Summary of the Consultation on ‘Defining and Measuring Circular Migration’

Conference of European Statisticians
29 April 2016
Timing of work and prior consultations

• Jun 2012: Further work on circular migration recommended in “Analysis of international migration estimates using different length of stay definitions”

• Feb 2013: Bureau establishes task force

• 2013-2015: Task force working (chair: Mexico)

• Feb 2016: Bureau reviews result, requests consultation

• Feb-Mar 2016: CES electronic consultation

• Apr 2016: Guide and consultation results presented to CES
Overview of the Report

- Objective: to prepare a proposal for a common international statistical definition of circular migration

- Chapter 2: existing concepts definitions

- Chapter 3: five dimensions of circular migration
  - repetition of move (frequency)
  - directionality,
  - duration
  - purpose or reason for move
  - developmental impact

- Chapter 4: key issues for a statistical definition of circular migration

- Chapter 5: practical application, examples from Italy and Sweden
Definitions

- Main definition:
  - A circular migrant is a person who has crossed the national borders of the reporting country at least 3 times over the past 10 years, each time with duration of stay (abroad or in the country) of at least 12 months.

- Tied to the international definition of migration.

- Allows estimating the share of circular migrants in the total number of international migrants.

- Extensions allowing for short-term migration. “Mixed-term migrants”.
CES Consultation 2016: Main Comments

- 43 responses – high response rate
- 41 ready to endorse

Issues:
- limitation to long-term migration (at least 12 months of stay)
- reference period of 10 years for circularity of moves
- practical difficulty of implementing the definition

Suggestion: to discuss further at the UNECE-Eurostat Work Session on Migration Statistics (Geneva, 18-20 May 2016)

Need for further work on practical testing of the definitions
The Conference is invited to

• express its **views** on the report;

• ask the Task Force to review in detail the comments and suggestions made, and reflect them in a **revised version** of the report;

• ask the Task Force **to discuss** the definition of circular migration at the forthcoming UNECE-Eurostat Work Session on Migration Statistics on 18-20 May 2016, including the need for developing practical guidance;

• agree that the revised report will be submitted to the 2016 October CES **Bureau meeting for final approval**.