



**United Nations**

**Statistical Commission  
Economic Commission for Europe**

# **Report of the Conference of European Statisticians**

**Fifty-ninth plenary session  
Geneva, 14-16 June 2011**



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Economic Commission for Europe**

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*Note*

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ECE/CES/81

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## **I. Introduction**

### **A. Attendance**

1. The Conference of European Statisticians (CES) held its fifty-ninth plenary session in Geneva at the Palais des Nations. It was attended by representatives from Armenia, Australia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Chile, China, Colombia, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Moldova, Montenegro, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Korea, Romania, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom and United States.

2. The Conference was attended by representatives of the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD), United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), United Nations Interim Administration Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK), United Nations International Trade Centre, United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and the following specialised agencies and international and supranational organizations: the Bank for International Settlements (BIS), the European Central Bank (ECB); the European Free Trade Association (EFTA); the European Commission (Eurostat); the International Labour Organization (ILO); the International Monetary Fund (IMF); the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of the Independent States (CIS-STAT); the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD); and the World Bank (WB).

3. Ms. Heli Jeskanen-Sundström (Finland) chaired the Conference.

### **B. Agenda and procedure**

4. The provisional agenda (ECE/CES/80 and Add.1) was adopted.

### **C. Opening statements**

5. Ms. H. Jeskanen-Sundström, Chairman of the Conference, opened the meeting and welcomed the participants. Mr. J. Kubis, Executive Secretary of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), delivered an opening statement emphasising the important role of the Conference in international statistics.

## **II. Matters arising for the Conference of European Statisticians**

### **A. February 2011 session of the United Nations Statistical Commission**

Documentation: ECE/CES/2011/18

6. The Conference was informed about the follow-up to the February 2011 session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC), which included three main activities:

(a) Work was initiated on Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM) with the aim of achieving better coordination and integration of geospatial and statistical

information. The topic is on the agenda of the UN Economic and Social Council in July 2011. Together with Eurostat, the UNSD will organise a seminar devoted to the linkages between geospatial and statistical information on the occasion of the high level forum on GGIM to be held on 24-26 October in Seoul, Korea;

(b) An interim report on measures taken by the UNDP Human Development Report Office has been sent to the members of the Statistical Commission;

(c) A Friends of the Chair group has been formed under the leadership of the United States to revise the preamble of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.

7. The UNECE work programme in statistics is in line with the decisions of the UNSC. For example, a regional Millennium Development Goals (MDG) database is being established and the CES Bureau has recently set up a Task Force to develop indicators on gender equality. The implementation of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics has a special importance in the work programme of the UNECE Statistical Division since the Principles were first adopted by the CES in 1991 and by UNECE in 1992. The UNECE expressed willingness to contribute in substance to the work of the UNSC Friends of the Chair group on the Fundamental Principles.

## **B. March 2011 session of the Economic Commission for Europe**

8. At the session, the UNECE presented new initiatives undertaken by the various sub-programmes. In the area of statistics, these included the work on developing a framework on measuring sustainable development, strengthening the capacity of countries from South-East Europe and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia in producing environmental indicators, and assessing how countries deal with climate change related statistics. The 64<sup>th</sup> UNECE session supported the work in these three areas and requested the Conference to continue its work on developing a framework for measuring sustainable development within the realm of official statistics.

## **III. Seminar on organization of data collection and sharing and the management challenges for the implementation of statistical data and metadata exchange**

### **A. Introduction**

9. The seminar was chaired by Italy. In his opening remarks, the seminar chair stressed the fundamental importance of the topic for top managers and for the international statistical system. The abundance of data available from many different sources requires important changes to the way statistical production is organised, and a long-term vision. Statistical data and metadata exchange (SDMX) is an important element of this vision, facilitating the sharing and integration of data between and within organizations.

### **B. Session 1: the organization of data collection and sharing**

Documentation: ECE/CES/2011/20; ECE/CES/2011/21; ECE/CES/2011/30;  
ECE/CES/2011/48

10. The session was organised by the Netherlands. It was based on invited papers by the Netherlands and Sweden. Supporting papers were received from Canada and the European Central Bank.

