

**Seventy-first session**

Item 131 of the preliminary list*

Programme planning**Programme performance report of the United Nations for
the biennium 2014-2015****Report of the Secretary-General***Summary*

The present report on the programme performance of the United Nations Secretariat for the biennium 2014-2015 is submitted in accordance with regulation 6.1 of the Regulations and Rules Governing Programme Planning, the Programme Aspects of the Budget, the Monitoring of Implementation and the Methods of Evaluation ([ST/SGB/2000/8](#)).

The report includes information on the results achieved by the Organization during the biennium in terms of expected accomplishments and the achievement of outputs, which is the traditional measure of performance. The key results achieved by the Organization under its 10 programme elements give Member States a high-level overview of the Secretariat's performance (see sect. II). The analysis of programme performance in regard to 34,150 mandated and additional outputs (see sect. III) indicates increases in implementation rates, from 91 to 94 per cent for mandated outputs and from 92 to 94 per cent for all outputs, compared with the previous biennium. The report also includes a detailed recounting of the results obtained by each individual budget section on 808 expected accomplishments under the 36 sections of the programme budget (see sect. IV). In addition, it contains a brief summary of the main challenges encountered in the implementation of each programme and lessons learned to improve performance.

Combining a results-based analysis with an output-oriented one, the present report provides a comprehensive overview of the major developments and the work performed by the United Nations Secretariat during the biennium 2014-2015.

* [A/71/50](#).



E. Regional cooperation for development

34. The five regional commissions — ECE, ESCAP, ECLAC, ECA and ESCWA — continued to promote sustained economic growth and sustainable development in their respective regions and to facilitate regional cooperation and integration among Member States.

35. The regional commissions used their convening capacities to hold discussions on policy issues and build political consensus regarding possible solutions to the economic and social problems faced by their member States. Concrete examples of the effective utilization of those capacities are as follows: ECA, at its forty-seventh and forty-eighth sessions, discussed the issues of industrialization for transformative development in Africa and the implementation of Agenda 2063 for planning, mobilizing and financing for development, respectively; ESCAP, at its seventieth session, focused on the role of regional connectivity in supporting economic growth and development, and at its seventy-first session focused on the integration of the social, economic and environmental dimensions of sustainable development and

adopted a resolution on restructuring the conference structure of the Commission to be fit for the evolving post-2015 development agenda; ECE, at its sixty-sixth session, endorsed a high-level statement on the post-2015 development agenda and the Geneva Charter on Sustainable Housing, which is aimed at increasing access to decent, adequate, affordable and healthful housing for all in the ECE region; ECLAC, at its thirty-fifth session, created a new Regional Conference on Social Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, aimed at improving national policies on social development and related international, regional and bilateral cooperation; and ESCWA, at its twenty-eighth ministerial session, adopted the Tunis Declaration on Social Justice in the Arab Region and commemorated the fortieth anniversary of the Commission with the issuance of the report entitled “Working for a just and prosperous Arab world: ESCWA at 40”.

36. Key publications issued by the regional commissions contributed to improved policy formulation and implementation processes in the various regions within their purview. The 2014 and 2015 editions of the ECA publication *Economic Report on Africa* urged that African countries focus on adopting dynamic industrial policies with flexible processes and mechanisms that would help them transform their economies and bring about inclusive and sustainable economic and social development. The 2014 and 2015 editions of *The Millennium Development Goals Report* continued to create awareness about Africa’s performance with respect to the Millennium Development Goals and presented perspectives on lessons learned in accelerating progress. ESCAP, in the 2014 and 2015 editions of its flagship publications *Economic and Social Survey of Asia and the Pacific* and *Asia-Pacific Trade and Investment Report* and in the regional report *Transformations for Sustainable Development: Promoting Environmental Sustainability in Asia and the Pacific*, provided fresh data, new perspectives and policy guidance on issues critical for enabling Governments and other actors to meet the challenges of achieving inclusive and sustainable development. ECE published *Conference of European Statisticians Recommendations on Climate Change-Related Statistics*, aimed at improving existing official statistics to support climate change analysis and reporting on greenhouse gas emissions under the Kyoto Protocol. The recommendations contained in the publication were endorsed by more than 60 countries and international organizations. ECLAC, in addition to its six traditional annual flagship publications, prepared important policy reports as contributions to the discussions of member States at high-level meetings. Among these was *Compacts for Equality: Towards a Sustainable Future*, which was presented at the thirty-fifth session of the Commission. The publication generated a dialogue with high-level authorities and policymakers on the regional vision of the post-2015 development agenda, aimed at achieving greater equality and ensuring sustainable development for future generations. The study entitled “Financing for development in Latin America and the Caribbean: a strategic analysis from a middle-income country perspective” discussed the specific challenges and diverse realities of middle-income countries. ESCWA offered a strategic vision for regional economic, social and cultural integration in the report entitled “Arab integration: a twenty-first-century development imperative”, which promoted key attainments in human development. ESCWA investigated the rise and the fall of the Arab middle class through its 2014 publication *The Arab Middle Class Report: A Force for Change?* and reviewed the current state of economic and social developments through its biennial flagship publication *Survey of Economic and Social Developments in the Arab Region 2014-2015*.

37. The policy analysis and statistical standards supported by the regional commissions were also widely utilized by the Governments of the region to improve their performance in various areas. ECA, through statistics and policy analysis published in country profiles, contributed to evidence-based planning and policymaking in support of national and subregional development priorities. In collaboration with regional partners, it designed a manual on the second national strategy for the development of statistics. ESCAP engaged with its member States in regional and global policy dialogues and provided research and analysis needed for the development of, inter alia, sound policies related to macroeconomics and financing for development, trade, investment, technology transfer, international road transport and logistics systems, and sustainable development. The first ESCAP Ministerial Conference on Civil Registration and Vital Statistics in Asia and the Pacific resulted in the adoption of a regional action framework and a declaration on the Asia and Pacific Civil Registration and Vital Statistics Decade (2015-2024). The ESCAP *Statistical Yearbook for Asia and the Pacific 2015* represented the first regional assessment of facts and trends at the outset of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. ECE supported the capacity of countries to report on the Millennium Development Goals and gender-sensitive indicators, and helped to assess their readiness to monitor progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. With the support of ECE, six of its member States developed a national strategy for the sustainable development of statistics. ECLAC maintained a leading role in regional statistics by staking out the main road for statistical cooperation in the region through the approval of the strategic plan for the period 2015-2025 for the Statistical Conference of the Americas at the eighth meeting of the Conference, held in November 2015, and through the provision of technical support to member States in the implementation of the 2012 System of Environmental-Economic Accounting and the 2008 System of National Accounts. ESCWA coordinated capacity development activities with regional and global partners on official statistics in the Arab region and produced statistical products jointly with other partners, including the *Bulletin of Industrial Statistics for Arab Countries*, country profiles focused on energy, and a Millennium Development Goals dashboard.

