



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

ECE/CES/55
12 April 1999

ORIGINAL: ENGLISH

~~STATISTICAL COMMISSION and ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE~~

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Forty-seventh plenary session
(Neuchatel, 14-16 June 1999)

Annotated provisional agenda of the 1999 plenary session

The plenary session will start at 2:30 p.m. on Monday, 14 June. **Delegates are asked to note that Wednesday 16 June will be a full day and will not finish before 5:15.** It will be held in the Cantonal Parliament House in Neuchatel Chateau, Switzerland. Delegates should arrive at the Parliament House between 1:30 and 2:00 p.m. on Monday in order to allow time for registration. More general information is given in document CES/1999/INF.1.

Documents for the meeting may be downloaded from the Web site that has been specially prepared for this meeting:
<http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/1999.06.ces.htm>

Introduction

1. The Conference's attention is drawn to agenda items 3 and 8 which are the key items on the agenda of this year's plenary session:

- !** **Item 3 - Integrated presentation and coordination of international statistical work in the ECE region:** In order to have a more focused discussion under this item and still allow time for the Conference to review other parts of the work programme, this year the Bureau proposes to divide the time allocation for this agenda into four roughly equal parts.

Three of those parts are for the three programme elements that the Bureau has selected for having an in-depth review. They are health statistics and indicators (P.E. 4.6), labour statistics (P.E. 4.10) and the hidden economy (part of P.E. 3.1). They are to be discussed on the basis of papers that are being contributed by Statistics Canada, the ILO Bureau of Statistics and ISTAT (CES/1999/11-13). The fourth segment has been reserved for the Conference to review planned future work of the international organizations in the remaining 40 or so programme elements in the Conference's work programme. Bureau members have been designated to briefly introduce these elements in groups under each of the six programme activity areas in the Integrated Presentation and to identify strategic issues in each of the six areas. More information is given in the notes below.

! **Item 8 - "Performance indicators for statistical offices"** is the topic for substantive discussion at this year's plenary session. Tim Holt of the United Kingdom's Office for National Statistics has organized the preparations for this session and he will chair the session. This session will be in the form of a seminar, and it will last about a day but has a tight timetable and will finish at 4:30 on Wednesday. More information is given in the notes below.

2. The Conference is expected to complete most of its work by 4:45 on Wednesday, 16 June. The final 30 minutes of the plenary session will be devoted to the adoption of the report of the 1999 plenary session. The session is expected to finish its business by 5:15 p.m. on Wednesday.

3. The documents intended for discussion are listed in the agenda shown in the table on page 3. Annex I lists additional background documents that have been produced as part of the documentation of the plenary session. These background documents are not intended to be discussed at the plenary session, unless members of the Conference wish to do in discussion under item 3 of the agenda. All the documents for the meeting will be distributed for the meeting in the usual way, but they will also be available on the ECE World Wide Web page in English, French and Russian as they become available. The address is as follows:

<http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/1999.06.ces.htm>

4. It should also be noted that the term of office of the current Bureau of the Conference will expire at the close of this year's plenary session. Therefore, the Conference will have to elect a new Bureau during the plenary session. Additional information is given in the notes below.

