



# Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General  
15 May 2020

Original: English

---

## Economic Commission for Europe

### Conference of European Statisticians

#### Sixty-eighth plenary session

Geneva (online), 22-24 June 2020

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

#### Opening and adoption of the agenda

### Revised annotated provisional agenda for sixty-eighth plenary session

The plenary session will be held as a virtual meeting, starting at 12:00 on Monday, 22 June 2020.

#### I. Provisional agenda

1. Opening.
2. Globalization and the future of economic statistics.
3. Measuring digital transformation.
4. New Conference of European Statisticians guidelines and recommendations.
5. Programme of work of the Statistics subprogramme of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.
6. New roles for statistical and geospatial agencies in emerging national data ecosystems.
7. How official statistics can help to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic, including providing data for Sustainable Development Goals.
8. Data stewardship – National Statistical Organisations in the changing world.
9. Business continuity of official statistics.
10. Closing of the meeting.

*Note: Agenda items 6 and 7 will be discussed in a joint CES and UN-GGIM: Europe session. Agenda items 8 and 9 will be discussed in a joint informal CES and OECD Committee for Statistics and Statistical Policy (CSSP) session.*

#### II. Annotations

The sixty-eighth plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) will convene in accordance with the *Rules Governing the Work of the Conference and its Bureau* (ECE/CES/2019/2).

GE.20-06707(E)



\* 2 0 0 6 7 0 7 \*

Please recycle 



In view of the Covid-19 pandemic, the CES 2020 plenary session will be organised primarily as a virtual meeting. This may be accompanied by a physical meeting in Geneva if the Covid-19 restrictions are lifted by the time of the meeting.

## **1. Opening**

The revised provisional agenda and timetable were agreed upon by the CES Bureau via e-mail following its February 2020 meeting.

## **2. Globalization and the future of economic statistics**

Discussion organised by Canada, Finland and Norway.

The Conference will discuss the future of economic statistics with focus on globalisation challenges, and collaboration and coordination between compilers of statistics at national and international level. The aim of the discussion is to increase understanding of user needs, and identify some concrete steps towards building a responsive economic statistics system that provides relevant information for policy makers.

The session will build on the progress of work of the Friends of the Chair Group on Economic Statistics and the UNECE Task Force on exchange and sharing of economic data. It will discuss the need for increasing collaboration and partnering between compilers of statistics; simplifying the sharing of economic data, learning, methods and tools to avoid duplication of efforts; and what role CES could play in supporting progress in this area.

The discussion will conclude with identification of concrete steps and recommendations for further work.

## **3. Measuring digital transformation**

The restrictions to movement due to the Covid-19 pandemic have led to a sudden increase of teleworking, tele-learning and the use of digital means in all spheres of life. The leap forward in digitalisation makes it even more urgent to discuss how to capture this change in official statistics. The discussion will build on a paper by Eurostat, International Monetary Fund and Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development on recent work and future plans of international organisations on measuring the digital economy and digital transformation, and on the in-depth review paper on measuring well-being in the era of digital society by Canada. The discussion will focus on statistical measurement issues for the digital economy, the collaborative economy and the digital transformation, and the related new data sources with the aim to identify ways forward for better measuring digitalization.

## **4. New Conference of European Statisticians guidelines and recommendations**

The Conference is invited to endorse eight documents (listed below). The first seven documents have been sent for electronic consultation to all countries participating in the work of CES and to the international organizations involved in the work in a related area. The last document presents a new version of the Generic Statistical Information Model (GSIM) that has been extensively consulted with the experts in statistical offices.

For the guidelines/recommendations where the feedback from electronic consultation demonstrates a consensus, the Conference will be invited to endorse them. In a case where consensus cannot be found, the Conference will be informed about the next steps to improve the document.

Documents on the following topics are submitted to CES for endorsement:

- (a) Exchange and sharing of economic data;
- (b) Climate change-related statistics and indicators;
- (c) Disaggregated poverty measurement;
- (d) Intra-household decision-making;
- (e) Communicating gender statistics;
- (f) Longitudinal data on migration;
- (g) Population and housing censuses beyond 2020;
- (h) Generic Statistical Information Model (GSIM).

## **5. Programme of work of the Statistics subprogramme of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe**

The Conference will be invited to approve the report on the implementation of the UNECE Statistical Programme in 2019 (ECE/CES/2020/14 and addenda), including the reports of the CES Bureau meetings and reports of expert meetings.

The Conference will be invited to adopt the official planning documents of the Statistics subprogramme prepared in the context of the United Nations Secretariat's planning and reporting process: the UNECE Statistical Programme for 2020 (ECE/CES/2020/15), the Programme of Work of the UNECE Statistics subprogramme for 2021 (ECE/CES/2020/16), including publications programme and the list of meetings planned for 2021 (ECE/CES/2020/16/Add.1). The programme of work will continue to reflect the annual format presented in 2020 in line with General Assembly resolutions 72/266 and 74/251.

### **Joint session with United Nations-Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM): Europe**

Referring to the decision of the 2018 CES plenary session (ECE/CES/95, para 43), the Conference will hold a common session of CES and UN-GGIM: Europe on 23 June 2020. The UN-GGIM: Europe plenary session will take place back to back with the Conference on 22 June 2020.

