

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

For information

Second Meeting of the 2007/2008 Bureau
Helsinki (Finland), 18-19 October 2007

Item 3c of the Provisional
Agenda

**PROGRESS REPORT ON THE WORK OF THE
UNECE-UNODC TASK FORCE ON VICTIM SURVEYS**

Note prepared by the ECE secretariat

BACKGROUND

1. The creation of the joint UNECE-UNODC Task Force on Victim Surveys was proposed at the first joint UNECE-UNODC Meeting on Crime Statistics, held in Geneva in November 2004. The Bureau of the CES approved the terms of reference for the group in February 2005.
2. The main objectives of the Task Force are:
 - to survey the countries that have undertaken or plan to undertake victimization surveys;
 - to analyse the communalities and differences of methods used;
 - to identify areas where it would be useful to recommend standards and common definitions; and
 - to develop methodological guidelines.
3. The ultimate outcome of the work of the Task Force is to provide countries with basic information for developing national victimization surveys, and to improve comparability of results of victim surveys.
4. Membership of the UNECE-UNODC Task Force includes country representatives from Australia (Chair), Canada, Italy, Netherlands, Poland, UK, USA. Eurostat and HEUNI (the European Institute for Crime Prevention and Control, affiliated with the UN) also participate regularly in the work of the Task Force.

PROGRESS ACHIEVED TO DATE

5. In the course of 2005, the Task Force collected detailed information from CES countries on victim surveys conducted in the past or planned in the near future. The information collected was processed and used to create an inventory of victim surveys. Using this inventory, the Task Force prepared a number of technical reports analyzing communalities and differences of the practices adopted by countries with regard to content and methodological aspects of victim surveys.
6. The reports were discussed at the second joint UNECE-UNODC Meeting on Crime Statistics, held in Vienna in January 2006. At that meeting, it was agreed to start the work on the preparation of a UNECE-UNODC Manual on Victimization Surveys with the objectives of:

- (a) helping countries to design their own national victimization surveys considering the accumulated experience in the implementation of victimization surveys in the region;
- (b) providing a short-core module that could be included in national surveys to assure international comparability for a limited set of victimization experiences.

7. The Manual will cover all the key aspects in the implementation of victimization surveys, presenting different possible approaches to address the different needs of the countries. Taking stock of the information collected on national surveys and the experience accumulated by countries, the Manual will describe the advantages and disadvantages of different methodologies so that countries can be guided in selecting the best methodology for their own national circumstances. The Manual will focus on the implementation of victimization surveys with some reference to modules included in ongoing surveys, and focus on the dissemination of survey results.

8. In the first half of 2006, the Task Force started to work on the Manual. It prepared a draft detailed outline, which was submitted to countries for comments and contributions. Between the end of 2006 and Spring 2007, the Task Force prepared a first draft of the Manual. This first draft was discussed at a meeting in Luxembourg on 26-27 June 2007, organised back-to-back to the first meeting of the Eurostat Task Force on Victimization surveys. The Task Force is currently preparing a second draft of the Manual.

9. The Task Force works in close collaboration with the Eurostat Task Force on Victimization Surveys whose objectives include the development of a European survey module on victimization. Eurostat, UNECE and UNODC follow regularly the work of both Task Forces. For example, the Eurostat Task Force benefited from the information collected by the UNECE-UNODC Task Force in the inventory of victimization surveys, and shared with the UNECE-UNODC Task Force the new information collected from EU countries.

PLANNED ACTIVITIES AND EXPECTED OUTPUTS

10. The second draft of the UNECE-UNODC Manual on Victimisation Surveys will be reviewed by the Task Force on 29 September 2007 in Bologna, where a meeting will be organised in connection with the Annual Conference of the European Society of Criminology. At that meeting, the Task Force will prepare a work plan for the finalization of the Manual and will propose the dates for a new joint UNECE-UNODC Meeting on Crime Statistics (presumably in mid-2008) where the final draft of the Manual will be reviewed and discussed with national experts. It is expected that the Manual will be finalised between the end of 2008 and early 2009.

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