11. The session focused on organisational models for statistical data collection, including multi-source and mixed mode collection. It dealt with the principles, experiences and issues driving the decisions to use a specific organizational model, and discussed the experiences gained so far in combining different collection modes.

12. The following issues were raised during the discussion:

(a) Several papers touched on the theme of centralisation of data collection, including the impact on budgets and data quality, the tensions it causes, and how to implement the required changes to data collection methods. The benefits of a process driven approach can include cost and burden reductions, and efficiency savings related to the pooling of resources and expertise;

(b) Centralisation involves certain trade-offs, such as loss of contact with the field, the difficulties of fostering initiative when decision making is centralised, and the distribution of cost savings. These need to be carefully managed and assessed for the organisation;

(c) Rendering more efficient the data collection from mixed and secondary sources represents a challenge. The importance of good metadata management was stressed in this respect;

(d) As the use of mixed mode data collection increases, further research is needed on the effects on outputs and the comparability of data collected from multiple sources.

### **C. Session 2: management challenges of statistical data and metadata exchange implementation**

Documentation: ECE/CES/2011/22; ECE/CES/2011/23; ECE/CES/2011/31; ECE/CES/2011/33; ECE/CES/2011/36; ECE/CES/2011/49; ECE/CES/2011/50; ECE/CES/2011/51; ECE/CES/2011/52; ECE/CES/2011/54

13. The session was organised by the World Bank. It was based on invited papers by Norway and Russia. Supporting papers were received from Germany, Israel, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Switzerland, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the European Central Bank and the International Monetary Fund / World Bank.

14. This session discussed the managerial and organisational challenges of SDMX implementation. The discussion considered the governance model of SDMX and how to reconcile the needs of national and international statistical organizations. The issue of using SDMX together with other standards such as the Data Documentation Initiative (DDI) was also raised. It was proposed to use content standards to provide a high-level framework to bridge different technical standards.

15. The following issues were raised during the discussion:

(a) Standards are needed to facilitate the exchange of data between organizations and to improve the quality of the data;

(b) SDMX is being used more widely and in more countries than ever before;

(c) The SDMX standards have matured over recent years and the current challenges are at a managerial rather than a technical level;

(d) The sponsor agencies have committed to implement SDMX within their organizations over the next three years;

(e) Organizations should consider publishing SDMX data schemas together with the disseminated data to promote the use of SDMX.

#### **D. Seminar conclusions**

16. The Chairman concluded that an in-depth reorganization of data collection and management is taking place in many countries. This implies changes in organisational culture, technology and relationships with data suppliers. There is a need to develop a quality framework that specifically covers the use of secondary and mixed data sources. One example of such a framework is the Quality Framework for Registers developed by Statistics Netherlands.

17. There is no doubt about the usefulness of SDMX for dissemination, but there is a need to resolve the questions about its use in other phases of the statistical production process, particularly in respect to the use of DDI and other data standards. The impact of SDMX on the entire statistical business process architecture should be further explored. Enhancing the status of SDMX as a global standard and organising a side-event to the next session of the United Nations Statistical Commission could help to improve implementation.

##### Action taken by the Conference

18. The Conference noted that expert groups exist in several horizontal areas of official statistics, but that there is currently no forum to discuss organisational and management aspects of data collection, such as monitoring, risk management, cost control, etc. It was proposed to create an expert group under the CES to cover the related topics. A key issue for this group would be economies of scale from the use of common tools and methods. The CES Bureau will discuss the possible creation of such a group at its forthcoming meeting.

19. The Conference welcomed the rich debates during the seminar and asked the secretariat and the CES Bureau to follow up on the issues raised in the course of their work.

#### **IV. Strategic vision of the high-level group for strategic developments in business architecture in statistics**

##### Documentation: ECE/CES/2011/1

20. In 2010 the CES Bureau created the High-Level Group for Strategic Developments in Business Architecture in Statistics, comprising heads of several national and international statistical organizations, to reflect on and guide strategic developments in the ways in which official statistics are produced. The High-Level Group presented a vision paper which emphasised the need for coordination and strategic direction of the many international initiatives currently working on related topics.

