Canada)

9. The in-depth review of the measurement of social cohesion was based on a paper by Canada, with feedback from Ireland, New Zealand, Poland, UK and OECD. The following comments were made in the discussion:

(a) The paper is of high quality and very helpful in opening up the complex topic from the measurement perspective;

(b) Creation of a new universal conceptual framework for social cohesion should not be attempted. Instead, any further work should accept the richness of different cultural contexts that determine it, and establish certain anchor points or key elements;

(c) Surveys measure different aspects of social cohesion. There is no need for a separate social cohesion survey but we should rather link the data already available in the different surveys. This would not require any new data collection and would facilitate a coherent dissemination of results;

(d) Society is increasingly interested in the situation of specific population groups such as young people or migrants. An overall picture on social cohesion that could further provide statistical insights into such groups would be desirable;

(e) Further work would be needed on the operationalisation of the concept of social cohesion and on multidimensional measurement techniques.

Conclusion

10. The CES Bureau supported establishing a task team to collect information on how the concept of social cohesion is measured in different countries and to identify good practices. Canada will lead the task team.

D. Selection of topics for in-depth reviews in 2023-2024 and CES 2023 plenary session (ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/5 by UNECE)

11. The Bureau discussed the topics to be reviewed in-depth in 2023-2024, and the topics to be discussed at the 2023 CES plenary session, based on a proposal prepared by the Secretariat. It was emphasised that the in-depth reviews should lead to a tangible outcome.

12. A cross-cutting thread through the discussion was relations with policy makers:

(a) The relations with policy makers are a strategic issue, linked to NSOs as providers of services, producers of insights, and data stewardship;

(b) Getting close to policy makers should not mean losing the independence of official statistics. It is needed to ensure continued relevance and may require a cultural shift in the

mindset of official statisticians. Sharing examples of interactions with policy makers would be useful;

(c) The policy making has changed during the last few years. It is no longer in silos and requires more systematic and cross-cutting evidence as a basis, and working with policy makers from day zero when policies are designed;

(d) To help policy makers, statisticians have the legal right to access, the technology and skillsets to bring together data from different areas to provide insight into interlinked issues;

(e) The relations with policy makers are relevant to several of the proposed topics. Therefore, it is important to focus the reviews well to identify the 'blind spots' where things need to be changed and avoid overlap with the other topics.

13. Below are more detailed comments on the topics proposed for the in-depth reviews and CES seminars.

14. **Linking data across domains and sources.** The following comments were made:

(a) We should refine the topic and identify what kind of outcome is expected. A possibility is to focus on how policy needs can be met by linking data, related to the paradigm shift of NSOs becoming producers of services and insights;

(b) The starting point for data linking should be the aim for which data are needed, not the other way round. An underlying framework and a systematic approach is important to be able to link data so that it makes sense;

(c) A review of data linking could potentially cover very different issues: institutional arrangements, reputation, trust, data stewardship, data access, responsibilities, technical, methodological issues, skillsets, how to analyse linked data, etc. It should be agreed from the outset what to cover;

(d) The review should not focus on technicalities. However, some technical issues of data linking are important enough to influence the strategic and managerial perspective, such as linking data with different coverage, different error structures, quality issues;

(e) Data linking is very important at local level and for producing disaggregated information. E.g., microsimulation allows to provide evidence for local level and very targeted policies;

(f) A review could look at examples of statistical outputs produced with linked data: what kind of policy issues have been addressed successfully by linking which kind of data, what was the demand, output and impact. It would be good to focus on use cases with the biggest impact. From there it is possible to draw conclusions what works, identify challenges, approaches and best practices, and what can be done at international level to advance this. Both national and international initiatives could be covered;

(g) There could be a survey among countries and organizations to see what is done in practice on data linking;

(h) The review is an opportunity to raise awareness about the HLG-MOS project on data governance framework for interoperability;

(i) The in-depth review could provide a good basis for discussing the topic at the 2024 CES plenary session, especially as there will be a joint session with UN-GGIM: Europe.

