



# Economic and Social Council

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## Economic Commission for Europe

### Conference of European Statisticians

#### Fifty-ninth plenary session

Geneva, 14-16 June 2011

### Annotated provisional agenda

The plenary session will be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland, starting at 9:30 on Tuesday, 14 June 2011

#### I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening addresses and adoption of the agenda.
2. Matters arising for the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) from the following meetings:
  - (a) February 2011 session of the United Nations Statistical Commission;
  - (b) March 2011 session of Economic Commission for Europe.
3. Organization of data collection and sharing, and the management challenges for the implementation of Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange (SDMX).
4. A strategic vision for the products and processes of official statistics - report by the High Level Group for Strategic Developments in Business Architecture in Statistics.
5. Measuring human capital.
6. Manuals, guidelines, recommendations, frameworks, etc. prepared under the auspices of the Conference:
  - (a) Impact of globalization on national accounts;
  - (b) Update of the Canberra Group Handbook on household income statistics;
  - (c) Measuring sustainable development.
7. Coordination of international statistical work in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) region:
  - (a) Outcome of the in-depth reviews of selected statistical areas by the CES Bureau:
    - (i) Use of secondary and mixed sources for official statistics;
    - (ii) Time-use surveys;

- (iii) Measuring information society, and statistics on science, technology and innovation.
  - (b) Discussion to obtain input to the in-depth review of education statistics to be carried out by the CES Bureau in autumn 2011.
- 8. Follow-up to the CES 2010 seminar on impact of global crises on statistical systems.
- 9. Statistical confidentiality:
  - (a) Guidelines on managing statistical confidentiality and microdata access – updating country case studies;
  - (b) Principles of confidentiality aspects of statistical data integration – follow up to the Principles adopted in 2009.
- 10. Progress reports and work of the CES Teams of Specialists:
  - (a) The UNECE Statistical Programme for 2011 and the report on the implementation of the 2010 Programme;
  - (b) The Database of International Statistical Activities (DISA);
  - (c) 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.
- 11. Organization of the meetings of the Conference of European Statisticians and its Bureau.
- 12. Selection of topics for seminar(s) to take place during the 2012 plenary session.
- 13. Election of the CES Bureau.
- 14. Other business.
- 15. Adoption of the report.

## **II. Annotations**

The fifty-ninth plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) is convened at the request of the fifty-eighth CES plenary session (ECE/CES/79) and in accordance with the Rules Governing the Work of the Conference and its Bureau adopted at the 2005 plenary session of the CES (CES/2005/2).

The fifty-ninth plenary session of the CES will continue to follow the format introduced by the 50<sup>th</sup> CES (ECE/CES/62). The plenary session includes a formal session and two seminars.

### **1. Opening addresses and adoption of the agenda**

The proposed provisional agenda and timetable were agreed upon by the CES Bureau at its 23 February 2011 meeting. The provisional agenda will be presented for the approval of the Conference.

### **2. Matters arising for the Conference of European Statisticians from the meetings of the Economic Commission for Europe and the United Nations Statistical Commission**

Each year, a short overview of meetings of the parent bodies of the CES, the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) and the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC), is

given. Information on the discussions held at the March 2011 session of the ECE and on resolutions and decisions taken that have a bearing on the work of the Conference will be presented in document ECE/CES/2011/18. The outcomes of the 2011 session of the UNSC in relation to the work of the Conference will be provided in document ECE/CES/2011/19.

### **3. Organization of data collection and sharing, and the management challenges for the implementation of Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange**

This part of the CES plenary session is organised by the UNECE secretariat. The topic is considered in two sessions, organised by the Netherlands and the World Bank.

Data collection is changing rapidly, both in mode and organization, as technologies evolve and new ways of using existing data are explored. The increasing use of secondary and mixed data sources, and the rapid growth of Internet data collection in many countries are examples of the pressures for changes to the way data collection is managed in statistical organisations. A closely related issue is that of data sharing, both within and between organizations. These changes require careful management and a clear understanding of issues and implications on the part of senior managers.

A key pre-condition for effective data sharing is the availability and use of effective standards. The SDMX initiative has resulted in a set of standards that seem to go a long way towards meeting these requirements. There have been a number of initiatives on the part of international organizations to implement and promote discussions on SDMX standards, but, with a few notable exceptions, adoption of SDMX by national statistical organizations has been relatively slow.

#### Sub-topic 1 – Organization of data collection and sharing

This session is organised by the Netherlands. Invited papers are prepared by the Netherlands and Sweden.

This session will consider organizational models for statistical collection, multi-modal data collection, and organizational models for data collection from secondary sources. The session will deal with the principles, experiences and issues that are driving the decisions to use a specific organizational model for data collection, and will discuss experiences gained so far in combining different modes of data collection.