21. The following issues were raised during the discussion:

(a) There is a need to find the right balance between delivering data quickly and other dimensions of the quality of the data delivered;

(b) There is a question of whether official statistics should or could try to compete with new data products from the private sector;

(c) The “industrialisation” of statistical production has implications on human resource management and the structure of statistical organizations.

##### Action taken by the Conference

22. The Conference supported the work and vision of the High-Level Group, including the proposed workshop in autumn 2011, and requested an update on progress at the next plenary session in 2012.

## V. Seminar on measuring human capital

### A. Session 1: why: drivers for human capital measurement

Documentation: ECE/CES/2011/24, ECE/CES/2011/25, ECE/CES/2011/28, ECE/CES/2011/32, ECE/CES/2011/35

23. The session was organised by Canada. The session was based on invited papers by Canada, Finland and New Zealand, with supporting papers by Sweden and the World Bank.

24. The session discussed the policy relevance of measuring human capital and how it can be used for analysing economic growth, productivity, impact of education, sustainability and demographic change. On one hand, the measures of human capital can improve key products of official statistics, such as productivity measures. On the other hand, they can provide an impetus for statistical development in a wide range of areas, such as measuring sustainability, expanding boundaries of National Accounts and wealth accounts, providing better estimates of output of education and the household sector, and analysing the impact of aging population.

25. The following main points were made in the discussion:

(a) Investment in developing methods to measure human capital is worthwhile if statistical agencies wish to provide more detailed data to analyse productivity, economic growth and competitiveness, and if the human capital data permit improvement of these estimates;

(b) Measuring the human capital as the value of lifetime earnings can inform debates on sustainability. With aging, the remaining lifetime earnings are decreasing while being transformed into assets, including the savings and pension funds. Analysing this process for the whole society provides a more complete picture of the asset base of the economy. It can inform discussions on aging and the adequacy of the retirement system that are extremely important policy issues in many countries;

(c) Important issues to take into account are the non-market production of human capital, the skills built up in informal education, and child rearing expenditures in the household sector;

(d) Human capital measurement can also inform in other areas, such as labour market, education, migration and health policy. Human capital measurement is a key to understanding social well-being;

(e) Development of both micro and macro level measures of human capital is necessary to shed light on differences in human capital in occupations with different skill levels and changes in productivity in different industries. Furthermore, combining longitudinal individual and firm level data can provide new insights, allowing the effects of different policies or causal factors to be better examined;

(f) Reference was made to two instruments developed by OECD: the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA) and the Programme for the International Assessment of Adult Competencies (PIAAC). PIAAC provides information on adult competencies, particularly literacy, and the impact of these competencies on social and economic outcomes. In addition, the OECD project on the social outcomes of

education was mentioned. This latter project gives information about the broader social benefits of education: better health, less crime, better care of children, and improved quality of life.

(g) The Human Development Report being currently prepared by the UNDP includes two new measures as a component of human development: school attainment expressed in number of years of schooling, and the school life expectancy. However, efforts should be made by the statistical community to improve these measurements as the data are often not available from official statistics.

26. In conclusion, the Session Organiser pointed out that human capital is a key determinant of the sustainability of the society. There is a need to measure the human capital to better evaluate the output of the education sector and productivity performance but also to measure the impact on well-being, social progress and quality of life.

## **B. Session 2: how: alternative approaches to measuring human capital**

Documentation: ECE/CES/2011/26, ECE/CES/2011/27, ECE/CES/2011/29, ECE/CES/2011/34, ECE/CES/2011/37, ECE/CES/2011/38, ECE/CES/2011/39

27. The session was organised by Norway. The session was based on invited papers by Australia and the United States Bureau of Economic Analysis, with supporting papers by Belarus, Italy, Poland, Ukraine and OECD.

28. The session discussed the conceptual issues around measurement of human capital. It analysed different methods and reviewed existing practice and new approaches. Measuring human capital is currently considered an advanced research topic and the discussion also touched upon whether it could become a part of official statistics in future.

