

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

UN/ECE Work Session on Statistical Metadata
(Washington, D.C., United States, 28-30 November 2000)

INFORMATION NOTE TO PARTICIPANTS

**The UN/ECE Work Session on Statistical Metadata will be held at the U.S. Bureau of Labor
Statistics Conference Center, 2 Massachusetts Ave., NE, Washington, DC 20212 USA,
starting on 28 November at 9.00 a.m.**

I. PROVISIONAL AGENDA OF THE MEETING

1. Adoption of the agenda.
2. Designation of officers.
3. Statistical metadata for dissemination.
Invited papers by Australia, Canada, Norway and the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics; supporting papers from Azerbaijan and the United Kingdom; methodological material "Best practices in statistical Website design" (coordinated by Sweden).
4. Metadata modeling and terminology issues.
Invited papers by Denmark, Slovenia, Sweden and the U.S. Bureau of the Census; supporting papers from Armenia, Hungary and Norway; methodological material: "Recommendations on formats relevant to the downloading of statistical data from Internet" (coordinated by the Netherlands).
5. Needs and responsibilities of international organizations for metadata.
Invited papers by Eurostat, OECD, ILO, IMF and UNIDO /University of Vienna.
6. Impact of the IMF Special Data Dissemination Standards on statistical practice.
Invited paper by IMF.
7. Future work.
8. Adoption of the conclusions reached at the Work Session.

II. GENERAL INFORMATION

9. The Conference of European Statisticians, at its 2000 plenary session, included this Work Session in its meeting programme (see CES/2000/4/Add.2, programme element 2.3). The Work Session will be held in English only.

10. All documentation for the meeting will be made available at the following Internet address:

<http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2000.11.metis.htm>

Hard copies of documents will be sent out to participants only if requested (please indicate your request on the Registration Form, or send an e-mail to josephine.rauss@unece.org). The UN/ECE Secretariat will inform participants by e-mail when documents become available on the Internet.

11. The agenda items will be considered based on two main categories of papers, **invited papers** and **supporting papers**. The organisers of the meeting have contacted a small number of countries and asked them to prepare invited papers for specific items. The invited papers will provide the main basis for discussion. However, issues raised in the other papers that countries contribute to the meeting (supporting papers) will also be discussed under that item. The deadline for the receipt of all papers is **15 August 2000**.

12. Consideration of individual agenda items will be led by Session Discussants. The sessions will start with the presentation of the invited papers, followed by a brief question period. The Discussants will then introduce the supporting papers. The authors will have an opportunity to comment briefly on their papers and to answer any questions. The Session Discussants and authors of both invited and supporting papers are encouraged to keep in close contact in order to better prepare the discussion and to take into account the requirements of the Session Organizers. The Session Discussants and their relevant contact information are provided below.

III. EXPLANATORY NOTES TO THE AGENDA

13. The meeting will focus on the substantive topics listed in the Programme of Work of the Conference of European Statisticians under the Programme Activity 2: *Technical infrastructure and other cross-cutting issues*, Programme element 2.3: *Dissemination and interchange of statistical information (see CES/2000/4/Add.2)*.

Agenda item 3: Statistical metadata for dissemination

Discussant: Ernie Boyko (Statistics Canada)

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 OTTAWA K1A 0T6
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Invited papers:

- *Disseminating data quality information to users via metadata: the ABS approach (David Lengyel and Graeme Oakley, Australian Bureau of Statistics);*
- *Statistics Canada's Integrated Metadatabase: our experience to date (Paul Johannis, Statistics Canada);*
- *Bazaar style metadata in the age of the Web - an "open source" approach to metadata development. (Jostein Ryssevik, Statistics Norway);*
- *Metadata and data quality (Frederic Conrad, Cathryn Dippo, Daniel Gillman, US Bureau of Labor Statistics).*

14. This session will focus on metadata for dissemination purposes. The main objective of such metadata are to convey important messages about the data to users and to facilitate resource identification and access. Metadata on the quality of the data is often describing the methods, sources and concepts of

statistics. Metadata are often placed in dissemination databases and catalogues with the aim to facilitate search engines to find the data.