The session will also discuss organizational models for data collection from secondary sources. It will look at approaches in different countries and explore how to make data collection from secondary sources more efficient.

#### Sub-topic 2 – Management challenges of SDMX implementation

This session is organised by the World Bank. Invited papers are prepared by Norway and Russia.

This session will consider managerial challenges of SDMX implementation and will look at the content-related and managerial implications of the standard. The discussion can deal with the governance model of SDMX and its future development work, how to develop the necessary tools, reconciling the needs of national and international statistical organizations, etc. The session will also discuss the complexity of implementing SDMX standards and how to overcome the barriers of SDMX implementation.

#### **4. A strategic vision for the products and processes of official statistics - report by the High-Level Group for Strategic Developments in Business Architecture in Statistics**

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 has developed a vision paper to provide the necessary coordination and strategic direction to the many international initiatives currently working on related topics. This vision paper is presented to the CES to inform delegates, and seek their feedback and support.

#### **5. Measuring human capital**

This part of the CES plenary session is organised by Statistics New Zealand in cooperation with UNECE. The topic is considered in three sessions, organised by Canada, Norway and New Zealand respectively.

Measurement of human capital is of interest from a number of perspectives. Today, the economic importance of knowledge and skills is widely recognised within labour economics, growth theory, business economics, sustainable development, and in the context of demographic change. At the same time, the personal and social wellbeing effects of learning are considered as important as the economic effects. Statisticians are in the early stages of work in this area and are trying to reach common views on why and how to measure human capital.

##### Sub-topic 1: Why: drivers for human capital measurement

This session is organised by Canada. Invited papers are prepared by Canada and Finland. The session will cover the policy relevance of human capital. For example, the implications it has for understanding the benefits of educational and other knowledge investments; health and social expenditures such as social security and pension policies; and economic growth and productivity performance. It will also cover the links that human capital has to other statistical measurement issues. These include measuring intangible assets and economic capital, productivity, economic growth; household accounts, measuring wellbeing; and measuring sustainability and demographic change.

##### Sub-topic 2: How: alternative approaches to measuring human capital

This session is organised by Norway. The invited papers are prepared by Australia and the United States Bureau of Economic Analysis. The session will discuss the conceptual issues around the measurement of human capital. It will also describe alternative methods and assessment of their suitability for various uses, and review existing practice and new approaches.

##### Sub-topic 3: Bringing the why and how together: conclusions and recommendations for follow up work

This session is organised by New Zealand as a panel discussion. The session will aim to bring the why and how together and discuss what approaches are suitable for answering which questions. The session will also identify any possible proposals for follow-up work.

#### **6. Manuals, guidelines, frameworks, etc. prepared under the auspices of the Conference**

Three documents will be submitted to the CES 2011 plenary session for consideration.

## (a) Impact of globalization on national accounts:

The practical guide “Impact of Globalization on National Accounts” was developed by the joint UNECE/Eurostat/Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Group of Experts on the Impact of Globalization on National Accounts (GGNA). The Netherlands was the Chair and Canada Vice-Chair of the Group. The draft Guide has undergone several review processes within its Leadership Group. Separate chapters have been provided for comment to CES member countries and to the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts. All comments received to date have been incorporated in the draft.

The document was circulated to the CES Bureau in January/February 2011. Following the CES Bureau decision, the document will be sent to all CES members for electronic consultation. Subject to the results of the consultation, it will be submitted to the Conference for endorsement;

## (b) Update of the Canberra Group Handbook on Household Income Statistics:

The updated Handbook has been prepared by a Task Force set up for this purpose in February 2009 (chaired by Australia). The document was circulated to the CES Bureau in January/February 2011 and has been amended to take into account the comments received.

Following the CES Bureau decision, the updated Handbook will be sent to all CES members for electronic consultation. Subject to the results of the consultation, the Handbook will be submitted to the Conference for endorsement;

## (c) Measuring sustainable development:

The Joint UNECE/Eurostat/OECD Task Force on Measuring Sustainable Development was set up in February 2009. The main task of the group is to further pursue the capital approach developed by the previous Joint UNECE/OECD/Eurostat Working Group on this topic, and follow up on dimensions unresolved in the previous work, focusing on social and human capital.

An extended summary of the Report of the Task Force was circulated to the CES Bureau in January/February 2011. Following the Bureau decision, the summary will be sent for electronic consultation to all CES members to collect feedback and to allow countries and organizations to provide input to the work. The CES 2011 plenary session will be informed about the outcome of the electronic consultation and the further work of the Task Force. The full report of the Task Force is planned to be submitted to the CES 2012 plenary session.