38. Consensus-building and advocacy efforts were important in the work of the regional commissions. For example, ECA held the Ninth African Development Forum in October 2014 on the theme “Innovative financing for Africa’s transformation”, which resulted in the adoption of a Marrakech consensus and recommendations. Through the consensus, ECA supported Africa’s development process and ensured that Africa’s priorities were reflected in the global debate on the development agenda. ESCAP held the Asia-Pacific Outreach Meeting on Sustainable Development Financing in 2014 and the Asia-Pacific High-level Consultation on Financing for Development in 2015, in order to reach consensus on the formulation of sustainable development policies. Those meetings culminated in four outcome documents setting forth recommendations on regional and global processes relating to financing for development. ECE held regional consultations on a monitoring and accountability framework, a development agenda, financing for development and the 15-year review of the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, to inform global intergovernmental processes. The work of ECLAC to strengthen the capacity of regional policymakers to contribute to the debate on reshaping the global financial architecture resulted in contributions and proposals from all countries of the Community of Latin America and Caribbean States in various debate forums, in line with ECLAC recommendations. The commitment of

all countries of Latin America and the Caribbean was enshrined in the Havana Declaration adopted at the Second Summit of the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, held in January 2014. Support was provided for the sustainable development agenda of small island developing States, ensuring that their specific challenges and issues were presented and articulated at the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States, held in Samoa. The first Arab High-level Forum on Sustainable Development, held by ESCWA in 2014, promoted effective Arab engagement to define a development agenda beyond 2015.

39. The regional commissions continued to assist their member States in developing and promoting the implementation of legal instruments, norms and standards in various areas of development. ECA contributed to the operationalization of the Africa Mining Vision to assist member States in the formulation, implementation and review of mining and development policy, and to the African Road Safety Charter, adopted at the third session of the Conference of African Ministers of Transport, held in 2014. ESCAP was instrumental in advancing the implementation of the Intergovernmental Agreement on Dry Ports and the Asian Highway and Trans-Asian Railway network initiatives and in the successful conclusion of the fourth round of tariff concession negotiations under the Asia-Pacific Trade Agreement. The parties to the ECE Convention on Long-Range Transboundary Air Pollution adopted a new Framework Code for Good Agricultural Practice for Reducing Ammonia Emissions to reduce ammonia emissions from agriculture, one of the major threats posed to human health. The ECE Convention on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context was opened for accession by all member States to promote the global use of environmental impact assessment for evidence-based policymaking in the area of sustainable development. The United Nations Framework Classification for Fossil Energy and Mineral Reserves and Resources, which had been developed by ECE, was made applicable to uranium and thorium resources, thus paving the way for improved global stability and security of energy supplies. ECLAC activities in the areas of social development and sustainable development led and contributed to the development of national strategies and laws and the ratification of international conventions by several countries in Latin America, including the adoption of operational guidelines for the implementation of and follow-up to the Montevideo Consensus on Population and Development, the signing by 20 countries in the region of the Declaration on the application of Principle 10 of the Rio Declaration on Environment and Development in Latin America and the Caribbean, and the adoption of the Digital Agenda for Latin America and the Caribbean and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States Plan for Food and Nutrition Security and the Eradication of Hunger 2025. ESCWA contributed to an increase in the number of countries implementing new or revised international statistical standards according to the methodology of the 2008 System of National Accounts, as well as to improvements in the institutional structures for official statistics in member countries, in compliance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.

40. As in the case of the programmes reported on under international cooperation for development, the regular programme of technical cooperation continued to be used by the regional commissions to facilitate rapid responses to the urgent demands of Member States through the provision of advisory services and training activities. As a result of ECA support, 13 of its member States reported progress in

the development of macroeconomic policies, while 15 States members of the Southern African Development Community benefited from ECA advisory services in the design of a regional road map and strategy for industrialization. ECA also held a high-level policy dialogue on smart industrial policies in Africa in September 2015, which served as a platform for the rebuilding of a pan-African industrialization network. Through the advisory services and training provided to its member States upon request, ESCAP helped to strengthen the capacities of individuals and institutions to develop and implement evidence-based macroeconomic, social protection and environmental policies needed for the achievement of inclusive and sustainable development. ECE provided 119 advisory services and organized 86 capacity-building events at the request of member States. Those activities helped to strengthen their capacity to accede to or adopt and implement international instruments, norms and standards, including with respect to transboundary issues, promoted regional cooperation and contributed to the achievement of internationally agreed development goals. ECLAC continued to be a leading provider of timely technical cooperation services, with more than 382 technical assistance missions dispatched to countries upon request, regarding key issues related to global value chains, innovation and productivity, the Sustainable Development Goals, climate change mitigation, natural disasters and natural resources, and enhanced the capacity of technical experts and policymakers through more than 90 expert group meetings and the dissemination of data and statistics through 43 online databases and 70 training courses and workshops. ESCWA delivered 99 advisory services as tangible assistance for government-led policies, complemented by 69 regional and subregional workshops and national workshops and 4 study tours, to strengthen South-South cooperation. ESCWA also implemented six comprehensive projects, for Jordan, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia, the Syrian Arab Republic, the State of Palestine and the Arab Customs Union.