15. The discussion in this session can address the following issues: strategies for building data catalogues for the Internet and traditional dissemination means; the construction and use of thesauri for indexing and classifying data products; strategies for using search engines on statistical sites as well as providing meta tags for remote search engines; strategies for the efficient production of codebooks to accompany data sets; the use of emerging technologies such as XML to help build and disseminate data and metadata; the role and use of international standards and emerging models for metadata dissemination; strategies for collecting and conveying necessary information about data quality to users via metadata.

16. In addition, the meeting will consider under this agenda item the progress in the preparation of a methodological material "Best practices in statistical Website design" (coordinated by Statistics Sweden). The preparation of this material was requested by the Work Session on Statistical Metadata in September 1999 (see Report, CES/2000/20). It aims to identify best practices based on the experience of different NSOs concerning the organisation and development, functionality, content, development tools, maintenance and administration of statistical Websites.

17. All participants wishing to contribute to this material are encouraged to contact Bo Sundgren and Lars Rauch (Statistics Sweden). Their contact data are the following:

Addr: Statistics Sweden
Karlavägen 100
SE 104 51 STOCKHOLM
Sweden

Mr. Bo Sundgren
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Fax: 46 8 5069 4599
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Mr. Lars Rauch
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Agenda item 4: Metadata modeling and terminology issues

Discussant: Mark Wallace (U.S. Bureau of the Census)

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United States
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Invited Papers:

- *Methods for incorporating administrative data with metadata models (Søren Netterstrøm, Statistics Denmark);*
- *Metadata quality from a business perspective (Jozica Klep, Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia);*
- *Update and a meeting of the Neuchâtel Group (Birgitta Ehrenström, Statistics Sweden);*
- *Use of metadata for the effective integration of data from multiple sources (Samuel Highsmith, U.S. Bureau of the Census).*

18. There is a large number of different metadata models already available and still emerging. This session is expected to touch a number of issues that are raised by the variety of metadata models. The most important are the following: identifying and explaining the differences among the various metadata models, possibilities to standardise a statistical metadata model, finding an approach, like a federation of

unique but related models, that could present a workable solution. Furthermore, the discussion at this session can consider the development of minimum metadata requirements for statistical aggregates, methods for incorporating administrative data in metadata models, and the development of a modeling groundwork for statistical information production that provides global access with local support.

19. This session will discuss the preparation of the methodological material "Recommendations on formats relevant to the downloading of statistical data from Internet" (coordinated by the Netherlands) following the request of the previous Work Session on Statistical Metadata in September 1999. The paper will focus on the modelling issues (format and structure of the data) relevant for meeting users' needs in further utilisation of statistical data downloaded from Internet.

20. All participants wishing to contribute to this material are encouraged to contact Jean-Pierre Kent (Statistics Netherlands) at the following coordinates:

Addr: Deurloustraat 120
1078 JK AMSTERDAM
Netherlands
Tel.: 3172 337 5037
E-mail: jknt@cbs.nl

Agenda item 5: Needs and responsibilities of international organisations for metadata

Discussant: Michael Colledge (OECD)

Addr.: Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development
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France
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Papers:

- *Statistical metadata for the Euro-zone and the European Union: the role of Eurostat (Marco Pellegrino, Eurostat);*
- *OECD experience in coordination by international agencies of the collection and dissemination of metadata for interpretation and evaluation of data (Denis Ward, OECD);*
- *Searchable metadata for international labour statistics (Fahrad Mehran, Lawrence Jeffrey, ILO);*
- *The SDDS and the provision of metadata to the IMF: responsibilities and implications (Robert Di Calogero, IMF).*

21. This session will consider the reasons why international organisations need metadata, the methods by which they collect and use them, and the responsibilities of international organisations in ensuring that their metadata collection and use is efficient and effective. It will also explore potential possibilities of international organisations to achieve a better synergy in their metadata methods and models.