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

This agenda item is concerned with the coordination of international statistical work in the UNECE region and the decisions and recommendations that the Conference is expected to take on the respective issues.

### **(a) Outcome of the in-depth reviews by the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians carried out in 2010**

The Conference will be informed about the outcomes of the regular in-depth reviews of selected statistical areas by the CES Bureau. The aim of the reviews is to improve coordination of statistical activities in the UNECE region. The review focuses on strategic issues and highlights concerns of statistical offices of both a conceptual and a coordination nature. The following topics were reviewed in-depth in 2010:

- (a) Use of secondary and mixed sources of official statistics (June 2010, based on a paper by the UNECE secretariat);
- (b) Time-use surveys (November 2010, based on a paper by Germany);
- (c) Measuring information society and statistics on science, technology and innovation (November 2010, based on a paper by Australia).

**(b) Discussion on education statistics to obtain input to the in-depth review by the Bureau in November 2011**

The aim of the discussion under this agenda item is to seek input from all CES members for an in-depth review of education statistics that the CES Bureau will undertake in November 2011. The paper to provide basis for the discussion will be prepared by Australia.

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

The Conference will be informed about the developments following the CES 2010 seminar on impact of crises on statistical systems based on a paper by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), OECD and Eurostat. Furthermore, the UNECE secretariat will invite countries and international organizations to provide input to a paper summarising the lessons learned from the crisis, to be prepared by Canada.

**9. Statistical confidentiality**

**(a) Country case studies in the *Guidelines on managing statistical confidentiality and microdata access***

The CES Bureau considered it useful to update the country case studies in the publication *Managing statistical confidentiality and microdata access: principles and guidelines of good practice*, approved by the CES in 2006. The UNECE secretariat will ask countries to provide updated case studies on confidentiality and microdata access, and will inform the CES plenary session about the progress of work.

**(b) Principles of confidentiality aspects of data integration**

The Conference endorsed in June 2009 the *Principles and Guidelines on Confidentiality Aspects of Data Integration Undertaken for Statistical or Related Research Purposes*. The Principles were developed by a Task Force chaired by Australia. The Conference invited countries to test the Principles within the following two years (June 2009 – June 2011) and to inform the UNECE secretariat about any problems encountered with their implementation. The UNECE secretariat will ask CES members about their experiences with using the Principles and will inform the Conference about the progress made in this area.

**10. Progress reports and work of the Conference of European Statisticians Teams of Specialists**

Under this agenda item, the Conference will be informed about the implementation of the UNECE Statistical Programme and progress of work of the Teams of Specialists working under the auspices of the Conference, as follows:

- (a) The UNECE Statistical Programme for 2011 and the report on the implementation of the 2010 Programme will be presented briefly for information;

(b) The progress made in updating the Database of International Statistical Activities (DISA) will be presented briefly for information;

(c) 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 will be submitted to the Conference for information.

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

In June 2009, the Conference decided to test a different timing of CES Bureau meetings compared to those stipulated by the *Rules governing the work of the Conference and the Bureau* (ECE/CES/2007/8). The points 12 (a), (b) and (c) from the Rules were suspended for two years to experiment with a changed frequency and duration of the CES Bureau meetings. The two years testing period expires in 2011. The Bureau discussed the results of the experiment at its February 2011 meeting and recommends to revert to the organization of the Bureau meetings according to the Rules.

Furthermore, the CES Bureau has discussed the duration of the CES plenary session in connection with the planned prolongation of the OECD Committee on Statistics to two days. These two meetings have been held back-to-back during the past several years and the duration of one meeting has implications for the other. The CES plenary sessions are organised according to the format introduced by the 50<sup>th</sup> CES (ECE/CES/62) that includes a formal session and two seminars. Any changes to the format and duration have to be agreed by the CES plenary session.

## **12. Selection of topics for seminar(s) to take place during the 2012 Conference of European Statisticians plenary session**

The Conference will select the topics for the CES seminar(s) in 2012 based on a proposal by the CES Bureau.

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

The current term of all members of the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians expires at the closing of the 2011 plenary session, on 16 June 2011. At the 2011 plenary session, therefore, elections for a Chair and for Vice-Chairs will be held for the two-year period June 2011 to June 2013.

## **14. Other business**

Any additional issues that the Conference needs to be informed of can be taken up under this agenda item.

## **15. Adoption of the report**

The Conference is expected to adopt the report of the plenary session, including the main decisions, before it adjourns.

### III. Organization of work

A detailed timetable will be made available on the official website of the Conference (<http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2011.06.ces.htm>) a few weeks before the plenary session.

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<b>Tuesday, 14 June</b>	
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<b>Wednesday, 15 June</b>	
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