Section 20
Economic development in Europe

Highlights of programme results

The adoption of amendments to the Conventions on Environmental Impact Assessment in a Transboundary Context (Espoo Convention) and on the Protection and Use of Transboundary Watercourses and International Lakes (Water Convention) will substantially contribute to

global implementation of the 2030 Agenda on Sustainable Development, by making them open for accession to all Member States. The parties to the Convention on Long-range Transboundary Air Pollution (Air Convention) adopted a new Framework Code on Ammonia Emissions, to reduce threats to human health. The United Nations Framework Classification for Fossil Energy and Mineral Reserves and Resources, which had been developed by ECE, was extended to uranium and thorium resources, critical for energy security and low carbon energy production. ECE adopted the Geneva Charter on Sustainable Housing, to improve access to decent, affordable and healthy housing for all. ECE developed a set of 42 statistical indicators for the monitoring of gender equality, six recommendations on statistical methodologies and conducted 13 training workshops to enhance the comparability of statistics in the region. International specialist centres on public-private partnerships in policy, laws and institutions; in smart and sustainable cities; and in roads, highways and related structures were established in France, Spain and India, respectively, as part of the ECE International Public-Private Partnership Centre of Excellence, to promote the best practices of public-private partnerships in respect of sustainable development worldwide.

Challenges and lessons learned

Ensuring the effective implementation of the recommendations arising from the review of the 2005 ECE reform was the major challenge in 2014-2015. Inclusive and participatory consultations with member States will be extremely useful for achieving an agreement on most issues and mobilizing their political support to the work of organization.

494. The above-cited results are based on the implementation of 93 per cent of 3,414 mandated, quantifiable outputs, compared with 91 per cent in the previous biennium. The number of additional outputs implemented at the initiative of the secretariat increased from 27 in 2012-2013 to 30 in 2014-2015.

495. Approved expected accomplishments and indicators of achievement can be found in the proposed programme budget for the biennium 2014-2015 ([A/68/6 \(Sect. 20\)](#)).

Executive direction and management

(a) Programme of work is effectively managed and implemented

496. As at December 2015, ECE had delivered 93 per cent of its mandated quantifiable outputs (biennial target: 95 per cent) within established deadlines. As a follow-up to the OIOS audit of selected projects in the Sustainable Energy Division, ECE has developed the management response and implemented all OIOS recommendations from that audit. To ensure transparent, effective and efficient management of extrabudgetary resources and to strengthen the accountability of staff for their use, ECE adopted the Directive on the Establishment of Agreements and Management of Extrabudgetary Resources. In addition, ECE adopted a new

evaluation policy, to strengthen independence, credibility and usefulness of evaluation, promote organizational learning and accountability. The new Policy is aligned with the norms and standards for evaluation established by the United Nations Evaluation Group.

(b) Enhanced coherence and coordination of programme delivery at the global, regional and country levels

497. Five initiatives (biennial target: 5) were undertaken by ECE to increase coherence and coordination at the global, regional and country levels. Jointly with the United Nations Development Group for Europe and Central Asia, the Regional Coordination Mechanism organized the regional consultations on monitoring and accountability for the post-2015 development agenda, to discuss the role of the regional level in accountability, and on financing for development, to review options on strengthening resource mobilization. The Regional Review Meeting to assess progress in the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action was co-organized with UN-Women. ECE provided regional inputs to global processes in the framework of the Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals. ECE signed United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks for 2016-2020 with six countries and was involved in mainstreaming the Sustainable Development Goals in the development assistance frameworks of the other five countries of the region.

(c) Increased awareness of ECE work among member States

498. In December 2014, ECE completed a project to further modernize its website. This included: a streamlined design for the homepages of ECE and its subprogrammes; a modern look and feel for the entire website; and three new sections: storytelling (explaining in simple terms the concrete impact of the work of ECE on people's lives), Open ECE (providing access to key budget, audit and evaluation documents), and Where We Work (providing an overview of the use of the ECE norms and standards in different parts of the world). As a result, the traffic has increased by 12.8 per cent, from 9.7 million page views in 2014 to 10.9 million in 2015. In total, there were 20.6 million page views of the ECE website by users (biennial target: 90 million) in 2014-2015. This result is not comparable with the target, owing to a change in methodology for measuring access to the website in January 2014.

**Subprogramme 1
Environment**

(a) Improved response to environmental challenges in the ECE region by ECE constituencies

499. As at December 2015, four measures (biennial target: 4) had been undertaken by ECE in response to environmental challenges in the region. The Espoo Convention was opened for accession to all Member States through the entry into force of an amendment. The parties to the Convention on the Transboundary Effects of Industrial Accidents (Industrial Accidents Convention) revised the list of chemical substances. The Committee on Environmental Policy adopted performance indicators and targets for the Shared Environmental Information System. The parties to the Water Convention established a regular reporting mechanism. Technical

assistance was provided to five constituencies (biennial target: 4), including advisory services relating to: sustainable use of transboundary natural resources (Lithuania, the Caucasus, Central Asia and Eastern Europe); promoting accession to the Industrial Accidents Convention and the Protocol on Water and Health (Turkmenistan); promoting strategic environmental assessment (Kyrgyzstan, the Caucasus and Eastern Europe), and the Convention on Access to Information, Public Participation in Decision-Making and Access to Justice in Environmental Matters (Aarhus Convention) and the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers (the Caucasus, Central Asia and Eastern and South-Eastern Europe).

(b) Strengthened implementation of ECE regional environmental commitments

500. The total number of parties reporting progress in implementing the ECE multilateral environmental agreements increased from 160 in 2013 to 190 in 2015 (biennial target: 170). This result includes 44 parties to the Air Convention; 3 parties to the Industrial Accidents Convention; 2 parties to the Protocol on Water and Health to the ECE Water Convention; 42 parties to the Espoo Convention, and 23 parties to the Protocol on Strategic Environmental Assessment to the Espoo Convention; 45 parties to the Aarhus Convention; and 31 parties to the Protocol on Pollutant Release and Transfer Registers to the Aarhus Convention.