15. **Timeliness and frequency of official statistics.** The following comments were made:

(a) ‘Granularity’ should be added to the topic;

(b) The review should not imply a trade-off or hierarchy between the quality dimensions. Quality is about being ‘fit for use’. Accuracy is not paramount: being perfectly accurate too late is useless;

(c) The CES discussion could look into the challenges of improving timeliness, frequency and granularity, and how to strategically communicate these, to be transparent towards users;

(d) It will be useful to share examples of improving timeliness, frequency and granularity, collect good practices, and identify approaches that could be used in other subject areas.

16. **Maintaining relevance through providing products meeting user needs.** The following comments were made:

(a) The products of NSOs have become much more varied than in the past, the statistical releases are often done on a bundle of outputs targeted to different users (databases, research files, infographics, data visualisations, podcasts, etc.). The review could look at innovative products;

(b) User community keeps evolving and new groups appear. The users do not always know what they need and require guidance;

(c) Work is ongoing on communication under HLG-MOS. It will be useful to know more about their work to decide whether there are areas that are not covered and would need a review.

17. **Use cases for alternative population basis.** The following comments were made:

(a) It is a very topical issue and was one of the main themes in the discussion about strategic directions of official statistics at the October 2022 Bureau meeting;

(b) The alternative population basis require many other kinds of sources than censuses. In many countries measurement of population is shifting from traditional censuses and definitions of population to be able to produce an estimate of population at any point in time and/or on different geographies;

(c) The global level discussions on updating the definitions for migration and population did not lead to new definitions. However, the need for different types of population counts is strongly present.

18. **Administrative micro-data for climate, energy and environment statistics.** The following comments were made:

(a) The term ‘administrative’ micro-data needs to be clarified. In some countries this means public sector data, while in other countries the data may come from the private sector;

(b) Although the conversation started from climate change area, the issues are more general and the approaches may be transferred to other domains (e.g. census, housing statistics, etc.). Sharing use cases will allow to identify commonalities, and ways to overcome the common challenges.

19. At the meeting, the following topics were proposed in addition to the ones listed in document ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/5/Add.1):

(i) **How to make sense of the multitude of available indicator frameworks** (Canada)

20. The Bureau members noted that this issue deserves attention. However, the topic should be narrowed down, otherwise it can be too overwhelming. It should be also clear what kind of practical tangible outcome the review is aiming at.

21. A possible angle to focus the topic better can be the link with policy makers. Often new frameworks are developed when a new policy issue arises. However, the frameworks developed in the past should not be forgotten, while recognising that different frameworks may be needed for different types of questions. Taking stock of the existing frameworks would be useful.

22. It would be helpful to rationalise the frameworks and make them understandable for policy makers. In many policy areas a system/framework is needed to be able to make progress. When policymakers require answers to big questions, they need to understand how the systems are analysed and estimated so that it can inform policy. Use cases can be helpful for that.

(ii) **Data disaggregation** (topic proposed by Canada, UK supports and is ready to engage)

23. The topic is related to linking data from different sources to enable disaggregation. It is also linked with the need for local-level data and methodological issues related to small area estimation. The current technological developments allow to go much further on this than was possible a few years ago.

Conclusion

24. The following topics were agreed for in-depth reviews:

(a) Linking data across domains and sources (October 2023; Canada, Poland, UK and OECD will refine the topic to better focus the review; the topic of proliferation of indicator frameworks will be partly covered under the review; 14 countries offering contributions);

(b) Use cases for alternative population basis (October 2023; Poland and UK to lead, Albania, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, New Zealand ready to contribute);

(c) Timeliness and frequency of official statistics (February 2024; Canada to co-lead, other co-leader tbd, Poland and UK to contribute);

(d) Administrative micro-data for climate, energy and environment statistics (February 2024; Ireland to lead, Poland and UK to contribute).