29. The following points were made in the discussion:

(a) More research is needed to understand the big differences between the human capital stock estimates generated by the cost-based and income-based methods. For example, in the Jørgenson-Fraumeni (J-F) approach, the assumptions on the discount rate for valuing future returns to education and returns to non-market time have a significant impact on the results. Lack of suitable data may also cause problems, e.g. income data may not include some of the in-kind benefits provided, particularly common in the non-profit sector. The statistical community would benefit from closer cooperation with research institutes and universities in this area;

(b) The multi-dimensional nature of human capital requires integration of different data sources, such as income statistics, population census, health status statistics, education statistics and labour statistics. Better primary data and databases linking the different data related to human capital would both be needed. One of the key success factors is to invest in the overall high quality of national statistics and data sets;

(c) The longer term goal could be to reflect the accumulated knowledge in measuring human capital in the future revisions of the System of National Accounts (SNA). Investment in health and education brings benefits in the same way as the investment in research and development which is capitalized in the 2008 SNA. However, it will take many years to develop methods for the measurement of human capital that are sufficiently robust. Meanwhile the human capital satellite accounts can be developed in order to explore their usefulness;

(d) The increased international mobility of labour makes it difficult to analyse the relation between investment and growth in human capital. Investments in education in one country may lead to the growth of human capital in another country;

(e) The connection between human and social capital should be taken into account in defining the concept and methods for measuring human capital;

(f) Countries measure different aspects of human capital, such as education, health and living conditions. As more experience will be gained, a common theoretical framework for measuring human capital could be developed, including both physical and monetary measures. There is still a need for more basic conceptual work to advance in this direction.

30. In conclusion to the second session, the Session Organiser noted that considerable progress has been made in the measurement of human capital, even though a number of issues remain to be solved. Clarification of the basic concepts of human capital will require more substantial work. The development of methods should aim at international comparability, harmonization of concepts and integration of the different human capital measures. A longer term goal could be to include human capital in a future revision of the SNA.

### **C. Session 3: bringing the why and how together – conclusions and recommendations for follow-up work**

31. The session was organised by New Zealand as a panel discussion.

32. The aim of the session was to discuss whether and how the currently used approaches to measure human capital can answer the policy questions outlined in the first session of the seminar, and to identify any possible proposals for follow-up work. The importance of linking the statistical development work to the related policy questions was emphasised.

33. The following points were made in the discussion:

(a) There was strong agreement on the need to establish more precise concepts on human capital and to separate the conceptual from the data issues. This was considered an important precondition before moving forward in the measurement of human capital;

(b) Human capital is comprised of other dimensions besides economic growth, such as human mobility, social integration, etc. Estimates of human capital stocks are one of the tools needed to assess future growth and well-being and the sustainability of current welfare;

(c) Only a few countries have so far been able to calculate monetary estimates of human capital. The question remains as to whether it is feasible for such estimates to be produced for all countries. On this point, the OECD Human Capital Project is important and the results look promising;

(d) There is a need for greater harmonisation of measurement of human capital across countries. Identifying gaps in methods and data sources is an important step. The risk of double counting also exists and the only practical way of addressing it is by using individual level data;

(e) The extent to which estimates of human capital could be considered official statistics was discussed. The development of a framework for producing measures of human capital was considered important. Such a framework should have links to the SNA, covering the production of satellite accounts, and also considering the potential for future SNA revisions;

(f) A notion of educational capital as a distinct part of human capital was mentioned. Depending on the method and the purpose, the need for the relevant expertise to

address the issues related to human capital varies from national accountants to educational statisticians.

Action taken by the Conference

34. The Conference decided as a first step to prepare a report taking stock of what has been done so far in measuring human capital, including the related work of OECD, the World Bank and UNECE. The report should be prepared by a small group of experts comprising expertise in national accounts, sustainable development and education statistics. The findings of the report should be presented to the Conference within two years.

35. The Conference welcomed the rich debates during the seminar and asked the secretariat and the CES Bureau to follow up on the issues raised in the course of their work.