(c) Strengthened national capacity for environmental monitoring and assessment systems in the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and South-Eastern Europe

501. Capacity for environmental observations was further strengthened, as evidenced by 17 countries (biennial target: 17) using the ECE guidelines for applying environmental indicators. In particular, 6 countries improved the legal basis for environmental monitoring and assessment, 6 countries strengthened cooperation among institutions involved in monitoring and assessment and 10 countries made further improvements in their air monitoring networks, ranging from new parameters for monitoring to introducing new network stations. Furthermore, 11 countries strengthened water monitoring capacity either by adding new parameters for monitoring or by introducing a new type of monitoring or by working on projects for specific water monitoring bodies, and the Russian Federation established a programme to implement the ECE guidelines on soil contamination. All 17 target countries are producing the majority of core indicators, and most of them are sharing data online, in line with the Shared Environmental Information System and the ECE guidelines on environmental indicators.

(d) Improved environmental performance in countries with economies in transition

502. The number of countries showing progress in environmental performance increased from 21 in 2013 to 25 in 2015 (biennial target: 21). The third environmental performance reviews of Belarus, Georgia, Montenegro and Serbia, including an assessment of progress in implementing the recommendations of their second reviews, confirmed an improved environmental performance in these countries. Belarus reported on the implementation of 32 recommendations, of which 83 per cent were fully or partially implemented. Georgia informed about the implementation of 58 recommendations, of which 78 per cent were fully or partially implemented. Montenegro implemented 30 recommendations, of which 84 per cent were fully or partially implemented. Serbia reported on the implementation of

31 recommendations, of which 78 per cent were fully or partially implemented. The implementation was higher for those recommendations that were directly addressed to environmental authorities, compared with those addressed to other decision makers.

Subprogramme 2 Transport

(a) Strengthened legal and regulatory framework for international land transport (road, rail, inland waterway and intermodal transport), including transport infrastructure, border-crossing facilitation, transport of dangerous goods, vehicle construction and other transport-related services

503. The share of legal instruments in force relative to the total number of agreed United Nations legal instruments on transport administered by ECE remained at 86 per cent (biennial target: 87 per cent). A total of 161 new vehicle regulations and amendments to existing regulations (biennial target: 100) were adopted by ECE, aimed at improving the safety and environmental performance of vehicles. The new regulations cover hydrogen and fuel-cell vehicles, pole side impact, electric-powered two wheelers, and frontal impact, with a focus on restraint systems. They also include the United Nations Global Technical Regulations on the Worldwide Harmonized Light Vehicle Test Procedures and on Tyres. Six international legal instruments (biennial target: 6) were brought in line with the eighteenth revised edition of the United Nations Recommendations on the Transport of Dangerous Goods, including all major legal instruments governing the international transport of dangerous goods by road, rail, inland waterway, air and sea.

(b) Greater geographical coverage and more effective implementation of ECE legal instruments and recommendations on transport

504. With assistance from ECE, the number of States parties to the United Nations transport legal instruments administered by ECE reached 1,709 (biennial target: 1,700). The new States parties are Belarus, Belgium, Georgia, Pakistan, the Republic of Moldova (three instruments), Saudi Arabia, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia and Viet Nam (two instruments). To expand the geographical coverage of its legal instruments on transport, ECE strengthened cooperation with other regional commissions, in particular ECA and ESCWA. Seven mechanisms (biennial target: 7) were put in place for monitoring the implementation, as agreed by member States. A new monitoring mechanism (Road Signs Management System) was established in 2014, enabling the Contracting Parties to the Convention on Road Signs and Signals (1968) to upload and compare national signs and signals in the ECE database with those agreed in this Convention. Another mechanism, initiated in the previous biennium was finalized, to ensure the monitoring of the implementation of Annex 9 of the International Convention on the Harmonization of Frontier Controls of Goods, 1982.

(c) Enhanced capacity in ECE member States, particularly in landlocked developing countries, for the development of the pan-European and transcontinental transport infrastructure and transport facilitation measures

505. With the accession of Serbia to the European Agreement on Main Inland Waterways of International Importance in 2014, the number of Contracting Parties

to the four key transport agreements reached 115 (biennial target: 115). Fifty-eight countries (biennial target: 53) participated in subregional transport infrastructure projects in 2014-2015. Phase III of the Euro-Asian Transport Links Project, which had been launched in 2013, attracted 32 countries, compared with 18 countries involved in phase I. Twenty-six countries participated in the ECE Trans-European Motorway and Trans-European Railway projects, according to statistics collected by the subprogramme. These projects along with the Euro-Asian Transport Links project enhanced the national capacity of participating countries for financing and improving transport infrastructures and increased the relevance of the three projects to existing and potential participating countries.

(d) Strengthened capacity to implement relevant ECE legal instruments, norms and standards, in particular in the countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia

506. The level of participants' satisfaction with ECE capacity-building activities organized in countries of Eastern and South-Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia increased from 75 in 2013 to 80 per cent in 2014-2015 (biennial target: 80 per cent), based on analysis of the participants' responses to evaluation questionnaires. The number of countries having established road safety improvement targets reached 42 (biennial target: 37), according to statistics collected by the subprogramme.

Subprogramme 3 Statistics

(a) Streamlined international statistical work

507. To improve inter-agency coordination and eliminate overlaps and gaps in statistical activities, ECE reviewed in-depth international statistical work in six areas (biennial target: 5). The reviews addressed statistics related to measuring social protection; leading, composite and sentiment indicators; population projections; measuring extreme events and disasters; labour mobility; and a process-oriented approach to statistical production. As a result, ECE launched three international task forces to improve the measurement of labour mobility, population projections and extreme events and disasters with official statistics. According to the statistics collected by the subprogramme, 27 international organizations (biennial target: 27) reported information to the ECE Database of International Statistical Activities during the biennium. The classification, developed for this database, had been adopted by a number of statistical offices, the international consortium on Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange, and the United Nations Statistics Division in their global inventory of statistical standards.