25. On the topic of ‘maintaining relevance through providing products meeting user needs’ the communications work stream under HLG-MOS will prepare a paper for the October 2023 meeting. Based on this paper the Bureau will decide whether an in-depth review is necessary.

26. The following topics were selected for discussion at the CES 2023 CES plenary session:

(a) Timeliness, frequency and granularity of official statistics (Canada to co-lead, the other co-lead tbc; Austria, Ecuador, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Mexico, Poland, Portugal, Spain, UK and OECD ready to contribute);

(b) Moving towards open-source technologies – strategic and managerial perspective (Ireland to lead; Canada, Netherlands, Norway, Poland and United Kingdom ready to contribute).

27. The proposed new topic of proliferation of indicator frameworks will be partly covered under the topic of linking data. After this review, the Bureau can decide whether reviewing the topic of frameworks separately is still needed. The topic on disaggregation will be put on the list of topics for a possible review in future. The proposals on topics that concern the work of HLG-MOS will be coordinated with the Group.

III. UNECE STATISTICAL WORK AND CES TEAMS OF SPECIALISTS

A. Quality of employment

(ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/6 by UNECE)

28. The Bureau reviewed the progress report of the Steering Group on Measuring Quality of Employment for 2018-2022, and the updated terms of reference of the Group for 2023-2028.

29. The work of the Steering Group members and of the co-chairs (Frank Schüller, Germany and Vincent Dale, Canada) during 2018-2022 was highly appreciated. Improving existing indicators and creating new ones for the *Handbook on Measuring Quality of Employment* was specially mentioned.

Conclusion

30. The work on quality of employment and forms of employment was considered important and strongly supported. The Bureau approved the extension of Terms of Reference of the Steering Group on Measuring Quality of Employment until 2028.

B. Migration statistics: focus of future work

(ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/7 by the Steering Group)

31. The Steering Group on migration statistics (chaired by Cinzia Conti and Enrico Tucci, Italy) presented two possible proposals for further work on migration statistics: (i) measuring emigration, and (ii) improving the timeliness of migration statistics. The UNECE Group of Experts on migration statistics expressed strong support for launching new methodological work on measuring emigration at its October 2022 meeting. Taking into account the recent discussions by the Bureau about the importance of improving the timeliness of official statistics, the Group of Experts also considered ‘improving the timeliness of migration statistics and their communication’ as an alternative topic.

32. The Bureau supported “measuring emigration” as the topic for future work. The United Kingdom is willing to chair the Task Force. Eurostat and OECD are willing to participate.

33. It was noted that the definition of international migration in the 1998 *United Nations Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration* (based on a threshold of 12 months) is no longer applicable, and there is a clear need to revise this definition and distinguish migration from mobility. A UNSD expert group has worked on revising these recommendations. A new conceptual framework was endorsed but it appears that there will be no significant changes to the main concepts and definitions.

Conclusion

34. The CES Bureau agreed to establish a task force on measuring emigration. The United Kingdom will chair the task force. The terms of reference for the task force will be submitted to the October 2023 meeting of the Bureau.

C. Joint Working Group on Environmental Statistics and Indicators (former Joint Task Force)

(ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/8 by UNECE)

35. The Bureau discussed the proposed mandate and terms of reference for a Joint Working Group on Environmental Statistics and Indicators as a standing body under the Conference of European Statisticians and the Committee on Environmental Policy (CEP).

36. The relationship of the new Joint Working Group on Environmental Statistics and Indicators (JWGESI) with the existing Working Group on Environmental Monitoring and Assessment (WGEMA) was clarified. The two groups work on different ends of the information value chain. WGEMA is policy-oriented and its members are from Ministries of Environment and Environment Agencies. JWGESI involves experts from NSOs and Ministries of Environment. It supports countries in their efforts to produce environmental statistics and indicators which are needed for policy making, but also advises WGEMA for example in the selection of indicators for environmental assessments.

