

Intermediate Progress Report - 30.06.2019

Thematic evaluation of the regional commissions (E/AC.51/2017/8)

	Recommendation	Management response	Actions taken by UNECE to close recommendation	OIOS response and implementation date
1	<p>Regional Commissions should develop and implement a strategy to enhance the capacity of Member States for dissemination and use of statistics at the national level, including guidelines and recommendations, taking into account the regional context.</p> <p>Related activities could include: a. promoting the participation of technical ministries or members of other substantive committees in relevant Statistical Committee working groups, task forces, including cross-sectoral capacity building activities bringing together statistics producers and users b. technology workshops that address new and advanced data dissemination methods</p>	<p>We accept this recommendation and would like to inform you that ECE recently finalized and published a document entitled "Recommendations on promoting, measuring and communicating the value of official statistics", which includes eight strategic recommendations for countries.</p>	<p>The UNECE sectoral committee on statistics, the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) adopted a strategy for capacity development in UNECE region in June 2018. The strategy emphasizes the importance of capacity development in countries not only in statistical subject-matter areas but also on so-called "soft skills", including statistical dissemination and communication. See: http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/ece/ces/2018/CES_10_E_Statistical_capacity_development_strategy.pdf</p> <p>The regular expert meetings on communication of statistics serve as a platform to share experience, learn from each other and build capacity in statistical communication. See: https://statswiki.unece.org/display/DIS/2018+Workshop+on+the+Dissemination+and+Communication+of+Statistics.</p> <p>Representatives of other agencies than the statistical office are often participating in the expert meetings, working groups and Task Forces (some examples include the UNECE Joint Task Force on environmental statistics and indicators - the group is jointly serviced by the UNECE Statistics Division and Environment Division, participants are experts from statistical offices and Ministries of Environment; groups working in the areas of poverty and inequality and on ageing related statistics include members of academia; etc.). In national capacity building workshops often both statistics producers and users are involved (e.g. workshop on statistics for SDGs:12 October 2017, Yerevan, Armenia;</p>	<p>OIOS takes note of the progress made and of the adoption of a strategy for capacity development in the ECE region, which is being provided. It would be useful to obtaining more information on the implementation of the strategy as it gets implemented, so that it can be reported in the context of the triennial review of implementation of recommendations, in about two years. In the meantime, this recommendation will be closed as implemented.</p> <p>Implemented July 2018</p>

	Recommendation	Management response	Actions taken by UNECE to close recommendation	OIOS response and implementation date
			http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=47161 ; workshops on gender statistics: 29-31 May 2018, Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan; http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=48280 ; 29-31 May 2017, Astana, Kazakhstan; http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=45135 ; etc.	
2	<p>The regional commissions should develop and implement a strategy to enhance their capacities in support of key statistics, in particular environmental and gender statistics and new statistical areas relating to the Sustainable Development Goals. This strategy should include actions to secure supplementary resources as appropriate and relevant, targeted recruitment of staff with expertise in key statistical areas and temporary recruitment of specialists and regional advisers.</p> <p><u>Indicator of achievement:</u> strategy to support the enhancement of capacities for key statistics is developed.</p>	<p>We accept this recommendation and will prepare a strategy to support the enhancement of capacities for key statistics developed for the ECE region.</p>	<p>1. UNECE is enhancing its capacity to support key statistics within the limits of available regular budget and extra-budgetary resources. When new staff are recruited to the Statistical Division, utmost care is taken to recruit good specialists with expertise in different statistical subject-matter areas that are required to carry out the Divisions mandated work, including in environment and SDG statistics. The Division is implementing a number of extra-budgetary capacity building projects, including the UN Development Account 10th tranche programme on statistics and data. Temporary recruitments are used to the extent possible within the UN rules for such recruitment. As a recent example, in April 2019 Statistical Division recruited temporarily an expert from Moldova to work on statistics for SDGs and strengthen the capacity in the Division.</p> <p>2. Given the limited regular budget and extra-budgetary resources for recruiting additional staff with new expertise, UNECE developed a strategic approach of pulling up the available statistical capacity in various sub-programmes. This is achieved through the creation in spring 2019 of a UNECE Nexus Team on Measuring and monitoring SDGs composed of statistical experts from all sub-programmes under the leadership of the Director of Statistical Division. The terms of reference and workplan for the team were approved at management level in June 2019. The focus is on pulling resources related to</p>	<p>Response from OIOS not received as at 30 June 2019</p>