(b) Updated and newly developed standards, methodologies and practices to enhance international comparability of statistics

508. Six methodological standards (biennial target: 5) were endorsed by more than 60 countries at the Conference of European Statisticians in 2014-2015 on gender equality indicators, climate change-related statistics, global production, business registers, quality of employment, and population and housing censuses. As indicated by the results of a survey, these standards were also endorsed by States Members of the United Nations beyond the ECE region, contributing to the enhanced

international comparability of official statistics. The Conference of European Statisticians recommendations on measuring sustainable development were used as a major input in developing an indicator framework for measuring the Sustainable Development Goals. In 2014-2015, ECE carried out methodological work, by drafting new guidelines and collecting good practices in 27 (biennial target: 27) of 55 statistical areas of the Classification of International Statistical Activities.

(c) Improved national capacities to implement international standards in official statistics, including Millennium Development Goals and gender-sensitive indicators, by ECE member States, particularly by those with less advanced statistical systems

509. In 2014-2015, ECE carried out 13 training workshops and undertook a number of advisory missions to improve the statistical capacity in countries with developing statistical systems. As indicated by a survey, 87 per cent of experts (biennial target: 80 per cent) who took part in ECE training workshops considered the training to be of high quality and useful for their work. These activities contributed to progress in areas identified for improvement in the global assessments of national statistical systems in line with international statistical standards. ECE supported countries' capacity to report on Millennium Development Goals and gender-sensitive indicators, and contributed to assessing countries' readiness for monitoring progress towards the Sustainable Development Goals. In total, six member States (biennial target: 4) developed a national strategy for sustainable development of statistics in line with recommendations contained in global assessments.

(d) Improved availability in the ECE database of reliable, relevant, timely and comparable statistics, including Millennium Development Goals indicators and gender-disaggregated data, to support evidence-based policymaking of ECE member States

510. In 2014-2015, the availability of high quality macroeconomic, social and demographic statistics improved in the ECE statistical database. In total, 161 time series (biennial target: 160) were available in the database. The country overview tables were among the most actively used data, along with gender and economic statistics, Millennium Development Goals indicators and the clearinghouse on migration statistics. User satisfaction remained high, with an online survey indicating that 86 per cent of users (biennial target: 80 per cent) considered the quality of data as excellent or good. In 2014-2015, data downloads increased by 5 per cent from the record levels of 2012-2013. Automated processes and quality checks improved the timeliness and reliability of data. In addition, ECE developed a mobile application and redesigned the database website. These improvements, along with the availability of a "quick" statistics option, as well as maps, graphs and country rankings, attracted new users.

Subprogramme 4

Economic cooperation and integration

(a) Increased knowledge of good practices and policies on financial and regulatory environment conducive to economic growth, innovative development and higher competitiveness of enterprises and economic activities leading to the formulation of related ECE policy recommendations

511. Six sets of policy recommendations (biennial target: 6) were prepared on innovation and entrepreneurship; innovation in the public sector; improving the national innovation system of Armenia; smart specialization strategies; improving the national innovation system of Tajikistan; and public-private partnership standards. The new recommendations resulted from the exchange of policy experience and good practices during the meetings of the Committee on Innovation, Competitiveness and Public-Private Partnerships and its subsidiary bodies (i.e., the teams of specialists on innovation and competitiveness policies and on public-private partnerships). These meetings contributed to increased knowledge of best practices and policies by over 400 policymakers and experts from the ECE region. The policy recommendations were presented as official documents and/or conference room papers at the 2014 and 2015 sessions of the Committee.

(b) Enhanced implementation of the aforementioned ECE policy recommendations

512. During the biennium, the subprogramme promoted enhanced implementation of policy recommendations, including through the Innovation Performance Reviews of interested countries and policy advisory missions conducted by the ECE Public-Private Partnerships Business Advisory Board. There were at least 14 cases (biennial target: 12) where member States implemented ECE policy recommendations, by developing new laws, strategies and policy programmes on innovation and competitiveness and on public-private partnerships, and by establishing public-private partnership units. These cases were reported by national counterparts during a stocktaking conference on the implementation of recommendations from national innovation performance reviews (17-18 November 2015, Minsk), and by a joint ECE-UNDP-Government of Belarus project on public-private partnerships financed by the European Commission.

(c) Strengthened national capacity in countries with economies in transition to promote good practices and implement the aforementioned ECE policy recommendations

513. The capacity to promote good practices and implement ECE policy recommendations was strengthened through more than 30 demand-driven capacity-building events held by ECE in Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, the Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkey, Turkmenistan and Ukraine, as well as in Morocco and the Philippines. These country-level activities involved well over 800 participants. Based on the reporting of member States, there were at least 15 cases (biennial target: 13) in which countries followed up on ECE capacity-building activities. These cases included: reviews of national operating procedures, rules and regulations initiated by member States; the use and adaptation of ECE good practices and policy recommendations in national capacity-building; education activities; the dissemination of new knowledge and lessons learned to peers and

students by participants in ECE capacity-building activities; and bilateral cooperation activities (twinning, site visits) initiated with facilitation from ECE.

Subprogramme 5
Sustainable energy

- (a) *Improved international dialogue among governments, industry and other stakeholders on sustainable energy issues, in particular, energy security, energy affordability and energy-related environmental impacts*

514. The ECE Sustainable Energy Weeks, the meetings of the Committee on Sustainable Energy and the launch of Geneva Energy Conversations, an interactive dialogue with energy experts, contributed to the increased participation of governments and other stakeholders in policy dialogue on sustainable energy issues. Progress was achieved in particular in promoting policy dialogue on energy security and affordability, energy-related environmental impacts and the implementation of the energy-related Sustainable Development Goals. Based on statistics collected by the subprogramme, the number of participants who contributed to policy discussions on these subjects reached 80 per cent (biennial target: 74 per cent). Participants' satisfaction remained high, with three online surveys indicating that 96 per cent of respondents (biennial target: 75 per cent) agreed on the usefulness of policy dialogue and made further suggestions about its content.

