



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
20 January 2014

Original: English

Economic Commission for Europe

Conference of European Statisticians

Sixty-second plenary session

Paris, 9-11 April 2014

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Opening addresses and adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda

The plenary session will be held at the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development Conference Centre, 2, rue André-Pascal, 75016 Paris, France, starting at 9:30 on Wednesday, 9 April 2014.

I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening addresses and adoption of the agenda.
2. Matters arising from the 45th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission.
3. What is the value of official statistics and how do we communicate that value?
4. Migration statistics.
5. Work of the High-level Group for the Modernisation of Statistical Production and Services.
6. Reports, guidelines and recommendations prepared under the umbrella of the Conference:
 - (a) Gender equality indicators
 - (b) Climate change related statistics
 - (c) Global production
7. Coordination of international statistical work in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) region:
 - (a) Substantive discussion on a statistical area selected by the Bureau for an in-depth review in 2014-2015;
 - (b) Outcomes of the in-depth reviews carried out by the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) Bureau: Big data; Entrepreneurship statistics; Measurement of social protection; and Leading, composite and sentiment indicators and official statistics;

- (c) Follow-up to the CES 2013 seminar on challenges in implementing the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting and measuring sustainable development;
 - (d) Follow-up to the CES 2013 seminar on challenges in providing access to micro-data for research.
8. Programme of work of the UNECE Statistics subprogramme:
 - (a) Reports on the work of the Conference of European Statisticians, its Bureau and Teams of Specialists;
 - (b) Programme planning documents for the UNECE Statistics subprogramme.
 9. Selection of topics for seminars to take place during the 2015 CES plenary session.
 10. Other business.
 11. Closing of the meeting.

II. Annotations

The sixty-second plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians is convened at the request of the sixty-first CES plenary session (ECE/CES/83) 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 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 21-22 October 2013 meeting. The provisional agenda will be presented for the approval of the Conference.

2. Matters arising from the 45th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission – for information

The agenda item will focus on the implications of the decisions of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) and the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE).

The Conference will also be informed of the progress in establishing the Sustainable Development Goals and the post-2015 development agenda, and of the results achieved by the Friends of the Chair group on broader measures of progress. The UNSC set up the group in February-March 2013.

3. What is the value of official statistics and how do we communicate that value? – for discussion and recommendations

This part of the CES plenary session will be organised in a form of a one-day seminar. The organisers are United Kingdom, Sweden and Eurostat. The United Kingdom will chair the seminar.

Official statistics are increasingly finding themselves competing against other information sources. This provides new challenges and new opportunities. The seminar will consider how to redefine and communicate the value of official statistics in the increasingly competitive data industry. The discussions will focus on the specifics of official statistics

that provide public value and make them unique among the many information sources available.

(a) Topic 1: Understanding the value of official statistics

The session, organised by Eurostat, will discuss how to define and understand the value of official statistics, for example compared to other types of data and statistics. The purpose is to identify possible measures to increase public interest in official statistics. The session will explore what national statistical offices could learn from the private sector on defining and understanding the value of data.

The session will analyse the value of official statistics also from a user perspective: how do users see official statistics, what are their specific benefits, what users value the most, and how to maintain the loyalty of users.

(b) Topic 2: Strategies for communicating the value of official statistics

The session, organised by Sweden, will focus on strategies for communicating the role and importance of official statistics. The session will discuss the benefits of communicating the value of statistics better, for example increasing participation in surveys. The use of communication tools and partnerships that may help statisticians to better reach current and potential users will be considered.

The session will also touch upon the possible impact of opening data more widely to users and how this could increase the value of statistics. It will consider how to promote re-use of data and how that might affect the perceived value and quality of statistics.

4. Migration Statistics – for discussion and recommendations

This part of the CES plenary session will be organised as a seminar. The organisers are UNECE and Mexico in collaboration with Norway, Russian Federation, Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT), and United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD). Mexico will chair the seminar.

Migration statistics is a particularly important topic in light of the recent 2013 High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development at the United Nations General Assembly. In many countries there is still a great need to improve quality and accessibility of migration statistics for evidence-based policy making and informing public debate. In addition to basic data on the size of migration, information on the characteristics of migrants, as well as the impact of migration on the migrants themselves and the places they move to and leave, need to be improved.

