

Third Meeting of the 2012/2013 Bureau
Luxembourg, 5-6 February 2013

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INTRODUCTION

1. The third meeting of the 2012/2013 Bureau was held in Luxembourg on 5-6 February 2013. The following members of the Bureau attended: Mr. E. Giovannini (Chairman), Mr. W. Smith, Ms. M. Bruun, Ms. I. Krizman, Mr. O. Osaulenko, and Ms. J. Matheson. The following permanent observers also attended: Mr. P. Schreyer (representing Ms. M. Durand, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)), Mr. P. Everaers (representing Mr. W. Radermacher, Eurostat), Mr. A. Kosarev (representing Mr. Sokolin, Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT)) and Ms. L. Bratanova (United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE)). Mr. G. Van der Veen (the Netherlands) attended at the invitation of the Chair of the Bureau. Mr. E. Ordaz Lopez and Ms. A. L. Pineda Manriquez (Mexico) for agenda item 2a, and Mr. Rob Smith (Canada) for item 4b attended via teleconference.
2. The following persons assisted the members of the Bureau: Ms. M. Gandolfo (ISTAT, Italy), Ms. A. Hocevar (Statistical Office of the Republic of Slovenia), Ms. I. Muzychenko (State Statistics Committee of Ukraine) and Ms. M. J. Santos, Ms. A. Nilsson and Ms. C. Sa (Eurostat). Ms. T. Luige of UNECE served as Secretary of the meeting.
3. The following staff of the UNECE Statistical Division also attended: Mr. A. Vikat, Mr. S. Vale and Ms. A. Peltola. Ms. T. Dimova attended item 4h via teleconference.

I. JOINT SESSION WITH THE HIGH-LEVEL GROUP ON THE MODERNIZATION OF STATISTICAL PRODUCTION AND SERVICES (HLG)

A. Outcome of HLG meeting and discussion of governance

4. The Chair of the HLG, Gosse van der Veen, summarised the main issues and outcomes of the HLG meeting held on 5 February morning.
5. The scheme of the new governance structure of the groups working under the HLG was presented to the Bureau. The following points were made in the discussion:
 - (a) Transforming the present groups into the new governance structure will require a transition period.
 - (b) There is a need for a communication strategy to promote the new governance structure among different audiences, such as the members of the current working groups, management of statistical offices, etc. Gaining the support of Chief Statisticians to the new structure at the CES plenary session in June 2013 will be important.

Conclusion:

6. The Bureau agreed in principle with the proposed governance structure for activities overseen by the HLG. The paper on governance will be updated, consulted with the Bureau and submitted to the CES 2013 plenary session. The HLG and the secretariat will prepare terms of reference for the new groups for the October 2013 Bureau meeting.
7. The paper on “big data” will be updated to take into account the outcome of the seminar on this topic on 22 February 2013 in New York. The paper will be submitted to the CES 2013 plenary session for information.

B. Outcome of the HLG seminar on 7-8 November 2012

8. The Bureau was informed about the outcome of the HLG seminar on 7-8 November 2012. The Bureau considered it useful to organise annual workshops following the same format involving representatives of the groups linked with the HLG.

C. Trust fund to support modernisation of statistical production and services

(ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/24)

9. The Bureau discussed the draft terms of reference for a trust fund to support the HLG modernisation activities. The terms of reference had been submitted to the UNECE Executive Committee (EXCOM) for approval. The EXCOM considered the work on modernisation of statistical production and services important, and in principle supported setting up the trust fund. However, the approval of the terms of reference was deferred to gather sufficient expressions of intent to contribute to the trust fund.

10. The following points were made in the discussion:

(a) More information is needed on how decisions on the use of funds will be taken. Outputs prepared under the HLG can be used as an example of products that could be developed with the help of the trust fund, such as the Generic Statistical Information Model (GSIM).

(b) It will be useful to provide information on in-kind contributions by countries to complement the information about financial contributions to the trust fund.