## **VI. Conference of European Statisticians' manuals, guidelines and frameworks**

### **A. Impact of globalization on national accounts**

Documentation: ECE/CES/2011/2 and Add. 1-3

Action taken by the Conference

36. The Conference endorsed the Guide on the Impact of Globalization on National Accounts, subject to the amendments presented in document ECE/CES/2011/2/Add.3, and requested the secretariat to publish the Guide.

### **B. Update of Canberra Group Handbook on household income statistics**

Documentation: ECE/CES/2011/3 and Add. 1-3

Action taken by the Conference

37. The Conference adopted the Canberra Group Handbook on Household Income Statistics, Second edition, subject to the amendments presented in document ECE/CES/2011/3/Add.3, and requested the secretariat to publish the Handbook.

### **C. Measuring sustainable development**

Documentation: ECE/CES/2011/4 and Add. 1-3

38. The extended summary of the Report of the Joint UNECE/OECD/Eurostat Task Force on Measuring Sustainable Development was presented for information. The final report of the Task Force is planned to be submitted to the CES 2012 plenary session. It will take into account the comments received from the electronic consultations with the Bureau and the CES members, and the discussion at the CES plenary session.

Action taken by the Conference

39. The Conference appreciated the progress made by the Task Force. It was stressed that the work should take into account other international initiatives in related areas. The final report should be a step forward towards harmonisation of the work in measuring sustainable development and not be considered as guidelines or a manual for official statistics.

## VII. Coordination of international statistical work in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region

### A. Outcome of in-depth review of selected statistical areas by the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians

#### 1. Use of secondary and mixed sources for official statistics

Documentation: ECE/CES/2011/5

40. The Conference was informed about the outcome of the in-depth review of the use of secondary and mixed sources for official statistics conducted by the CES Bureau in November 2010. The review concluded that it would be useful to share information and develop guidelines in this area. As a follow-up, two actions have been undertaken:

(a) A new wiki tool has been created for sharing information, called ASSIST (Administrative and Secondary Sources in Statistics);

(b) A training manual has been published on the wiki with examples of best practice.

41. The discussion examined some of the challenges of the use of data from secondary sources. The use of the data has been facilitated by technological advances but the legal, methodological and public relations implications need to be borne in mind.

42. Eurostat noted that the paper did not mention work ongoing in the European Union (EU) in connection with the Eurostat vision on the production method of EU statistics, and proposed an amendment referring to EU legislation on Censuses.

43. It was suggested that the group on data collection proposed in the Chairman's conclusions of the first CES 2011 seminar could deal with the topic of using secondary and mixed sources.

Action taken by the Conference

44. The Conference welcomed the review and the follow-up actions taken by the secretariat, including the creation of the ASSIST wiki. The Conference encouraged countries to contribute to this wiki, particularly regarding the challenges identified during the discussion.

45. The Conference also welcomed the development of a training manual on this topic, and the translation of this manual into Spanish by Mexico.

46. The Bureau will continue to review progress in the use of secondary and mixed sources, and will report back to the Conference when necessary.

#### 2. Time-use surveys

Documentation: ECE/CES/2011/6

47. The Conference was informed about the outcome of the in-depth review of time-use surveys conducted by the CES Bureau in November 2010.

48. In the discussion, the following points were raised about the work of the Task Force on Time-Use Surveys:

(a) The new guidelines that the Task Force is preparing should ensure continuity with existing guidelines, such as the Harmonised European Time Use Surveys;

(b) The Task Force's work should contribute to the reduction of the time that respondents need to fill in the time-use survey questionnaire and consider new technologies for conducting the surveys more efficiently;

(c) The importance of good analysis and dissemination of time-use statistics was further emphasised.

Action taken by the Conference

49. The Conference welcomed the review and emphasised the importance of the follow-up work undertaken by the Task Force on Time-Use Surveys. The Conference will return to the discussion of this topic at one of its future sessions.

**3. Measuring information society, and statistics on science, technology and innovation**

Documentation: ECE/CES/2011/7 and Add.1

50. The Conference was informed about the outcome of the in-depth review of measuring the information society and statistics on science, technology and innovation conducted by the CES Bureau in November 2010.