Provisional agenda and timetable suggested by the Bureau

Time	Item	Topic	Document
Monday, 14 June (2:30 - 5:30)			
2:30-2:45	1	OPENING ADDRESSES and ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA	ECE/CES/55
2:45-2:50	9	INTRODUCTION TO THE BUREAU ELECTIONS	CES/1999/6
2:50-3:00	2	MEETINGS OF THE PARENT BODIES OF THE CES ! The May 1999 session of the Economic Commission for Europe ! The March 1999 session of the UN Statistical Commission	--- CES/1999/7 CES/1999/8
3:00	3	INTEGRATED PRESENTATION OF INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL WORK IN THE ECE REGION ! Chairman's introductory comments ! Health statistics (P.E. 4.6) Coffee/tea break ! Labour statistics(P.E. 4.10)	CES/1999/10 and Adda. 1-7 --- CES/1999/11 --- CES/1999/12
3:00-3:05			
3:05-4:05			
4:05-4:30			
4:30-5:30			
Tuesday, 15 June (9:30-12:30 and 2:30-5:30)			
9:30-10:30 10:30-10:55 10:55-12:30 12:30-2:30	3 cont.	! The hidden economy (part of P.E. 1.3) Coffee/tea break ! The remaining 40 or so programme elements Lunch	CES/1999/13 CES/1999/10 and Adda 1-7
2:30-2:40	4	JOINT INTERNATIONAL DATA COLLECTION	CES/1999/19
2:40-2:55	5	ASSISTANCE TO COUNTRIES IN TRANSITION	CES/1999/25
2:55-3:10	6	INVOLVEMENT OF NSIs IN ANALYSIS AND FORECASTING	CES/1999/9
3:10-3:25 3:25-3:50	7	RELATIONS BETWEEN OFFICIAL STATISTICIANS, ACADEMIC STATISTICIANS AND NGOs Coffee/tea break	CES/1999/26
3:50 3:50-4:00 4:00-5:30	8	PERFORMANCE INDICATORS FOR STATISTICAL OFFICES ! Introduction ! Theme 1	--- --- CES/1999/14-15
Wednesday, 16 June (9:30 - 12:30 and 2:30 - 5:15)			
9:30-10:00 10-12:30 2:30-3:45 3:45-4:10 4:10-4:30	8 cont.	! Theme 1 (continued) ! Theme 2 (and coffee/tea break) ! Theme 3 Coffee/tea break ! General discussion	CES/1999/14-15 CES/1999/16-17 CES/1999/18
4:30-4:45	9	ELECTION OF BUREAU (continued)	CES/1999/6
4:45-5:15	10	ADOPTION OF THE REPORT	Draft report

Explanatory notes to the agenda

Item 1: Adoption of the agenda, and consideration of the procedures to be followed at the plenary session

The Bureau of the Conference proposed this provisional agenda at its February 1999 meeting. It is presented in more detail in this document for the approval of the Conference. To help ensure that the plenary session is as short and effective as possible, the procedures which the Conference approved at its 1994 session for improving the efficiency of the CES plenary sessions and applied at all subsequent sessions (**CES/821**) will be applied again during the 1998 session.

Item 2: Implications of meetings of the Conference's parent bodies

a) The May 1999 session of the Economic Commission for Europe

Information on the discussions held at the May 1999 session of the Economic Commission for Europe and on resolutions and decisions taken at it which have a bearing on the work of the Conference will be presented in **CES/1999/7**.

b) The March 1999 meeting of the UN Statistical Commission

Information on the conclusions reached and the decisions taken at the March 1999 meeting of the UN Statistical Commission that may have a bearing on the work of the Conference and on international statistical work affecting ECE, EU and OECD countries will be presented in **CES/1999/8**.

Item 3: Integrated presentation and coordination of international statistical work affecting ECE, EU and OECD countries

Please refer to the references to item 3 in the introduction to this document.

The coordination of international statistical work affecting ECE, EU and OECD countries and the taking of decisions on the Conference's own work programme are two of the most important functions that the Conference is expected to perform at each plenary session. These responsibilities will be carried out under this agenda item. Therefore, **under this item the Conference is expected to take decisions on its own work programme and that of the ECE's Population Activities Unit, and, when considered appropriate, to offer guidance and advice to other international and supranational organizations and to other ECE Principal Subsidiary Bodies on planned activities in their work programmes that relate to ECE, Eurostat and OECD countries.**

Discussion is expected to focus primarily on the material presented in documents CES/1997/10 and its addenda. However, if need be, the various

background documents listed in the Annex of the provisional agenda are also available for reference.

The complete integrated presentation is too large and too wide-ranging to produce in a single document. It is therefore presented in several addenda (**CES/1999/10 and addenda 1-6**, corresponding to each of the six programme activities covering more than 40 programme elements in the Conference's work programme). Each of these documents contains brief descriptions of the conclusions reached by the Bureau in its review of the work that was carried out in the Conference's work programme since the 1998 plenary session and in its review of work planned to be carried out in the next two years. The Bureau's proposals for decisions by the Conference are included in each of these documents project by project.

Document CES/1999/10 also contains an annex in which information is given on the resources which are expected to be available in the ECE during the period from July 1999 to June 2001 for servicing the Conference's work programme.

Document **CES/1999/10/Add.7** is also an important document. It contains up-to-date information on the outcome of work conducted in projects in the Conference's work programme during the March-June 1999 period.

Item 4: Collection of data jointly by ECE, Eurostat, OECD and others

At its 1997 plenary session the Conference asked the ECE secretariat, Eurostat, the OECD and other international organizations to prepare updated annual reports on joint data collections that are sent (or planned to be sent) to ECE and OECD countries. The report for this year's plenary session will be issued as **CES/1999/19**.