Conclusion

37. Para 22 in the Terms of Reference will be reworded: “The work shall be supported by...” will be replaced with “The work should be coordinated with...” or a similar phrase. With this small change, the Bureau approved the terms of reference for a Joint Working Group on Environmental Statistics and Indicators as a standing body under the Conference of European Statisticians and the Committee on Environmental Policy.

D. High-level Group for the Modernization of official Statistics (HLG-MOS)

(ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/9 and Add.1-2 by HLG-MOS)

38. The Bureau discussed the outcomes of the HLG-MOS work in 2022 and plans for 2023, and the extension of the mandate of HLG-MOS.

39. The Bureau commended the co-chairs of the Executive Board, Jennifer Banim (Ireland) and Stéphane Dufour (Canada), as well as the UNECE secretariat for the excellent work in managing and supporting the many HLG-MOS activities in 2022. The Bureau members strongly supported the work of the HLG-MOS. UNECE work on assisting countries in implementing the modernisation standards and its visionary activities were highly appreciated.

Conclusion

40. The Bureau approved the report on the implementation of the work plan in 2022, the plans for 2023 and the Terms of Reference for HLG-MOS for 2023-2025.

E. Access to privately held data

(ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/10 by UNECE in consultation with Canada, Ireland, Poland, Spain, Eurostat and OECD)

41. As a follow-up to the CES 2022 session on collaboration with private data providers, the CES Bureau considered next steps in the work in this area, based on a proposal prepared by the Secretariat in consultation with a group of countries and organizations. The following points were made in the discussion:

(a) The proposal received strong support from the Bureau. The in-depth review serves as a good basis for compiling a set of best practices on the integration of privately held data in official statistical production and developing guidance on how to design suitable incentives and collaboration models. To provide basis for the review, a survey was carried out among countries participating in the work of CES. More detailed follow-up questions could be asked to those countries who demonstrated experience with using privately held data. It could be done via selected and targeted interviews with countries;

(b) Several aspects were suggested to be emphasised in the follow-up work, including practical experiences with legislation that allows access and use of privately held data, social acceptability, data quality, ethics and public good/public interest;

(c) NSOs should collaborate with a broad range of stakeholders that may hold data, such as the private sector, non-governmental organisations, industry bodies and civil society. Successful collaboration would also help improve social acceptability;

(d) The focus should be on ensuring sustainable access to high-quality data for the production of official statistics, and not on one-off handover of data. New technologies and modern methods, such as input privacy preserving techniques, allow access and use of privately held data without moving the data to an NSO;

(e) A strong statement by international organisations (or a high-level declaration, similar to the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics) on access to data for a public good would be important to support NSOs in accessing privately held data, and to overcome the situation that multinational companies may have different access policies in different countries.

Conclusion

42. The Bureau supported the proposal for further work. Canada, New Zealand, Poland, the United Kingdom, Eurostat and OECD volunteered to be involved and share their experiences.

43. The UNECE Commission session in April 2023 will be an opportunity to raise at a policy level the issues about the need for access to privately held data for official statistics.

F. Subjective poverty measures

(ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/22 by the Task Force and UNECE)

44. The Bureau reviewed the progress report of the Task Force on subjective poverty measures (chaired by Thesia Garner, United States), including a plan for the next steps. The following points were raised in the discussion:

(a) It is important that subjective measures are understood as statistical measures of good quality, not inferior to objective measures. The work is linked to the OECD work on subjective well-being;

(b) The interest of policymakers in subjective measures tends to increase because people's perceived satisfaction with their situation influences their support to policies. A challenge is to know how to reconcile subjective and objective measures;

(c) The broad spectrum of Task Force membership is an important asset for the work.

Conclusion

45. The Bureau supported the work of the Task Force and requested it to continue according to the presented plan, which foresees presentation of the full report to the February 2024 meeting of the Bureau.