Action taken by the Conference

51. The Conference welcomed the review and the inventory of groups working on statistics on information society, science, technology and innovation. The Conference noted that there may be scope for better coordination of the many initiatives undertaken in the area. The development of a conceptual framework may be considered. The Bureau will discuss possible ways forward at its 2-3 November 2011 meeting.

**B. Discussion to obtain input to the in-depth review of education statistics to be carried out by the Conference of European Statisticians Bureau in autumn 2011**

Documentation: ECE/CES/2011/8

52. The Conference discussed challenges in education statistics based on a paper by Australia. The aim of the discussion was to provide input for the in-depth review of education statistics that the CES Bureau will undertake in November 2011.

53. The following points were raised in the discussion:

(a) It would be important to explore the possibilities to improve education statistics by linking relevant sources at the micro level and by using longitudinal data;

(b) Focusing on local educational facilities and the quality of courses and teaching staff was not considered of high priority from an international viewpoint. The implementation of the new International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED) and the development of international recommendations for education statistics were considered more important;

(c) The work proposed in the paper should build on and be coordinated with the existing international work in education statistics.

Action taken by the Conference

54. The Conference encouraged countries to provide written comments to the authors and the secretariat for consideration in the in-depth review of education statistics in November 2011. The Australian Bureau of Statistics will update the paper, taking into

account comments from the discussion and the written contributions to be sent by countries after the CES plenary session.

## **VIII. Follow-up to the Conference of European Statisticians 2010 seminar on impact of global crises on statistical systems**

Documentation: ECE/CES/2011/9

55. The Conference was informed about the developments following the CES 2010 seminar on the impact of crises on statistical systems based on a paper by the IMF, OECD and Eurostat. Canada informed about the progress of work on preparing a compilation of country experiences with lessons learned from the financial crisis. Fourteen countries and one international organization have provided input to the paper.

Action taken by the Conference

56. Statistics Canada will prepare the summary paper on lessons learned from the financial crisis for the November 2011 meeting of the CES Bureau. Countries who have not yet contributed are encouraged to send their input to the UNECE secretariat as soon as possible. When finalized, the paper will be distributed to all CES members and posted on the website.

## **IX. Statistical confidentiality**

Documentation: ECE/CES/2011/10 and Add.1

57. The UNECE secretariat informed the Conference about country experiences with implementing the *Principles and Guidelines on Confidentiality Aspects of Data Integration undertaken for Statistical or Related Research Purposes* (2009). Twenty-six countries and two international organizations responded to the electronic consultation on this topic.

Action taken by the Conference

58. The Conference welcomed the comments provided by countries through the written consultation. The secretariat will retain the comments for use in a future review of the *Principles and Guidelines on Confidentiality Aspects of Data Integration undertaken for Statistical or Related Research Purposes*. The Bureau will assess the organization and timing of such a review and will report back to the Conference as appropriate.

59. National and international statistical organizations were invited to contribute new case studies for a revised version of the publication *Managing Statistical Confidentiality and Microdata Access: Principles and Guidelines of Good Practice*. Any organization wishing to do so is requested to notify the UNECE secretariat by the end of August 2011.

## **X. Progress reports and work of the Conference of European Statisticians teams of specialists**

### **A. United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Statistical Programme for 2011 and the report on the implementation of the 2010 Programme**

Documentation: ECE/CES/2011/11 and Add.1-2, ECE/CES/2011/19, ECE/CES/2011/41, ECE/CES/2011/43

60. The UNECE Statistical Programme for 2011 and the report on the implementation of the 2010 Programme were presented. Three documents prepared in the framework of the UN biennial planning and performance evaluation process were submitted to the CES for approval: biennial evaluation report 2008-2009, biennial evaluation plan 2010-2011, and the list of planned publications in 2012-2013.

#### Action taken by the Conference

61. The Conference welcomed the work undertaken by the UNECE Statistical Division in implementing the Statistical Programme for 2010 and 2011, and endorsed the plans for the rest of 2011, including the list of planned meetings.