Item 5: Operational activities and technical assistance to Countries in Transition

The 1999 session of the Economic Commission for Europe takes place from 4-6 May. At that session the Commission is expected to request each Principal Subsidiary Body to look at operational activities and technical assistance for countries in transition in their fields of competence and mandate, and to provide its views on the directions they should take. In order to assist the Conference to do this, the secretariat will present a short note summarizing the work that the ECE Statistical Division plans to do in the next two years i) in its UNDP- and UNFPA extra-budgetary projects and ii) by its Regional Adviser in Statistics (**CES/1999/25**).

Item 6: Involvement of NSIs in analysis and forecasting

The Bureau concluded that it would be useful for the Conference to have a short discussion at the plenary session on this subject. Statistics Canada has agreed to contribute a paper on the subject (**CES/1999/9**).

Item 7: Relations between official statisticians, academic statisticians and NGOs

The Bureau concluded that it would be useful for the Conference to have a short discussion at the plenary session on this subject. The Chairman of the Conference will contribute a paper to serve as the basis of this discussion (CES/1999/26).

Item 8: Performance indicators for statistical offices

Please refer to the references to item 8 in the introduction to this document.

Each year the plenary session has the opportunity to discuss, in the form of a seminar, a topic of particular interest to heads of national statistical offices. On this occasion the members of the Conference are invited to comment in substantive discussion on the topic "Performance indicators for statistical offices". The Bureau asked Tim Holt, Director of the UK Office for National Statistics, to organize and chair the seminar session.

The purpose of the discussion is to consider the potential for using performance indicators, the extent to which they are currently being used to measure the performance of statistical services, and to share best practice in this area. There will be **three main themes**:

- 1. Performance indicators for official statistics: an overview:** This theme will provide an opportunity to discuss in a wider context the potential for introducing performance indicators for official statistics and how NSIs have been and might be compared. There will be two invited papers. One of them will give an outside user's perspective of NSIs concentrating on how the user evaluates the quality and usefulness of NSI output. The second one will consider how countries measure up to good practice and against the Fundamental Principles and what this can tell us about their performance as NSIs.
- 2. How do we measure the performance of an NSI? - an NSI perspective:** This theme will provide an opportunity to discuss how NSIs currently measure their own performance, how successful they are at doing this and what might be seen as good practice. And to what extent do individual NSIs seek to compare their own performance with other organisations in their own countries or with statistical offices elsewhere? There will be two invited papers on this theme.
- 3. Performance indicators for supra-national and international organisations:** The need for effective performance indicators is just as important for statistics departments of supra-national and international organisations as it is for NSIs. This theme provides an opportunity for considering the issue of measuring the performance of these departments. Eurostat will be providing an Invited Paper on this theme and OECD will be acting as an extended discussant.

At the end of the seminar session there will be an opportunity for general discussion which will give delegates an opportunity to draw together the messages from all three themes.

There are two main categories of papers, **invited papers**, and **supporting papers**. There will be five **invited papers (CES/1999/15-19)**, and they will serve as the main basis of discussion. They will be prepared by the following persons/offices:

Theme 1: Robert Chote, Economic Editor of the Financial Times (CES/1999/15) and Statistics Netherlands (CES/1999/16);

Theme 2: Statistics Canada (CES/1999/16) and the Statistical Office of Estonia (CES/1999/17); and

Theme 3: Eurostat (CES/1999/18).

The invited papers will be translated into all three ECE working languages and introduced by their authors. Other countries will also contribute **supporting papers** dealing with these themes. The supporting papers will be issued as addenda to the invited papers, and they will provide a supplementary basis for discussion. The supporting papers will be reproduced only in the languages in which they are received, and they will be introduced by Tim Holt.

A report of the discussion will not be adopted at the end of the session (see agenda item 10) but a summary will be distributed to participants within about two weeks.

Item 9: Election of a new Bureau for 1999/2000 and 2000/2001

The term of office of the current Bureau of the Conference expires at the closing of the 1999 plenary session. The following persons are currently the elected Chair and Vice-Chairs of the Conference: Paolo Garonna of Italy (Chair), Adrian Abrahamse (Netherlands), Svein Longva (Norway), Donal Murphy (Ireland), Edvard Outrata (Czech Republic), and Rein Veetousme (Estonia). A new Bureau will be elected for the 1999/2000 and 2000/2001 two year period. The procedures to be followed in electing the new Bureau were approved by the Conference at its 1991 plenary session (see **CES/1999/6**). The election is open to all delegates who are heads of national statistical offices, including previous Chairs and Vice-Chairs. All six elected members of the current Bureau are also eligible to be re-elected to the Bureau.