	Recommendation	Management response	Actions taken by UNECE to close recommendation	OIOS response and implementation date
			<p>environment including forestry, transport and energy.</p> <p>3. Based on this new strategic approach in which <i>Measuring and monitoring SDGs</i> becomes one of the four nexuses of UNECE, UNECE considers that this recommendation can be closed as of 30 June 2019.</p>	
3	<p>Regional commissions should develop region-specific tools, guidelines, frameworks and templates (taking into consideration the Guidelines by the Partnership in Statistics for the 21st Century - Paris 21), in order to strengthen their support to member countries with development and refinement of their National Statistical Plans and National Strategy for the Development of Statistics, to ensure that they take into account the goals, priorities and needs of the 2030 Sustainable Development Agenda.</p>	<p>We accept this recommendation and will review our existing efforts in this regard to determine where interventions can be delivered on integrating the Sustainable Development Goals into national statistical plans, within existing resources, including in our regular budget for technical cooperation.</p>	<p>UNECE is carrying out global assessments for statistical systems of countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (together with Eurostat and EFTA). The global assessments provide a good basis for the countries to develop national strategies and plans for development of statistics. The results of latest global assessments are available at: http://www.unece.org/statcoop/ga.html. The UNECE Strategy for statistical capacity development is a regional implementation of the Paris21 capacity development 4.0 initiative. It includes a maturity model that countries can use as a template for assessing their capabilities in particular statistical areas and identifying capacity building priorities.</p> <p>UNECE has developed a Road Map on statistics for SDGs that gives guidance to countries how to set up a system of providing statistics for SDGs. The Road Map includes recommendations and tools to support countries in this work - for more information, see: https://statswiki.unece.org/display/SFSDG/Statistics+for+SDGs+Home</p> <p>UNECE is undertaking statistical capacity activities as part of a 2017-2020 programme for the improvement of economic and social statistics in support of the implementation of the 2008 SNA based on extrabudgetary resources. UNECE has developed a regional plan for the implementation of the 2008</p>	<p>OIOS notes the progress made on the development of global assessments that would enable countries to then develop plans and strategies; the same with regards to the models and templates that countries can use to determine their needs and priorities with regards to capacity building. OIOS also notes the road map ECE developed on Statistics and SDGs which will help MS to guide their efforts at producing statistics that will then support the monitoring of SDGs. OIOS will like to encourage ECE to continue documenting the support it provides to MS in implementing their strategies based on the road map and the use of the other tools so that they can be reported as part of the Triennial review on the implementation of recommendations. OIOS considers this recommendation as implemented.</p>

	Recommendation	Management response	Actions taken by UNECE to close recommendation	OIOS response and implementation date
			System of National Accounts (2008 SNA) in countries of East Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia and South East Europe, which follows the global strategy adopted by the UN Statistical Commission. A number of the SDG indicators depend on income, production and consumption which require the availability of suitable and reliable measures of the national accounts.	Implemented July 2018
4	Regional Commissions should strengthen internal coordination within each regional commission with regard to the production and dissemination of sectoral data, including: a. a clear plan for and regular exchange of information on regional activities in statistics; b. a clear commission-wide biennial plan for data collection aimed at identifying common data sources to avoid duplication; and c. Central data management and monitoring to ensure effective collaboration when updating databases within regional commissions.	We accept this recommendation and will engage in a discussion with other regional commissions to determine an action plan for ECE in line with this recommendation.	<p>1. UNECE Statistical division is maintaining a central database and web interface for all statistical data produced by UNECE (http://w3.unece.org/PXWeb/en). This includes data on economic and social and demographic statistics (provided by the Statistical Division), transport (provided by Transport Division) and timber (provided by Forestry and Timber Section). The Statistical Division collects data through joint questionnaires with Eurostat, OECD and UNSD, or directly from the databases of other international organizations (such as Eurostat and OECD). There is no duplication in data collection in UNECE as each Division is focusing on a different subject area.</p> <p>2. The 11 December 2017, UNECE EXCOM approved the Mandates and Terms of Reference of the Teams of Specialists under the Conference of European Statisticians for the period 2018-2022 (ECE/EX/2017/L.14). For each Team of Specialists, the coordination with other entities is specified under item D Planned activities and outputs. One specific Task Force on exchange and sharing of economic data was created (Annex V). As stated in para. 12: the work will build on existing national and international experience, including the results of related initiatives of UNSD, Eurostat, OECD, World Trade Organization (WTO) and IMF1. The Task Force will ensure coordination with and input to corresponding work undertaken by the</p>	OIOS notes the progress made on the different aspects of this recommendation and will validate and verify the different arrangements implemented by ECE through our triennial review which will be due at the end of 2019. Implemented November 2018