IV. STRATEGIC DEVELOPMENTS IN OFFICIAL STATISTICS – FOLLOW-UP TO DISCUSSION IN OCTOBER 2022

(ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/11 by UNECE)

46. The Bureau considered a follow-up to the discussion about issues of strategic importance for official statistics in October 2022 that covered challenges, opportunities and changes of internal or external origin.

47. The following comments were made in the discussion:

(a) The current system works very well – the discussions at the CES Bureau meetings are strategic due to a good selection of topics for in-depth reviews and CES seminars;

(b) An open discussion at the CES Bureau October meetings on “what keeps Chief Statisticians awake at night” would be welcome and should help to focus the CES work and identify issues for discussion at the CES plenary sessions;

(c) Possible tweaks in the work of the Conference could include (i) being more conscious of the changes in the context of groups' work and adjusting the way of working accordingly; (ii) consider introducing some “hard stops”, i.e. a maximum amount of effort that any group should put into a topic, based on concrete data.

Conclusion

48. The Bureau agreed that an open discussion on strategic issues should be held at the subsequent October meetings of the Bureau and periodically at the CES plenary sessions.

V. PREPARATION OF THE CES 2023 PLENARY SESSION

A. Seminar session on data ethics

(ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/12 by UK and Canada)

49. The Bureau discussed the organization of a session on data ethics at the CES 2023 plenary session based on an outline by the UK and Canada.

50. The in-depth review paper on data ethics will provide the main basis for the discussion. The session will be chaired by UK. Canada will act as moderator. A speaker from outside the statistical system has been invited to give a keynote speech and two others to participate in the panel discussion.

51. The following points were raised during the discussion:

(a) Data ethics and social acceptability are two big and intertwined topics, putting forward the idea of public interest and public good. The title of the session should be adjusted to reflect linking those topics together. (Some suggestions: Data ethics in support of social acceptability; How to turn data ethics into social acceptance; We can – should we? A discussion on data ethics and social acceptability.);

(b) Data ethics is an important element to achieve social acceptability. Data ethics is something statisticians impose on themselves. Social acceptability is a conversation, an external lens;

(c) The seminar should not aim to cover both topics exhaustively but to raise awareness in the statistical community about this area, and identify what further activities are needed. The discussion on social acceptability should continue after the seminar in June;

(d) The seminar should make it clear that data ethics is an evolving topic in the conditions of new technologies, new data sources, linking data, etc. The concept is simple but difficult to achieve. It is important to sensitize statisticians that ethics questions have to be considered in the production process from the beginning, and we may need to change the way things are done to get social acceptance;

(e) It will be useful to clarify the meaning of social license/social acceptability. Having a license or legal basis does not mean that what you do is socially accepted. It was agreed to use term ‘social acceptability’ instead of ‘social license’. However, the discussion should not be overcomplicated with an academic debate about terms;

(f) Communicating how official statistics works with data helps in getting social acceptance. Work on ethics and communication both need to continue, to assure the public that their data is used responsibly;

(g) The evolving role of the national statistical offices as offices for data may put data ethics into a new light: how do we apply data ethics, the European Statistics Code of Practice and Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics in the new situation?

Conclusion

52. The seminar organisers will take into account the recommendations by the Bureau. The title will be changed to make it clear that its main focus is on how data ethics and social acceptability are linked. Eurostat and Ireland (together with other countries) will provide a paper on social license/acceptability based on the work in the European Statistical System, inviting countries outside EU also to contribute. New Zealand offered to contribute to the seminar.

B. Draft agenda and timetable for the 2023 CES plenary session

(ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/14 by UNECE)

53. The CES 2023 plenary session is planned to take place in two parts: the formal session on 22-23 June 2023 in Geneva (with English-French-Russian interpretation), and an informal session on 28 June 2023 in Paris (in English only), back-to back with the OECD Committee on Statistics and Statistical Policy (CSSP) meeting. There will be an online connection to both parts of the CES meeting. It was emphasised that keeping the CES and OECD CSSP meetings back-to-back in the same venue is important for the participants, especially the ones who travel from afar.