In accordance with the procedures agreed by the Conference at the 1991 plenary session, the process of electing the new Bureau will be carried out by Carlo Malaguerra, President of the Federal Statistical Office of Switzerland, who is the most senior former Chairman of the Conference. After discussions with delegates, he will make proposals for the Conference's approval.

Item 10: Adoption of the report, and closing of the plenary session

The Conference is expected to adopt the report of the present plenary session before it adjourns. To enable this to be accomplished as quickly as possible and during the limited time available, the Bureau has asked the secretariat to follow the same procedure that was used at recent plenary

sessions. The report will therefore be short and will be limited as far as possible to decisions taken by the Conference during the course of the plenary session. Since the seminar discussion that takes place on the topic for substantive discussion (agenda item 8) is not expected to lead to decisions, the draft report will not include a record of that discussion. However, as noted above, a summary of it will be prepared after the plenary session and mailed to all members of the Conference within about two weeks. That summary will also be incorporated in the final report of the plenary session that will be produced a month or so after the plenary session. The final report of the plenary session will also be made available on the ECE's Web site for the plenary session.

Delegates are asked to confine their suggestions for amendments to the report to those of a substantive nature (i.e. to correcting important errors or omissions). They are also asked to hand in any proposed new text in writing and if possible in English before the discussion of the adoption of the report.

The secretariat will distribute each part of the draft report as soon as it becomes available during the meeting, in each of ECE's three official working languages.

- - - - -

Annex I: List of background documents for the 1999 plenary session

The following supplementary documents contain **background information** for several items of the provisional agenda. They are listed below by agenda item number. The Bureau considers that none of the documents listed below need be discussed at the plenary session. The documents intended for **discussion** at the plenary session are listed in the table on page three of this document.

Agenda item 1

	<u>Document</u>
Procedures to be followed for ensuring efficient plenary sessions	CES/821

Agenda item 3

Programme activity 1: Organization and operation of statistical services

PE 1.2: Report of the November 1998 meeting of the CES Bureau	CES/BUR.99/14
PE 1.2: Report of the February 1999 meeting of the CES Bureau	CES/BUR.99/26
PE 1.2: Report of the UNSD's Singapore meeting on best practices with respect to the Fundamental Principles	CES/1999/20

Programme activity 2: Technical infrastructure and other cross-cutting issues

PE 2.1: Report of the May 1998 ISIS meeting	CES/SEM.38/2 &Add.1
PE 2.1: Report of the February 1999 meeting on the management of statistical information technology	CES/AC.71/1999/31
PE 2.1: Report of the March 1999 work session on statistical confidentiality	CES/1999/22
PE 2.2: Report of the June 1999 work session on statistical data editing	CES/1999/29
PE 2.3: Report of the June 1998 work session on statistical output for dissemination to the information media	CES/1999/2
PE 2.3: Report of the May 1999 work session on statistical output for dissemination to the information media	CES/1999/24
PE 2.6: Report of the October 1998 work session on geographic information systems	CES/1999/5

Programme activity 3: Economic statistics

PE 3.1: Report of the ECE's special session for transition countries at the OECD's September 1998 meeting on national accounts	CES/1999/4
PE 3.9: Report of the June 1998 ECP consultation	CES/1999/1
PE 3.9: Report of the February 1999 work session on consumer price statistics	CES/1999/27
PE 3.10: Report of the June 1998 seminar on agricultural statistics	CES/SEM.39.41
PE 3.14: Report of the June 1999 work session on business registers	CES/1999/28

Programme activity 4: Social and demographic statistics

PE 4.4: Report of the March 1999 work session on registers and administrative records in social and demographic statistics	CES/1999/21
PE 4.5: Report of the November 1998 meeting on population and housing censuses	CES/SEM.40/29
PE 4.6: Report of the October 1998 meeting on health statistics	CES/AC.36/1998/3

PE 4.11: Report of the December 1998 regional population meeting	CES/PAU/1998/30
PE 4.11: Report of the May 1999 work session on projections <u>Programme activity 5: Environment statistics</u>	CES/1999/23
PE 5.1: Report of the September 1998 work session on methodological issues of environment statistics	CES/1999/3

- - - - -