Conclusion:

11. The HLG and Bureau agreed in principle with setting up a trust fund to support the modernisation activities under the HLG. The HLG and the secretariat will update the terms of reference to include a clear explanation about how the money from the trust fund will be used. The HLG will prepare a message to countries asking them to provide a non-binding statement of intent to contribute to the trust fund.

II. IN-DEPTH REVIEW OF SELECTED STATISTICAL AREAS

A. Political and other community activities, including volunteering

(ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/2 by Mexico, Add.1 by ILO, Add.2 by Eurostat)

12. The Bureau reviewed in depth political and other community activities, including volunteering, based on a paper by Mexico, and additional notes by ILO and Eurostat. The United States sent comments on the review during the meeting. These could not be incorporated into the discussion but will be forwarded to the authors of the paper and taken into account in the follow-up to the review.

13. The following points were raised in the discussion:

(a) The Bureau welcomed the in-depth review as it brings clarity to the concepts related to political and other community activities. Some of the concepts are new and need more precise definitions, such as active solidarity, active empathy and participatory solidarity. Furthermore, the concept of common good is not applicable to all political activities, as they sometimes serve limited interests.

(b) At times of economic crises, data on volunteerism are extremely important, yet challenging to obtain. The paper should elaborate further on the various statistical measures of volunteering beyond hours worked, on activities outside the SNA production boundary, and on the effects of volunteering. Other possible data sources in addition to the Labour Force Survey (LFS) should be reviewed.

(c) The paper makes a useful link between the framework for volunteer work and the 2008 SNA, time use surveys and other statistical tools. A link should be made also with the recent work on well-being and social capital by OECD, the measurement of relational goods¹ by Italy, and the forthcoming definition of “work” by ILO.

(d) More information is required in order to decide whether there is a need to launch work in this area. The Bureau proposed to organise a CES seminar on political and other community activities and related topics to bring together information about the work in related areas and discuss a possible road map for the way forward.

Conclusion:

14. Mexico will update the paper to take into account the comments received and the Bureau discussion. OECD will send written comments. The paper will be submitted to the CES 2013 plenary session for information.

15. OECD and Mexico, together with the secretariat, will prepare an outline for a possible CES seminar on political and other community activities and related topics. The outline will be first consulted with the Bureau and then sent to all CES members as part of the electronic consultation on the CES 2014 seminar topics.

B. Follow-up to the in-depth review of poverty statistics

Documentation: ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/3 (UNECE)

16. As a follow-up to the in-depth review of poverty statistics carried out in November 2012, the Bureau discussed the organization of a seminar on poverty statistics to be held in 2013, jointly with OECD and CIS-STAT. The discussion was based on a seminar outline prepared by the secretariat.

17. The following points were raised in the discussion:

(a) The seminar outline covers a wide range of topics. Different opinions were expressed on whether to narrow down the focus of the seminar or to maintain a wide coverage. Clarifying the expected outcome of the seminar will help to decide about the focus. Bringing together the different aspects of poverty measurement would help to clarify the priorities and identify areas where more in-depth methodological work on poverty statistics could be undertaken.

(b) The seminar should include topics of interest for all countries of the UNECE region. It should provide a bridge between the methodologies used to measure poverty in the EU and non-EU countries.

¹ Relational goods are goods that cannot be enjoyed alone. Examples would include participation in a choir, sports team, or some group volunteer activity.

(c) The possibility of holding parallel sessions should be investigated. Well-organised sessions in smaller groups allow more discussion on common problems and exchange of experience. The parallel sessions should report back to the plenary session.

(d) Several topics were suggested to be covered in the seminar, such as specific measurement issues, clarification of definitions and methodology, data sources, international comparability, poverty in vulnerable groups, ways to speed up the production of poverty data, communicating poverty measures, and responses to the criticism on the relative poverty measures.

(e) Multidimensional poverty is a “must” topic for the seminar. The recommendations of the OECD Task Force on the Multidimensional Measures of Poverty and Deprivation and the EU Sponsorship Group Task Force on the Household Perspective and Distributional Aspects of Income, Consumption and Wealth should be covered. The seminar could also consider links to the work of the OECD expert group on income measurement.

