

**CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS**

For decision

Second Meeting of the 2005/2006 Bureau  
Washington, D.C. (United States), 24-25 October 2005

Item 8c of the Provisional Agenda

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE TASK FORCE ON MEASURING EMIGRATION  
USING DATA COLLECTED BY THE RECEIVING COUNTRY**

**Note prepared by the UNECE secretariat**

**BACKGROUND**

1. The creation of a Task Force on measuring emigration using data collected by the receiving country (hereafter called “Task Force”) was proposed at the Joint ECE-Eurostat Seminar on International Migration (21-23 March 2005) to conduct the work agreed upon at the above meeting and to organise the next ECE-Eurostat meeting on International Migration, to be held in 2006.
2. Despite the increased attention given to migration movements and migrant stocks in national and international agendas, the quality of migration statistics and its comparability at regional and international levels is still an issue. Major challenges are related to:
  - the use of different definitions on stocks of international migrants (the majority of countries in the UNECE region collect information on stock of international migrants through the two topics of place of birth and citizenship; however, not all countries use the same criteria to define migration stocks);
  - the lack of data on out-flows (emigrants);
  - the lack of data on in-flows (particularly illegal immigrants);
  - the lack of consistency of data on flows and stock of migrants;
  - the lack of data on short-term migrants.
3. The following proposal aims at addressing the first two issues listed above, with a particular focus on the measurement of emigration. People who move outside their country are difficult to count in their country of origin because of their absence, while they should be more easily counted in the receiving (host) country. However, issues relating to different definitions and data availability have to be carefully examined. The understanding of approaches in defining migrant stocks and flows would improve a coordinated exchange of data between host countries and countries of origin. This would allow a better estimation of stock and flows of emigrants and their characteristics and, at the same time, it would improve the harmonization of approaches to identify stock and flows of immigrants in host countries.
4. Following the suggestion by the Bureau to establish “a single clearing-house that would provide a list of international agencies, NSOs and projects that address the improvement of data quality in migration statistics”, it was initially planned that the Task Force will also develop a process to collect information on projects to improve availability and quality of data on migration. The clearing-house should not oversee projects but would simply serve as a single location from which progress towards improved data availability could be assessed. It should house information on the key organizations, contact persons, projects, project progress reports and any relevant legislative actions that impact on the progress made towards improved and consistent migration data. Taking into account that this activity was not included in the ‘Workplan to improve International Migration Statistics’ (see document ECE/CES/BUR/2005/13), the Bureau may reconsider the need that the Task Force carries out this task.

## **ACTIVITIES OF THE TASK-FORCE**

5. The Task Force relates to the output #4b from the Work Plan to Improve International Migration Statistics (ECE/CES/BUR/2005/13). The Task Force will carry out the following activities:

- i) prepare a work plan for delivering the outputs outlined above;
- ii) design a set of tables to carry out pilot projects to exchange data and methodological information among countries on the stock and flows of migrants by country of origin in host countries, with a view to providing relevant data from the perspective of countries of origin;
- iii) coordinate the work of the countries for the pilot projects, assure the smooth exchange of data and metadata and finalize a paper to be submitted at the next UNECE/Eurostat meeting on the feasibility of estimating relevant stock and flows of emigrants based on available data on immigrants in host countries;
- iv) coordinate the inputs of its members and other experts in the production of an agreed framework for estimating emigrants and prepare a draft to be presented at the next UNECE/Eurostat meeting on migration statistics. The draft document should illustrate the different characteristics used in countries to collect information on immigrants that could be useful to estimate emigrants from other countries. The document will also define a list of priority characteristics that countries could collect and tabulate in order to facilitate the exchange of data on stock of migrants by country of origin in the region;

## **COUNTRIES THAT PROPOSED TO PARTICIPATE IN THE DATA EXCHANGE EXERCISE**

6. The following three groups of countries proposed to participate in the exchange of data: The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia-Switzerland-Italy-Albania; Estonia-Finland-Russian Federation; USA-Canada-UK-Poland-The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia-Italy-Australia. Georgia and Kazakhstan also expressed their availability to participate in the project and Australia and France indicated their availability to provide data as needed.

## **EXPECTED OUTPUT**

7. Within the overall objective of improving the use of harmonized concepts and definition of stock of migrants and within the framework of the UN Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration, the task force shall develop guidelines on how to measure emigrants through data on stocks and flows in host countries. The guidelines will be based on pilot projects carried out by groups of 3-4 countries that will exchange data, taking into account issues of data suitability, timeliness and availability.

## **TIME-TABLE FOR ACTIVITIES AND INTERMEDIATE OUTPUTS**

October 2005:	templates for data exchange are finalized and sent out to participating countries
December 2005:	data are collected and analysis is started by pilots' leaders
March 2006:	analysis report by each group

July 2006: draft guidelines on measurement of emigration through immigration data are produced

October 2006 results are presented to the UNECE/Eurostat Work Session on Migration Statistics

**MEMBERSHIP OF THE TASK FORCE**

Canada, Georgia, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Portugal, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, United Kingdom, United States, Eurostat, UNECE.

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