The agenda items 6 and 7 below will be held in a joint session with UN-GGIM: Europe.

## **6. New roles for national statistical agencies and geospatial agencies in emerging national data ecosystems**

The discussion will be organised by Denmark and Canada, the Chair of the High-Level Group for the Modernisation of Official Statistics. It will explore the implications of the development of national data ecosystems for national statistical and geospatial agencies. It will consider the perspectives of both communities with a view to identifying areas of common interest, as well as common issues, where the communities can work together more closely in the future.

Discussion will focus on good practices and lessons learned regarding the cooperation between national statistical and geospatial agencies as they modernise their roles in response to the challenges and opportunities offered by emerging national data ecosystems.

## **7. How official statistics can help to deal with the Covid-19 pandemic, including providing data for Sustainable Development Goals**

The current Covid-19 pandemic is a live example of how NSOs can engage to help manage a hazardous event/disaster and assess its impacts. Linking the data to a specific location has a special importance in this respect. The discussion will take into account the *CES Recommendations on measuring hazardous events and disasters* that CES endorsed in 2019. It will focus on the role of NSOs and geospatial agencies in:

- (a) Providing data to help deal with the Covid-19 pandemic: both to governments and health authorities to help manage the pandemic, and to the general public for assessing the situation.
- (b) Providing data to assess the impact of the pandemic, including for the relevant SDG and Sendai framework indicators.<sup>1</sup>

The topic will be discussed from a strategic and managerial perspective, looking at the institutional arrangements and preparedness of NSOs to play a role in helping to manage a hazardous event or disaster. It will base on case studies that the CES Task Force on measuring hazardous events and disasters is collecting as input for developing the implementation guidelines of the CES Recommendations, and a set of core statistics and an ‘emergency data kit’ to be available in case of emergency situations.

### **Joint informal session with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Committee for Statistics and Statistical Policy: Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on official statistics**

## **8. Data stewardship – National Statistical Offices in the changing world**

This session will be organized by UNECE. The Conference will discuss data stewardship at the national level and the role NSOs can play in this context.

Several countries have seized the opportunity to step up the role of NSOs in cross-government data strategies to better deal with the Covid-19 pandemic. In addition to data, several NSOs are providing other support, such as advice to other agencies on dealing with data, tools for mobility analysis and contact tracing, etc. NSO expertise in data collection, management, ensuring international comparability, protecting privacy, or using big data and new tools are valuable assets that can help society to better cope with the pandemic. At the same time, a rapid response may increase expectations for NSOs to continue releasing data earlier and more frequently also post Covid-19.

The discussion will build on the paper by an informal task team consisting of Albania, Canada, Estonia (lead), Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland and the UNECE Secretariat that was prepared as a follow-up to the CES 2019 seminar on ‘Emerging role of national statistical offices as offices for statistics and data’. The Covid-19 pandemic puts the role of NSOs into a new context, allows to test the proposed approach and to identify some good practices and lessons learned.

## **9. Business continuity of official statistics**

This session will be organized by OECD. The Covid-19 crisis has made a significant impact on the compilation and dissemination of official statistics: lockdowns in many countries and teleworking have affected the ways surveys and censuses are carried out; related quality

---

<sup>1</sup> There are two directly relevant SDG indicators: ‘Number of deaths, missing persons and directly affected persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population’ (used to measure three targets: 1.5, 11.5 and 13.1), and ‘Direct economic loss attributed to disasters in relation to global gross domestic product (GDP)’ (for targets 1.5, 11.5, 13.1), and several additional indicators in the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction.

issues need to be addressed; methodological and conceptual questions have arisen, etc. At the same time, there is huge user demand for early estimates to enable assessment of the economic and social impact of the crisis. In trying to deal with these issues, many national experts have voiced the need to exchange practices and experiences at the international level.

The session will be organised as a panel discussion with a view to drawing the main lessons from the current crisis in terms of business continuity. For instance, what are the most innovative practices that have emerged to cope with non-available source data? How can resilience be built into operations of statistical agencies to be prepared for future crises? Which work practices that were adopted under pressure during the crisis are likely to stay? The session will be supported by an issues paper that will also draw on information gathered through digital workspaces and other initiatives (in particular the OECD-hosted digital workspace: <https://community.oecd.org/community/official-stats-workspace-covid19/overview> and the UNSD website: <https://covid-19-response.unstatshub.org>).

## 10. Closing of the meeting

A draft report of the CES plenary session, including the main decisions, will be prepared after the meeting and will be sent to all participants for adoption by a 'silent procedure'. The finalized 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 ([http://www.unece.org/statistics/meetings-and-events.html#/\) before the plenary session.](http://www.unece.org/statistics/meetings-and-events.html#/)

<i>Date</i>	<i>Item/Programme</i>
<b>Monday, 22 June</b>	
12:00-12:10	1
12:10-13:40	2
13:40-14:10	3
14:10-14:25	4
14:25-14:30	5
<b>Tuesday, 23 June</b>	
12:00-14:00	6
14:00-14:30	7
<b>Wednesday, 24 June</b>	
12:00-13:15	8
13:30-15:00	9