(f) The World Bank should be involved in the seminar to permit discussion of the different approaches to poverty measurement used by the World Bank and national statistical offices.

(g) The target audience of the seminar should be statisticians and analysts from national statistical offices, ministries and other government agencies that produce or use poverty statistics. Researchers could also be invited. Media representative(s) could be invited to explain how they use poverty data. The discussion should be at a technical/methodological level, not at policy level. It may be helpful to have a final round table with some chief statisticians involved to capture the strategic issues for further work on poverty measurement.

Conclusion:

18. The Bureau supported the organization of a joint UNECE/OECD/CIS-STAT seminar on poverty statistics on 2-4 December 2013. The secretariat will develop a draft programme for the seminar and circulate it to the Bureau for comments. Ukraine offered to contribute to drafting the agenda for the seminar. The draft agenda will be presented to the CES plenary session to obtain input from all CES members.

19. CIS-STAT volunteered to prepare a paper for the seminar on comparability issues in poverty measurement in the region.

C. Selection of topics for in-depth reviews by the Bureau in 2013-14 (ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/4 by UNECE)

20. The Bureau discussed topics to be reviewed in depth in 2013-14 based on a proposal by the secretariat.

Conclusion:

21. The following two topics that were selected in February 2012 are planned to be reviewed at the October 2013 meeting of the Bureau:

- (a) **Entrepreneurship** – paper by Eurostat and OECD with input from a few countries;
- (b) **Open data** – paper by Italy and UNECE with input from Canada, suggested additional contributors: United Kingdom and the World Bank.

22. The following topics were selected to be reviewed in January 2014:

- (a) **Measurement of social protection** – the contributors to be identified;
- (b) **Leading, composite and sentiment indicators and official statistics** – a paper led by Italy.

23. It was pointed out that “indicator sets” is an additional topic that could be reviewed in-depth. This concerns building up indicator sets, negotiating with stakeholders, choosing indicators, communicating the sets by using scoreboards and dashboards, etc. The secretariat together with Eurostat and OECD will prepare a short description for an in-depth review on this topic, and make a proposal to the Bureau for the October 2013 meeting.

24. Furthermore, the Bureau will review the procedure and format for conducting in-depth reviews, and analyse their outcome and impact. The secretariat will prepare a paper for the October 2013 meeting of the Bureau.

III. PREPARATION FOR THE CES 2013 PLENARY SESSION

A. Organization of the CES 2013 seminar “Challenges in implementing the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) and measuring sustainable development in follow-up to Rio+20”

(ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/5 by Seminar Organizers: the Netherlands, Switzerland and Slovenia)

25. The Bureau discussed the organization of the CES 2013 seminar on sustainable development, SEEA and follow-up to Rio+20 based on an outline by the Seminar Organizer, the Netherlands. Slovenia and Switzerland will be the Session Organizers.

26. The Bureau made the following recommendations:

(a) The seminar should make a link between statisticians and the UN process of establishing the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and the Post-2015 Development Agenda. Therefore, the keynote speaker for session 1 should be a person who is involved in the negotiations on SDGs, either from the UN Secretary General’s High-level Panel or from the Open Working Group on SDGs. This would help to pass on the message to the policy makers that the sustainable development goals and targets should be measurable, that statisticians have already worked on this subject and are ready to contribute.

(b) The Report of the Task Force on Measuring Sustainable Development should be an important document providing a basis for the seminar. The summary of feedback from the electronic consultation with CES members on the Report can provide useful input to the seminar, in particular concerning the proposals for future work.

Conclusion:

27. The seminar “Challenges in implementing the SEEA and measuring sustainable development in follow-up to Rio+20” will take place on Monday, 10 June 2013, from 09:50 to 17:30. The seminar organisers will proceed with the preparations, taking into account the recommendations by the Bureau.

B. Organization of the CES 2013 seminar “Challenges in providing access to microdata for research purposes”

(ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/6 by Seminar Organizers: Slovenia, New Zealand and United States)

28. The Bureau discussed the organization of the CES 2013 seminar on access to microdata based on the outline prepared by the Seminar Organiser, Slovenia. New Zealand and United States will be the Session Organizers.