22. Thus, the discussion is expected to deal especially with the following topics: international organisations' metadata needs and uses; how their needs can be met through collection of relevant, accurate, timely, consistent metadata, at minimum cost to the source agencies; how their metadata can be presented so as to be readily visible and accessible; and the role of international organisations in co-ordinating their data and metadata requests and in developing international data and metadata standards.

Agenda item 6: Impact of the IMF SDDS on statistical practice**Discussant:** Robert Di Calogero (IMF)

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 International Monetary Fund
 700, 19th Street, NW
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20431, United States

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 Fax: 1202 623 6165
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23. The session aims to: (1) provide an update on recent developments in the SDDS, especially the results and aftermath of the Third Review which was conducted by the Fund's Executive Board in March this year; and (2) provide some insights on how the SDDS, and especially the Dissemination Standards Bulletin Board (DSBB) will develop over the next two to three years.

24. Concerning the recent developments in SDDS, the Third Review established a new external debt data category and a three year transition period for its implementation. It is clear that most subscribers will need to alter and/or augment their data collection systems to meet this prescription. The Third Review provided for the re-dissemination of the new reserves data template on the Fund's external web site; this project has not begun as yet but should be up and running in the next few months. Finally, the Third review established IMF staff monitoring of observance of the SDDS, to begin July 1; a report on the initial experience in this endeavor will be included.

25. Concerning future development of the SDDS, IMF is planning to implement a number of recommendations made by a team of consultants hired to review the DSBB last year. The aim is to make the DSBB a state of the art web site by increasing its interactivity and functionality and, thereby, having it serve as a portal to other sites. These improvements will include upgrading the way subscribers interact with the Fund in the transmission of metadata and could have broader implications, i.e., the introduction of XML and standardisation of metadata tags across subscribers and eventually International Organizations. This project is only at its early stages it is expected to have implications for metadata sharing among the international organisations.

Agenda item 8: Future work

26. Under this agenda item, the Work Session is expected to discuss issues of potential interest to countries and international organisations for future work by the Conference of European Statisticians on statistical metadata.

IV. DEMONSTRATIONS

27. Since only a very limited amount of time on the margins of the meeting can be set aside for demonstrations, they will have to be made during lunch breaks and after the afternoon session ends. To facilitate planning, participants wishing to give a demonstration should inform the UN/ECE secretariat well in advance of the meeting and also indicate the requested facilities and equipment for the demonstrations. A room will be reserved for demonstrations on 29 and 30 November. Internet access will also be provided.

V. ORGANIZATIONAL INFORMATION**General information**

28. The meeting will take place in the Bureau of Labor Statistics Conference Center (US Bureau of Labor Statistics, 2 Massachusetts Ave., NE, Washington, DC 20212 USA) starting on 28 November, Tuesday, at 9:00 a.m..
29. Continental Breakfast will be served each morning from 08:00, light snacks and beverages (coffee and soft drinks) will be served for the morning and afternoon breaks.

Hotel information

30. **Participants are asked to make their own hotel reservations.** The organisers have reserved a block of rooms in the **Phoenix Park Hotel**

Addr: 520 North Capitol St., NW
 Washington, DC 20001 USA
 Tel: +1.202.638.6900
 +1.800.824.5419
 Fax: +1.202.393.3236

31. The rooms are reserved for the meetings' participants at a special discounted rate of \$105 plus 14.5% tax = \$122.23. This is a very good rate for downtown Washington. The US organizers strongly recommend that all participants stay there. **The block of rooms at this special discounted rate will be reserved for meeting participants only until 27 October 2000. After that date, the hotel will make those rooms available to the general public at the normal rate. Therefore, in order to be sure of obtaining a room at this special rate, please make your reservations early, and use the group number 7489 when making your reservations.** The reservation must be guaranteed with a credit card or deposit.