(a) Topic 1: Measuring recent and changing migration patterns: Challenges and opportunities

The session, organised by Norway and UNSD, will discuss recent migration patterns during the economic crisis and sources used to measure these phenomena. The session will address the specific challenges for migration statistics in relation to new flows of migration due to changing economic situation in many countries.

The session will also consider the use of different data sources for information on migration. Population censuses are a traditional source of information on stocks of migrants. In addition, administrative sources and data from unofficial sources are increasingly used to produce migration statistics. The new data sources have the potential to improve the coverage, comprehensiveness and quality of migration statistics. The session will discuss the advantages and risks associated with using these new data sources.

(b) Topic 2: Methods to improve the measurement of migration

The session, organised by Russian Federation and CIS-STAT, will focus on innovative methods that can be used to improve the measurement of migration. It will consider combining different data sources to increase the quality and timeliness of migration statistics.

The session will also look at migration statistics from the stakeholder perspective. It will consider the role that academic research could play in the production of national migration statistics. Measuring emigration continues to be a challenge. The session will therefore discuss practical ways for improving the measurement of emigration, such as using administrative data, including migration-related questions on censuses or other surveys, and exchanging data across countries.

5. Work of the High-level Group for the Modernisation of Statistical Production and Services – for discussion and recommendations

The High-level Group for the Modernisation of Statistical Production and Services (HLG) was set up in 2010 to guide strategic developments in the ways official statistics are produced. The Conference has expressed strong support for the work and endorsed the vision (in 2011) and the strategy (in 2012) for modernising statistical production and services in statistical offices.

The HLG will submit its annual report on implementing its strategy to the Conference for approval. The Conference will be invited to discuss the outcomes of recent projects on frameworks and standards for statistical modernisation, and on developing a common statistical production architecture.

6. Reports, guidelines, recommendations, etc. prepared under the umbrella of the Conference

Three documents will be submitted to the CES 2014 plenary session for consideration.

(a) Gender equality indicators – for decision

The report is an outcome of the work of the Task Force on Indicators of Gender Equality, established by the CES Bureau in November 2010. The report consolidates and systematises the existing gender-relevant statistical indicators and proposes methods of sustainable data collection on selected indicators with the purpose to improve the monitoring of gender equality in countries.

The CES Bureau reviewed the report in October 2013 and requested the secretariat to conduct an electronic consultation with all CES members in February-March 2014. Subject to the positive outcome of the consultation, the report will be submitted to the Conference for endorsement.

(b) Recommendations on climate change related statistics – for decision

The Recommendations have been prepared by the Task Force on Climate Change Related Statistics, established by the CES Bureau in November 2011. The purpose of the Task Force was to identify practical steps to support development of climate change related statistics, and to enhance the role of official statistics in greenhouse gas emission inventories. In 2013, the Conference and the Bureau expressed support for the Task Force's first draft Recommendations. The Task Force also organised an expert meeting on 8-9 October 2013 which gave valuable input for finalising the Recommendations.

The CES Bureau reviewed the full text of the Recommendations in January 2014 and asked the secretariat to conduct an electronic consultation with all CES members in February-March 2014. Subject to the positive outcome of the consultation, the Recommendations will be submitted to the Conference for endorsement.

(c) Global production – for information

The Guide was developed by the Task Force on Global production, established in November 2011. The aim of the work was to support the implementation of the System of National Accounts 2008 (SNA) and the Balance of Payments and International Investment Position Manual, Sixth Edition (BPM6) with respect to global production arrangements. It followed up to the work of the Expert Group on the Impact of Globalization on National Accounts and the research agenda identified in the *Guide on Impact of Globalization on National Accounts*, endorsed by the CES in June 2011.

The CES Bureau reviewed the draft Guide in January 2014 and asked the secretariat to conduct an electronic consultation with all CES members in February-March 2014. This would enable countries to review the draft recommendations, provide feedback on their applicability and usefulness, and prepare additional case studies. The Task Force will continue the work on the Guide to take into account the comments received. The plan is to submit the Guide to the CES 2015 plenary session for endorsement.

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

This agenda item concerns the decisions that the Conference is expected to take regarding the coordination of international statistical work in the UNECE region.

The Conference will be informed about the outcomes of in-depth reviews of selected statistical areas carried out by the CES Bureau. These reviews are important tools of coordination and aim to identify gaps or duplication of work and address emerging issues. The reviews focus on strategic issues and highlight concerns of statistical offices of both a conceptual and a coordinating nature.