- (b) *Improved overall energy efficiency, including energy efficiency market formation across the ECE region*

515. The joint ECE/ESCAP Interregional Workshop on Investment Projects Pipeline (23-24 April 2014, Bangkok) under the Promoting Energy Efficiency Investments for Climate Change Mitigation and Sustainable Development project contributed to improved energy efficiency market formation in the region. The workshop reviewed the investment projects pipeline, an inventory of energy efficiency project proposals. More than 40 participants from 18 countries gained knowledge and experience to identify, develop and submit project proposals for energy efficiency investments. As indicated by the workshop participants, this work resulted in six new energy efficiency investment projects developed and approved for financing in countries with economies in transition, bringing the total number of energy efficiency investment projects to 24 (biennial target: 20). The total number of national experts trained to identify, develop and submit project proposals for energy efficiency investments reached 220 (biennial target: 220).

- (c) *Strengthened formulation and implementation of ECE recommendations/guidelines, best practices and other normative instruments for sustainable energy development*

516. The number of countries that applied the United Nations Framework Classification for Fossil Energy and Mineral Resources in their fossil energy and uranium resources management increased from 11 in 2013 to 18 in 2015 (biennial target: 14). Seven workshops to build capacity on the Framework Classification application were organized in Switzerland (three events, with a total of 202 participants from more than 30 countries), Cuba (50 participants from 5 countries), Egypt (50 participants from 17 countries), South Africa (42 participants from 16 countries) and the United States (42 participants from 8 countries). These activities

contributed to increasing the participants' capacity to implement the Framework Classification, undertake case studies, and provided feedback on improvements to the Framework Classification. The workshops resulted in seven case studies by Argentina, Brazil, Cameroon, China, Malawi, the Niger and the United States. The number of capacity-building events to disseminate the coal mine methane best practices increased from four in 2013 to six in 2015 (biennial target: 6).

Subprogramme 6

Trade

(a) Adoption and increased implementation by member States of ECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for trade facilitation and electronic business

517. The number of new or revised ECE recommendations, standards or guidelines approved by member States in 2014-2015 was 25 (biennial target: 24). These instruments, including the revised Recommendation No. 4 (National Trade Facilitation Bodies) and the new Recommendation No. 40 (Consultation Approaches: Best Practices in Trade and Government Consultation on Trade Facilitation Matters) will contribute to the implementation of the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement by member States. More than 2.5 million page views of these instruments (biennial target: 120,000) demonstrated their high usage by countries in 2014-2015, with the United Nations location codes accounting for the major share of page views. In response to requests by member States, nine countries (biennial target: 6) received ECE assistance on the implementation of trade facilitation and electronic business instruments, which contributed to increased capacity to implement national trade facilitation reforms.

(b) Adoption by member States of ECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for regulatory cooperation

518. The deliverables of the work of the ECE Working Party on Regulatory Cooperation and Standardization Policies continue to be referenced worldwide by government authorities, international organizations and the business community. In particular, New Zealand and the Russian Federation, the WTO Committee on Technical Barriers to Trade, the European Union Expert Panel for the Review of the European Standardization System and the Customs Union of Belarus, Kazakhstan and the Russian Federation have explicitly referred to the use of Recommendation L (International Model for Transnational Regulatory Cooperation Based on Good Regulatory Practice). Recommendation L was revised during the biennium (biennial target: 1) to ease barriers to trade through the harmonization of trade regulations and standards. Two requests for assistance on market surveillance have been received from the African Organization for Standardization Conformity Assessment Committee and Ukraine.

(c) Adoption and increased implementation by member States of ECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools for agricultural quality standards

519. During the biennium, the number of adoptions and revisions of agricultural quality standards reached 33 (biennial target: 25) while the total number of implementations was 1,439 (biennial target: 1,000). The number of PDF files

opened on the ECE website related to recommendations and standards on agricultural produce was 50,700 (biennial target: 350,000 downloads). This result is not comparable with the biennial target owing to new software for monitoring the use of the ECE Internet site and the change in the data collection methodology. Nevertheless, the demand for standards has increased in comparison with the previous biennium, which attests to the significantly higher uptake than expected of ECE standards by the public sector in transition and developing countries worldwide. ECE outreach and capacity-building activities contributed to the increased alignment of national regulations with ECE standards in order to open up export opportunities.

(d) Enhanced national capacity of member States for trade policy development and implementation

520. During the biennium, member States achieved enhanced capacity for trade policy development. Five national action matrices for trade development (biennial target: 2) were developed for selected ECE member States in Central Asia and Eastern Europe and adopted by their Governments. In addition, two needs assessment studies (Tajikistan in 2014 and Kyrgyzstan in 2015) on regulatory and procedural barriers to trade (biennial target: 2) were published. The Governments of these two Central Asian countries adopted the ECE recommendations for improving regulatory and procedural barriers to trade as part of their national development plans.

**Subprogramme 7
Forestry and timber**

(a) Increased understanding and better monitoring of the forest sector, to support sustainable forest management

521. Sixty per cent of ECE member States (biennial target: 69 per cent) provided satisfactory qualitative data on sustainable forest management. Seventy-three per cent of ECE member States (biennial target: 69 per cent) provided satisfactory quantitative data on sustainable forest management. Seventy-seven per cent of ECE member States (biennial target: 70 per cent) provided satisfactory responses to the ECE/FAO/International Tropical Timber Organization/Eurostat joint forest sector questionnaire. Eighty-seven per cent of participants (biennial target: 77 per cent) evaluated meetings and workshops of the ECE/FAO Forestry and Timber Section as useful. Compared with the previous biennium, this is a significant improvement in the assessment of ECE activities, indicating the increased relevance and effectiveness of the meetings.

(b) Increased capacity of countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus, Central Asia and South-East Europe to achieve sustainable forest management at the national level

522. Eight capacity-building workshops on promoting sustainable forest management for greener economies were organized for countries of Central Asia and the Caucasus. Based on the workshop evaluation results, 91 per cent of participants (biennial target: 77 per cent) rated the events as useful for their work. Several countries have indicated the need for continuing such activities in the future. The capacity-building workshops included modules on green economy,

policy development, wood energy, and data collection and management — areas that require special attention in the region. These activities facilitated the exchange of best practices and showcased good examples from other countries. As a result, Georgia, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan were able to develop programmes or plans for the forest sector in a green economy. This represents a major shift from the old-style forestry policies formulation towards the one that is cross-sectoral and takes into account both the environmental and economic aspects of development.