	Recommendation	Management response	Actions taken by UNECE to close recommendation	OIOS response and implementation date
			Expert Group on International Trade and Economic Globalization Statistics (ITEGS), the G20 Data Gaps Initiative, Eurostat's Integrated Global Accounts (IGA) –projects, the CES Task Force on Common Elements of Statistical Legislation and the Data Integration Project under the UNECE High-level Group for the modernisation of official statistics.	
5	<p>Coordination between the regional commissions should be further strengthened to share expertise and experience on common thematic priorities, including the possibility of periodic sharing of information and more joint activities, where feasible.</p> <p><u>Indicator of achievement</u>: at least one annual collaboration and sharing initiative is organized between regional commissions per year.</p>	<p>We accept this recommendation and, within the broader cooperation of the regional commissions, will review opportunities for increasing collaboration, within existing resources.</p>	<p>1. UNECE is undertaking joint activities with other regional commissions through regular work wherever relevant, and also through the UN Development Account programme.</p> <p>2. In a systematic effort to coordinate the work on statistics, including current and future joint projects, UNECE and the other regional commissions participate in regular quarterly teleconferences, which also include UN-DESA. These teleconferences provide an opportunity to exchange experiences, share information on activities and identify new areas for collaboration.</p> <p>3. As per OIOS latest comment dated December 2018, please find below concrete examples of joint activities with other Regional Commissions:</p> <p>A systematic approach in organising environment related activities with other Regional Commissions as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint UNECE/ESCAP Regional event on Energy statistics and accounting was held in May 2019. As a follow-up a joint UNECE/ESCAP/UNDESA training on energy accounting will be held in December 2019 • The joint report of UNECE, ESCAP and ECLAC on statistics for hazardous events and disasters presented to the UN Statistical Commission in March 2019 will be followed with similar joint 	<p>Response from OIOS not received as at 30 June 2019.</p>

	Recommendation	Management response	Actions taken by UNECE to close recommendation	OIOS response and implementation date
			<p>reports to the UN Statistical Commission in 2020 and 2021. The work in this area is very challenging and the joint reports would allow for a consistent approach across all regions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ECLAC will contribute to the UNECE Expert Forum on Climate Change related statistics on 3-4 October 2019 <p>On gender statistics the following events were held or are planned:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On November 2018 in Tokyo, Japan, a UNECE and ESCAP /SIAP Regional Training workshop on gender statistics. • ECLAC contributions to the UNECE session on Gender statistics held in May 2019 in Neuchatel, Switzerland • The outcomes of the regional training in Tokyo and the workshop in Neuchatel will feed in the work of the UNECE Task Force on Communication of gender statistics which will produce guidance on this topic. The work should be completed in 2020. As per usual practice the final draft will be consulted with all Regional Commissions. <p>On Statistics for the Sustainable Development Goals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • UNECE and ESCAP jointly organise the annual meetings of the UN Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia (SPECA) Working Group on Statistics, which considers progress and challenges regarding the production of statistics for the SDGs. These meetings take place in Tashkent, Kazakhstan in October 2018, and Chisinau, Moldova, in September 2019. 	

	Recommendation	Management response	Actions taken by UNECE to close recommendation	OIOS response and implementation date
			4. Based on the recent and future examples of collaboration provided, UNECE considers that this recommendation can be closed as of 30 June 2019.	