

**Economic and Social Council**Distr.: General  
30 May 2013

English only

**Economic Commission for Europe**

## Conference of European Statisticians

**Sixty-first plenary session**

Geneva, 10-12 June 2013

Item 7 (c) of the provisional agenda

**Outcomes of the in-depth reviews carried out by the CES Bureau: Banking, insurance and financial statistics; population ageing; and political and other community activities including volunteering****Results of the consultation of the in-depth review of statistics related to population ageing****Note by the secretariat***Summary*

This note summarizes the comments by members of the Conference of European Statisticians on the in-depth review of statistics related to population ageing. The secretariat carried out the electronic consultation of the outcome of the review in March-April 2013.

A total of 21 replies were received in response to the request for comments: from 20 countries and one international organization. There was general support for the endorsement of the in-depth review. Furthermore, several countries provided comments and additional information, and some suggested specific modifications to the in-depth review paper.

In view of the general support, it is proposed that the Conference endorse the outcome of the in-depth review of statistics related to population ageing, subject to acknowledging the proposed modifications.

## I. Introduction

1. This note summarizes the comments by members of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) on the in-depth review of statistics related to population ageing. The CES Bureau carried out the in-depth review in November 2012. The electronic consultation on the outcome of the review was conducted by the secretariat in March-April 2013.

## II. Summary

2. A total of 21 replies were received in response to the request for comments on the in-depth review. The following 20 countries and one international organization replied: Australia, Austria, Belarus, Finland, Georgia, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Mexico, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Slovenia, Sweden, Turkey, United States, and Eurostat.

3. The respondents expressed support for the in-depth review document and/or to launching a Task Force as suggested in the paper. No country or organization opposed the endorsement of the outcome of the review.

4. As an outcome of the review, a Task Force has been set up to improve the availability, accessibility and comparability of statistical data in support of ageing-related policymaking. More information about the Task Force is available in document number ECE/CES/2013/9/Add.1.

5. Some countries and organizations (Australia, Mexico, New Zealand, Portugal, Turkey and Eurostat) provided additional information on their circumstances and activities or highlighted the importance of ageing related statistics for them. This information will be used by the Task Force on Ageing-related Statistics whose activities include the collection and presentation of good national practices in disseminating and communicating these statistics.

6. Several countries provided general comments on the issues raised in the in-depth review paper. These comments are summarized in section III below. In addition, Australia, Latvia, New Zealand and Eurostat suggested specific modifications to the paper. The secretariat will be in contact with these countries and Eurostat in view of implementing some of the modifications in an updated version of the paper, to be made available after the CES plenary session. Most comments can be taken into account in the activities of the Task Force on Ageing-related Statistics.

## III. General comments

7. Austria expressed a wish to see a prioritisation of the ideas presented in the review document.

8. Some different views were expressed on the need for consistent tabulation that had been proposed in the review: Austria viewed this aspect to be overly emphasized and suggested putting weight on consistent counting and central collection of data, while Lithuania expressed its agreement with consistently defined age groups. Portugal suggested that reflection on the confidentially implications of providing detailed statistical data, for example data by one-year age groups, may be necessary.

9. A number of countries commented on means of data collection.

(a) Austria expressed doubts about the benefits of increasing the production of longitudinal studies, particularly in view of the demanding input that these studies require.

---

Instead, they stressed the importance of standardisation and, if necessary model-based, retrospective calculation of time series;

(b) Australia noted the attention paid to surveys in the review, but stressed the importance of census or population based data, to provide appropriate denominators for creating indicators in this space; for example, ensuring appropriate age distributions, locations and adjustments for deaths. This approach also applies to administrative data where appropriate data standards are applied to information collected from clients (e.g. age, sex, location, household type and structure, health status and disability status);

(c) Australia stressed that the blending of information from surveys and administrative data collections should be seen as a strong opportunity to bridge many of the data gaps identified in the report, especially given that the older population are dispersed between private households and supported accommodation, such as institutional population. The establishment of the survey collection could consider combining these forms of data, or it could come through post hoc data linkage techniques;

(d) Mexico called for validation criteria, data base settings, conceptual work, as well as the mechanisms to deal with the difficulties during the field surveying shared between statistical offices, albeit that variation in the treatment of these issues may exist between National Statistical Offices.

10. Austria expressed support for creating a dashboard of indicators, which it could disseminate through its website.

11. New Zealand highlighted significant ethnic and regional dimensions to ageing, which may need to be considered, although this may be statistically challenging.

#### **IV. Proposal**

12. **In view of the support expressed during the electronic consultation, the Conference is invited to endorse the in-depth review of statistics related to population ageing, acknowledging the comments summarised in this note.**