54. The Bureau discussed the provisional agenda of the CES 2023 plenary session based on a proposal by the Secretariat.

Conclusion

55. The Conference will discuss outcomes of two in-depth reviews: (i) hard-to-reach groups in administrative sources, and (ii) social cohesion.

56. The CES will have seminar-like discussions on three topics:

(a) Data ethics in support of social acceptability (led by the UK and Canada; the final formulation of the session title to be decided by the session organisers) – for more detail about the contents of the seminar see paras 49-52;

(b) Timeliness, frequency and granularity of official statistics (Canada to co-lead, the other co-lead to be confirmed (Portugal was proposed)); Ireland, Poland and UK confirmed their intention to contribute; other contributors from the electronic consultation were Austria, Ecuador, Hungary, Italy, Mexico, Portugal, Spain and OECD);

(c) Moving towards open-source technologies – strategic and managerial perspective (Ireland to lead; Canada, Netherlands, Norway, Poland and United Kingdom offered contributions).

VI. CES GUIDELINES AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR ENDORSEMENT IN 2023

A. Core values of official statistics

(ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/15 by the Task Team)

57. The Conference asked the Task Team of core values to the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics (chaired by Pdraig Dalton, Ireland) to elaborate behaviours that demonstrate the implementation on the core values of official statistics in practice. The Bureau reviewed the draft list of behaviours to decide if it could be sent for written consultation to all CES members, prior to its submission to the CES plenary session in June 2023 for endorsement.

58. During the discussion, the inclusion of the term “data stewardship” was raised. This term was not explicitly used in the list of behaviours following concern from some countries that it was not yet adequately defined, but the introduction to the behaviours document refers to “new roles within the wider data community”. As it is planned to be a living document, this may be added in future.

Conclusion

59. The list of behaviours to support the Core Values of Official Statistics will be sent to CES members for an electronic consultation. Subject to a positive outcome of the consultation, the document will be submitted to the CES 2023 plenary session for endorsement.

B. Data stewardship

(ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/16 and Add.1 by the Task Team)

60. The Bureau reviewed the draft report *Data stewardship and the role of national statistical offices in the new data ecosystem* prepared by the CES Task Force on data stewardship (chaired by Urmet Lee, Estonia). After a preliminary consultation in 2022, the report has been further

improved. Key messages and a chapter on data maturity have been added, and the glossary has been extended in consultation with the global Working Group on Data Stewardship. The report has been restructured and shortened, and has undergone substantive language editing by Statistics Canada.

61. The following points were made during the discussion:

(a) The Bureau congratulated the group for coming up with a good report on a complex topic in a relatively short time;

(b) It will be useful to add an Executive Summary for people who would not read the whole report;

(c) While data stewardship covers many different activities and a statistical office may already be doing some of them, the report should not leave an impression that there is no need to change towards taking up a new, more active role in a national data ecosystem;

(d) A critical aspect of data stewardship is the change of paradigm from production of statistics as a good to production of services. It should be clarified that data stewardship is not necessarily fully encompassing the changing role of National Statistical Offices;

(e) Participation in the Task Force of people outside official statistics dealing with public governance was very useful as the topic needs to be discussed at the whole of government level;

(f) The importance of continuing the work on data stewardship was emphasised. It may take time to reach a common understanding of data stewardship and NSOs' role in it. A possible direction for future work is to consider in more detail examples of how data stewardship is implemented in countries and the data services provided in practice.

Conclusion

62. The Task Force will finalise the draft report taking into account suggestions from the Bureau. It will be sent to CES members for an electronic consultation. Subject to a positive outcome of the consultation, the document will be submitted to the CES 2023 plenary session for endorsement.