62. The Conference approved the evaluation report on the statistics subprogramme performance 2008-2009 (ECE/CES/2011/41), the biennial evaluation plan 2010-2011 (ECE/CES/2011/43), and the list of planned publications 2012-2013 (presented in the Annex of document ECE/CES/2011/19).

### **B. Database of International Statistical Activities**

Documentation: ECE/CES/2011/53

63. The Conference was informed about the 2011 issue of the Database of International Statistical Activities (DISA) being available on the Web.

### **C. Reports of the Conference of European Statisticians Bureau meetings, progress reports on the Teams of Specialists working under the auspices of the Conference and reports from expert meetings**

Documentation: ECE/CES/2011/12, ECE/CES/2011/13, ECE/CES/2011/14, ECE/CES/2011/40, ECE/CES/2011/42, ECE/CES/2011/44, ECE/CES/2011/45, ECE/CES/2011/46, ECE/CES/2011/47

64. The Reports of the CES Bureau Meetings, progress reports of the Teams of Specialists working under the auspices of the Conference, and reports from expert meetings were submitted to the Conference for information.

## **XI. Organization of the meetings of the Conference of European Statisticians and its Bureau**

Documentation: ECE/CES/2011/17

Action taken by the Conference

65. The Conference approved the formulation of point 12(a) from the Rules governing the work of the Conference and its Bureau as follows:

“(a) Meetings of the Bureau will normally be held in February and October of each year. It is desirable to alternate the venue between Europe and North America, and to hold the spring meeting back-to-back with another high-level meeting where most of the CES Bureau members participate.”

66. The Conference requested the CES Bureau to continue its discussion to find the best solution for the timing of the future meetings of the CES and the OECD Statistics Committee. Representatives of both UNECE and OECD member countries, as well as Eurostat, stressed the utmost importance of holding the meetings back-to-back.

## **XII. Selection of topics for the seminars to take place during the Conference of European Statisticians 2012 plenary session**

Documentation: ECE/CES/2011/15

67. Taking into account the results of the survey carried out among the CES members in May 2011 and the recommendation by the CES Bureau, the following topics were selected for the CES seminars in 2012:

### **A. Implementing the fundamental principles of official statistics, including issues related to coordination of national statistical systems**

Seminar organizer: UNECE will coordinate the organization of the seminar. Ireland, New Zealand, Norway, Ukraine and United States will contribute to the organization

Contributions offered by: Czech Republic, Finland, Georgia, Italy, Lithuania, Mexico, Netherlands, Portugal, Romania, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Ukraine, United Kingdom, Eurostat and UNECE

### **B. Challenges for future population and housing censuses (based on lessons learned from the last census round)**

Seminar organizer: co-organised by Canada and CIS-STAT in cooperation with UNECE

Contributions offered by: Australia, Austria, Brazil, Bulgaria, Canada, Czech Republic, Germany, Latvia, Mexico, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Eurostat and UNECE

Action taken by the Conference

68. The secretariat will distribute an electronic copy of the proposal for the 2012 seminar topics (document ECE/CES/2011/15/Add.1) to allow countries to consult their offices for possible contributions.

69. The Seminar Organisers will invite selected countries and organizations to prepare papers for the seminars to provide basis for discussion.

70. The Conference requested the CES Bureau and the secretariat to follow up on the organization of the two seminars in 2012.

### **XIII. Election of the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians**

Documentation: ECE/CES/2011/16

71. For the 2011-12 and 2012-13 terms of office, based on the proposal put forward by Ms. K. Wallman, the most senior previous Chair of the Conference, the Conference elected:

Mr. E. Giovannini (Italy) as a Chairperson;

and the following Vice-Chairpersons of the Bureau:

Mr. E. Pereira Nunes (Brazil);

Mr. W. Smith (Canada);

Mr. P. Potisepp (Estonia);

Mr. G. Bascand (New Zealand);

Ms. I. Krizman (Slovenia);

Mr. O. Osaulenko (Ukraine);

Ms. J. Matheson (United Kingdom).

### **XIV. Other business**

72. The 2012 plenary session of the Conference will take place during the week of 4-8 June 2012 in Paris, back-to-back with the meeting of the OECD Statistics Committee.

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