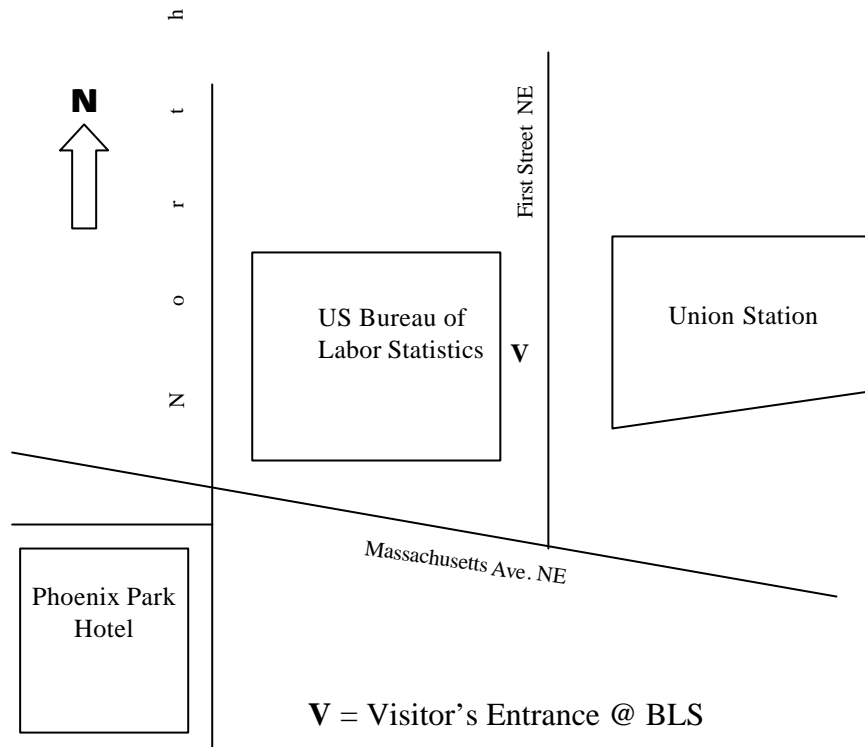
32. The hotel is located two blocks from the entrance to BLS (see directions below). It is close to many restaurants. BLS is directly across the street from Union Station (the train station) which has a Metro (subway) stop.

Travel and directions

33. From Airports to Hotel:

- **Dulles International** – You must travel by taxi, limousine, or rent your own car. Taxi and limousine costs about \$50 (about 45 minute ride).
- **Reagan National** – Taxi and limousine costs about \$15. You can take the Metro (subway) to the Union Station stop for \$1.45 and it takes about 22 minutes. You must change trains from the Blue to the Red line at the “Metro Center” stop to get to Union Station.
- **Baltimore-Washington International** – Taxi and limousine costs about \$60 (about 1 hour ride). There is also a MARC train that goes to Union Station for \$5.

34. From Hotel to BLS: Turn left (North) after leaving the North Capitol St. entrance of the hotel. Walk to the intersection and turn right (East) to cross, then turn immediately left (North) to cross again. After crossing the street, turn right (East) and walk up the hill. The Bureau of Labor Statistics building is on your left as you walk. At the corner of the building, turn left (North) and walk about 100m to the visitor entrance on the left.



35. Inside BLS: You must show identification (your passport is fine) at the guard desk, who will check your name against his list. If you have registered for the meeting, your name will be on the list. If you have trouble and the guard won't let you through, ask to speak with Ms. Pam Douglas at extension 17375. Then you will pass through the airport type metal detector and suitcase x-ray machine. Then walk straight through the double doors and turn left to the elevators. Take the elevator to the ground (G) floor. Follow the signs to the conference center.

Additional Information

36. All correspondence regarding the Work Session should be addressed to:

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(Washington, D.C., United States, 28-30 November 2000)

REGISTRATION FORM

This form should be completed in duplicate by each participant
and returned **by 15 October 2000**

1 copy to:

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1. Surname (Family name): Mr./Ms.	2. First name:
3. Representing (country or organization):	4. Professional title:
5. Mailing address:	
6. Tel. No.	7. Fax No.
8. E-mail address:	
9. Requested way of receiving documentation: <p style="text-align: center;">Paper form <input type="checkbox"/> Internet <input type="checkbox"/></p>	
10. Name of your hotel in Washington:	
11. Date and time of arrival in Washington:	12. Date and time of departure from Washington:
13. Special dietary or other requirements:	

Date _____ Signature _____