Subprogramme 8

Housing, land management and population

(a) Improved capacity for policy formulation and implementation in housing, planning and land administration in the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, and South-Eastern Europe

523. Three countries were engaged in ECE country profiles on housing and land management. The country profiles for the Republic of Moldova and Uzbekistan were completed, providing recommendations on how to improve national housing policies and legislation. A regional assessment report containing a set of policy recommendations was developed based on mini country profiles submitted by 38 countries (biennial target: 26). A total of 28 countries (biennial target: 26) reported on their measures to improve housing policies and land management practices. These included a financing mechanism for energy efficiency in buildings (Armenia); a draft law on housing (Serbia); the Act regulating utilities in residential buildings, the Act on Spatial Planning and Construction Code (the Czech Republic); a strategic urban plan (Malta); policies to improve energy efficiency (Portugal, Uzbekistan, Turkmenistan) and affordability of housing (Albania, Croatia, Denmark, the Republic of Moldova, the Russian Federation, Slovakia and Tajikistan); and an e-registry of real estate (Kyrgyzstan).

(b) Strengthened implementation by countries of ECE guidelines on housing and land management, including on energy efficiency, informal settlements, transparency in land and real estate markets and on improved safety in buildings

524. The implementation of 35 ECE workshops, seminars and training programmes contributed to an increased knowledge and improved implementation of sustainable policies related to real estate markets, energy-efficient housing, smart city design and land administration by member States. The number of countries that reported on their measures to implement ECE guidelines on energy-efficient and affordable housing increased from 23 in 2013 to 27 in 2015 (biennial target: 27). As a follow-up to the Albanian national workshop on energy efficiency, the Government adopted a programme on building standards. Armenia adopted a law on energy-efficient housing and initiated a smart cities programme. Azerbaijan launched a national programme on land registration. Belarus initiated a programme of affordable housing for young people. Estonia launched a programme on district heating based on biofuels. The Russian Federation adopted a law on social housing. Tajikistan established an electronic database of normative documents in the construction sector and set up a service for the supervision of quality in construction.

(c) *Enhanced national policy formulation on population ageing and intergenerational and gender relations*

525. The number of countries that adjusted their policies or introduced new measures contributing to the regional implementation of the Madrid International Plan of Action on Ageing increased from 30 in 2013 to 33 in 2015 (biennial target: 33). Malta adopted a national policy on active ageing for 2014-2020 focusing on participation in the labour market, participation in society, and independent living. Poland introduced the Long-term Senior Policy Strategy for 2014-2020, addressing health and independent living, professional and social activity, the silver economy and intergenerational relations. The Czech National Action Plan for Positive Ageing 2013-2017 was amended by including a chapter on monitoring its implementation. A Road Map for Georgia was developed to provide recommendations on population ageing. Two policy briefs on ageing issued in 2014-2015 promoted the exchange of good practices. The results from the Active Ageing Index and data from the Generations and Gender Programme provided an additional evidence base for policymaking on ageing.

Section 23

Regular programme of technical cooperation

Highlights of programme results

The regular programme of technical cooperation continued to facilitate rapid response from the implementing entities of the United Nations Secretariat to urgent demands from Member States for assistance, through the provision of advisory services and tailored training activities. The services, which are provided by both global and regional entities, aim to transfer knowledge through a range of capacity-development initiatives, contributing to the enhancement of skills, expertise, institutional capacities, and strengthened national policymaking abilities.

An important focus of the programme has been assisting countries with the implementation of national action plans for achieving the Millennium Development Goals and the implementation of the outcomes of the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, as well as the third International Conference on Small Island Developing States. The programme also assisted Member States in preparatory actions aimed at streamlining the new, transformative and inclusive sustainable development goals into national plans, thus building on the experiences and evidence from the efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals.

The flexible and responsive nature of the programme was invaluable in supporting countries in addressing unpredictable and unforeseen events, including economic stresses, the outbreak of Ebola virus disease in West Africa and global and regional climate stresses, which resulted in increased demand for support and effective action from Governments. The programme facilitated meaningful response by the implementing entities.

Challenges and lessons learned

Capacity-development support for strengthening national capacities to measure, monitor, assess and report on progress in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals and targets will be critical for realizing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. The need for Governments to take into consideration the interlinkages and interactions among the three pillars of sustainable development while developing their national plans will be key to the success of the programme. Protracted conflict and political instability continued to challenge capacity-building activities in the Arab region as well as in Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia. Most challenges relate to the instability in these regions and the unfolding process of transition and reform.

3. Economic development in Europe

Subprogramme 1

Environment

- (a) *Improved transboundary environmental management by countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia and countries of South-East Europe*

649. All six bilateral or multilateral agreements (biennial target: 6) were implemented in river basins, as planned. In the Kura basin, a draft treaty was developed to formalize water cooperation between Azerbaijan and Georgia. In the Drin basin, a project funded by the Global Environment Facility on the basis of a previously signed memorandum of understanding was initiated. In the Dniester basin, further support was provided towards the ratification by Ukraine of the Dniester Treaty. Progress in the Chu and Talas basins included the approval and the initiation of another Global Environment Facility project aimed at further development of the bilateral cooperation between Kazakhstan and Kyrgyzstan, including cooperation in monitoring water quality. In the Pyanj basin, the memorandum of understanding on the exchange of hydrological data between Afghanistan and Tajikistan was concluded. In Central Asia, ECE contributed to further strengthening of regional environmental and water management cooperation, including on dam safety, through the establishment of joint monitoring of the Orto Tokoi dam in Kyrgyzstan. In addition, a formal regional working group for Central Asian countries was established to support cooperation on water quality. The Environment Division of ECE conducted 35 advisory missions and 19 capacity-building events.