C. Measuring circular economy

(ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/17 by the Task Team and ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/17/Add.1 by the Task Force)

63. The Bureau reviewed the draft *UNECE/OECD Guidelines for measuring circular economy, Part A: Monitoring framework and indicators*, and considered the proposal to extend the mandate of the Task Force until 2025 which will allow for drafting *Part B: Guide on measuring progress towards a circular economy*. Part B will complement part A with guidance on data sources for the production of the agreed core indicators, the required institutional collaboration, and using the indicators.

64. The Bureau expressed its satisfaction with the work of the Task Force (chaired by Johanna Pakarinen, Finland), and the good example it sets for cooperation between international organisations. Canada and OECD are interested to continue to contribute to the work of the Task Force.

Conclusion

65. The draft *UNECE/OECD Guidelines for Measuring Circular Economy, Part A: Conceptual Framework, Statistical Framework and Indicators* will be sent to CES members for an electronic consultation. Subject to a positive outcome of the consultation, the document will be submitted to the CES 2023 plenary session for endorsement.

66. The Terms of Reference of the Task Force are extended until 2025.

D. Hazardous events and disasters

(ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/18 by the Task Team)

67. The Bureau reviewed the set of core disaster-risk related indicators developed by the Task Force on measuring hazardous events and disasters (chaired by Angela Ferruzza, Italy), aiming to support the implementation of the *CES Recommendations on measuring hazardous events and disasters* (2019).

68. Detailed written comments were provided by UNSD. In their comments UNSD expressed appreciation that elements from the Global Set of Climate Change Indicators were used for this indicator set. Furthermore, UNSD made some editorial comments and proposed additional complementary indicators.

Conclusion

69. The Task Force will make minor editorial changes of the document, taking into account the comments provided by UNSD, and the document will be sent to CES members for an electronic consultation. Subject to a positive outcome of the consultation, the document will be submitted to the CES 2023 plenary session for endorsement.

VII. UNECE STATISTICS PROGRAMME OF WORK DOCUMENTS

(ECE/CES/ BUR/2022/FEB/19-21 by UNECE)

70. The Bureau reviewed three documents related to the implementation of the UNECE Statistics subprogramme prepared in the context of the United Nations secretariat's planning and reporting process: the report on the implementation of the Statistical Programme 2022, the draft programme of work for 2024 and the outline of key components of the UNECE Statistics Subprogramme for 2025.

71. The Bureau was also informed about the preparations of the 2023 ECE Commission session (18-19 April 2023). The overarching topic for the session will be "Digital and green transformations for sustainable development in the UNECE region". The CES Chair, Padraig Dalton is invited to participate in a panel 'Enhancing trust and transparency: Using digital tools to support the green transformation' (taking place on the 18 April, afternoon).

Conclusion

72. The Bureau approved the Report on the implementation of the Statistical Programme 2022 (ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/19) and the draft Programme of Work for 2024 (ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/20). Both documents will be submitted to the CES 2023 plenary session for adoption.

73. The outline of key components of the UNECE Statistics Subprogramme for 2025 (ECE/CES/BUR/2023/FEB/21) was sent to the Bureau for possible comments and suggestions after the meeting (with a deadline of two weeks). The suggested improvements from this consultation will be submitted to the CES 2023 plenary session. The recommendations agreed by the Conference and included in its decisions will be reflected in the proposed programme of work for 2025.

VIII. DATES AND VENUES OF NEXT MEETINGS

74. The Bureau confirmed the dates and venues of the next CES Bureau meetings as follows:

- 9-10 October 2023 (Cardiff, UK)
- 14-15 February 2024
- 15-16 October 2024

75. The 71st CES plenary session will take place as follows: a formal session on 22-23 June 2023 in Geneva (with English-French-Russian interpretation), and an informal session on 28 June 2023 in Paris (in English only), back-to back with the OECD CSSP meeting.

76. The 72nd CES plenary session is planned to take place during the week of 24-28 June 2024 in Geneva (tbc). The CES plenary session will include a joint session with the UN-GGIM: Europe.

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