Furthermore, the Conference will discuss under this agenda item follow-up actions to the CES seminars held in previous years.

(a) Substantive discussion on a statistical area selected by the Bureau for an in-depth review in 2014-2015 – for discussion and recommendations

Over the last several years, one of the in-depth review topics has been discussed at the CES plenary session, before the review by the Bureau. The aim is to obtain input for the review from all CES members. This discussion has provided many useful comments and has been appreciated by the participants of the Conference. The topic for discussion will be selected by the CES Bureau at their meeting on 28-29 January 2014, and will be announced in the detailed timetable for the CES plenary session.

(b) Outcomes of the in-depth reviews carried out by the Conference of European Statisticians Bureau – for decision

The reports of in-depth reviews carried out by the CES Bureau since the previous CES plenary session in June 2013 will be submitted to the Conference. The CES Bureau reviewed 'Big data' and 'Entrepreneurship statistics' in October 2013; and 'Measurement of social protection' and 'Leading, composite and sentiment indicators and official statistics' in January 2014. The Conference will be invited to endorse the outcomes of the in-depth reviews.

Furthermore, the CES Bureau reviewed in October 2013 the outcomes of the in-depth reviews carried out since 2007. The Bureau considered the in-depth review process of great value for CES as it allows to focus the work on most topical areas and leads to concrete outcomes in terms of guidelines and recommendations. A document summarising the outcomes of the in-depth reviews undertaken in 2007-2013 will be presented to the Conference for information.

(c) **Follow-up to the Conference of European Statisticians 2013 seminar on challenges in implementing System of Environmental-Economic Accounting and measuring sustainable development – for information**

The Conference will be informed about the actions to follow up on the issues raised during the CES 2013 seminar on challenges in implementing the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting and measuring sustainable development. The Bureau discussed the follow-up actions at its meetings in October 2013 and in January 2014.

(d) **Follow-up to the Conference of European Statisticians 2013 seminar on challenges in providing access to micro-data for research – for information**

The Conference will be informed about the actions to implement decisions taken at the CES 2013 seminar on challenges in providing access to micro-data for research.

8. Programme of work of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Statistics subprogramme

(a) **Reports on the work of the Conference of European Statisticians, its Bureau and Teams of Specialists – for decision**

The Conference will be invited to consider the reports related to the UNECE statistical work programme in 2012-13 as follows:

(i) Biennial Evaluation Report of the Statistics subprogramme for 2012-13 will be submitted to the Conference for approval (ECE/CES/2014/14, endorsed by the CES Bureau in January 2014);

(ii) Report on the implementation of the 2013 Statistical Programme will be submitted to the Conference for approval (ECE/CES/2014/15, endorsed by the CES Bureau in January 2014);

(iii) Reports of the CES Bureau Meetings, progress reports of Teams of Specialists (Steering Groups and Task Forces) and reports of expert meetings will be submitted to the Conference for information.

(b) **Programme planning documents for the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Statistics subprogramme – for decision**

The Conference will be invited to review and approve the official planning documents of the Statistics subprogramme prepared in the context of the United Nations secretariat's biennial planning and reporting cycle:

(i) UNECE Statistical Programme for 2014 will be submitted to the Conference for approval (ECE/CES/2014/16, endorsed by the CES Bureau in October 2013). This document is in line with the Programme of work of the Statistics subprogramme for 2014-2015, approved by the Conference in June 2013;

(ii) Strategic Framework of the Statistics subprogramme for 2016-17 (ECE/CES/2014/17, endorsed by the CES Bureau in October 2013).

9. Selection of topics for seminars to take place during the 2015 Conference of European Statisticians plenary session – for decision

The Conference will select the topics for the CES seminars in 2015 based on a proposal by the CES Bureau. The proposal will reflect the results of an electronic survey to be carried out by the Secretariat in early 2014 among the CES member countries and international organizations.

10. Other business

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

11. Closing of the meeting

A draft report of the CES plenary session, including the main decisions, will be adopted at the end of the meeting (in English only). A detailed report will be prepared after the Conference and will be sent for comments to all participants. The finalised report will be translated into French and Russian.

III. Organization of work

A detailed timetable will be made available on the official website of the Conference (www.unece.org/stats/documents/2014.04.ces.html) a few weeks before the plenary session.

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