Subprogramme 2

Transport

- (a) *Enhanced national capacities to implement ECE legal and regulatory framework for international land transport, infrastructure and services, facilitation of border crossing, road safety, and transport of dangerous goods and perishable foodstuffs*
- (b) *Strengthened regional cooperation on transit transport development and facilitation of border crossing in the South Caucasus and Central Asia*
- (c) *Strengthened national legal and regulatory frameworks on road safety in South-Eastern Europe, the South Caucasus and Central Asia*

650. The number of parties to ECE legal instruments increased from 1,699 in 2014 to 1,709 by the end of 2015 (biennial target: 1,700). With Serbia's accession to the European Agreement on Main Inland Waterways of International Importance, the number of parties to four key agreements reached 115 (biennial target: 125). With the support of ECE, the number of countries committed to national road safety targets increased from 40 to 42 (biennial target: 42).

651. The transport and border crossing working group of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia enhanced the capacities of landlocked developing countries for sustainable development of transport, regional connectivity, integration and improvement of road safety management systems. Subregional infrastructure projects and cooperation with regional organizations contributed to improvement of intermodal transport, connectivity, border crossing

and regional integration. Two road safety projects supported evidence-based decision-making and setting of road safety goals. Four studies on road safety facilitated the setting of national road safety targets. The Transport Division of ECE conducted 19 advisory missions and 10 capacity-building events.

Subprogramme 3 Statistics

- (a) *Improved skills of beneficiary countries to disseminate and communicate statistical indicators relevant for monitoring of sustainable development strategies and other internationally agreed development goals using modern web-based dissemination tools and extraction software*
- (b) *Increased capacity of beneficiary countries to address their capacity gaps to produce statistical information in compliance with international standards, including the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics*

652. With the support of ECE, five countries improved skills to disseminate and communicate statistics using web-based tools and three countries improved their statistical databases (biennial target: 8). Two countries (Mongolia and Turkmenistan) conducted global assessments of their national statistical systems. These assessments focused on technical, institutional and organizational capacity to produce statistics in compliance with international standards, and provided specific recommendations.

653. Eight countries (biennial target: 8) integrated recommendations from global assessments into national strategies for the development of statistics. Fifteen countries (biennial target: 15) provided comprehensive reports documenting the production processes of economic, social and environmental statistics. Meetings of the working group on statistics of the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia held in Baku and Bishkek by ECE enhanced the capacities of 12 countries to monitor sustainable development, assess progress in green economy and modernize the production of official statistics. ECE launched initiatives for the development of environment statistics as the basis for the implementation of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting. The Statistical Division of ECE conducted 23 advisory missions and 11 capacity-building events.

Subprogramme 4 Economic cooperation and integration

- (a) *Enhanced knowledge of best practices and guidelines related to economic cooperation and integration issues, particularly those covered by the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia*
- (b) *Strengthened regional institutions and regional legal frameworks in areas covered by the Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia*

654. With the support of ECE, the 2014 economic forum held in Ashgabat on regional connectivity adopted recommendations on strengthening technical assistance in trade, transport, border crossing and information and communications technology.

655. Eighty-five per cent (biennial target: 72 per cent) of the countries participating in the United Nations Special Programme for the Economies of Central Asia used knowledge and information provided by ECE advisory missions and capacity-building activities to strengthen regional economic cooperation, as acknowledged by the governing council in November 2015. Six regional institutions and frameworks (biennial target: 5) acknowledged that technical assistance provided by ECE had increased their effectiveness. The coordination group on a regional space for water and environmental information supported by ECE strengthened support to the International Fund for Saving the Aral Sea and improved information management. The Economic Cooperation and Integration Division of ECE provided 14 advisory services and 12 capacity-building events.

Subprogramme 5 **Sustainable energy**

- (a) *Strengthened institutional and human capacity to develop energy efficiency strategies to meet international treaty obligations*
- (b) *Strengthened institutional and human capacity to develop renewable energy development strategies to meet international treaty obligations*

656. The Sustainable Energy Division of ECE strengthened economic cooperation by providing recommendations on energy efficiency, renewable energy and other elements of the Sustainable Energy For All initiative to 16 countries of the region. Fourteen countries implemented recommendations on energy efficiency (biennial target: 12), and 12 countries applied recommendations on renewable energy (biennial target: 12). Seven project proposals (biennial target: 7) were developed by countries for energy financing.

657. The meeting of the Energy Sector Coordinating Committee of the Central Asia Regional Economic Cooperation programme held in Kyrgyzstan in 2014 contributed to raising awareness of the Sustainable Energy For All initiative. The workshop held in Almaty on ecosystems assessment in the Syr-Darya River Basin strengthened understanding of relations between ecosystems, land use, energy and water. Advisory support to Armenia and Georgia increased awareness of solar and wind energy and to energy efficiency in buildings. Workshops held in Geneva in 2015 strengthened the capacity of Central Asian countries in application of the United Nations Framework Classification for Fossil Energy and Mineral Reserves and Resources. The Division conducted six advisory missions and 14 capacity-building events.

Subprogramme 6 **Trade**

- (a) *Enhanced capacities of countries with economies in transition to implement trade facilitation, electronic business and other ECE recommendations, norms, standards, guidelines and tools*
- (b) *Enhanced capacities of countries with economies in transition to promote and implement policies, strategies and mechanisms supporting trade facilitation and regional economic integration*

658. With the support of ECE, six countries (biennial target: 6) strengthened their capacity to implement trade facilitation and electronic business. They developed

enabling an environment for the Single Window at national level, established national trade facilitation committees and improved countries' readiness to implement the WTO Trade Facilitation Agreement endorsed in December 2013. As a result, these countries were able to notify the WTO secretariat about their implementation readiness and start developing national implementation plans.

659. A total of six trade facilitation strategies and mechanisms (biennial target: 6) were developed (one was finalized in January 2016). The Economic Cooperation and Trade Division of ECE supported three national and regional networks of experts (biennial target: 3). With the assistance of ECE, 17 countries benefitted from capacity-building events organized jointly with other international and regional partners. Assistance ranged from establishing cooperation among trade control agencies and the business community in support of trade facilitation to training in the use of the trade facilitation implementation guide provided to trade experts from Central Asia and Ukraine. The Division conducted 22 advisory missions and 20 capacity-building events.