29. The Bureau made the following recommendations:

(a) Instead of a keynote speech, the Seminar and Session Organizers should develop a presentation to provide a framework for the seminar, guide the discussion and drive towards a useful conclusion.

(b) The issue of “big data” will be addressed at the seminar from the viewpoint of the changing environment in which statistical offices operate.

(c) One of the outcomes of the seminar could be launching work to update the *Guidelines and core principles of confidentiality and microdata access* (2007) developed by a Task Force led by Dennis Trewin (Chief Statistician of Australia at the time). It will be interesting to see what has changed in the 5-6 years since the adoption of the Principles.

Conclusion:

30. The seminar will take place on Tuesday, 11 June 2013, from 09:30 to 16:10. The seminar organizers will proceed with the preparations, taking into account the recommendations by the Bureau. The Session Organizers’ summaries will cover the main issues from all papers. The questions by the Session Organizers will aim at stimulating discussion and will not address specific countries or papers.

C. Report on measuring sustainable development planned to be submitted to the CES 2013 plenary session

(ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/7 by UNECE)

31. The discussion was based on a short summary of the outcome of the electronic consultation on the Report on Measuring Sustainable Development with all CES members carried out in December 2012—January 2013. Thirty five replies were received by the time of the Bureau meeting.

32. The Bureau was informed that comments by Australia, which asked for an extension of the deadline, and a few other countries, are still expected.

33. All responding countries and organizations support the Report. Many countries emphasise the importance of the Report for clarifying and harmonising the complex area of measuring sustainable development. Several countries have sent good substantive comments and editorial suggestions that will help to improve the text.

Conclusion:

34. The Bureau expressed its appreciation of the work of the Task Force, its Chair and Editor (the Netherlands) and the secretariat for their efforts towards this important achievement.

35. The secretariat will organise the finalisation of the Report to take into account the comments received from the CES members through the electronic consultation. The secretariat will make a more detailed summary of the responses for the CES 2013 plenary session. Australia has offered to help with a final single-pen editing of the Report. The finalised Report will be submitted to the CES 2013 plenary session for endorsement.

36. CIS-STAT will help to organise the translation of the Report into Russian.

37. The Report and the summary of the comments by the CES members, in particular the proposals for future work, will provide input to the CES 2013 seminar on measuring sustainable development and implementation of SEEA in follow-up to Rio+20.

38. The CES Bureau will discuss possible follow-up work in this area at its October 2013 meeting.

D. Preparation of the formal session, draft agenda and timetable for the 2013 plenary session

(ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/8 by UNECE)

Conclusion:

39. The Bureau approved the draft provisional agenda and tentative timetable for the CES 2013 plenary session (10-12 a.m. June 2013 in Geneva). The timetables for the two seminars will be finalised in consultation with the Seminar Organisers.

40. A short Bureau meeting (15-20 minutes) will take place during 10 June lunchtime to select the topics for the 2014 CES seminars.

IV. WORK OF THE CES TEAMS OF SPECIALISTS

A. Task Force on environmental indicators

(ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/9 and Add.1 by UNECE)

41. The Bureau discussed the Terms of Reference (ToR) for the continuation of work of the Joint UNECE Intersectoral Task Force on environmental indicators. The Task Force is working to improve environmental data collection and reporting in the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) and South-East Europe (SEE). The Task Force is closely cooperating with the European Environment Agency (EEA), Eurostat, United Nations Statistical Division, United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP), and other international organizations involved in environment statistics. The ToR have already been approved by the other governing body of the Task Force, the UNECE Committee on Environmental Policy.

42. The following points were raised in the discussion:

(a) Continuous capacity building is needed in EECCA and SEE countries to improve the collection and production of environmental data. The Task Force is cooperating with the EEA which has a large-scale technical assistance project for EECCA countries under the European Neighbourhood Partnership Instrument to develop a shared environmental information system in the European Neighbourhood region (ENPI-SEIS project).

(b) The work of the Task Force has been practical and useful for the CIS countries. The group is sharing experience and critically reviewing the data produced by the EECCA and SEE countries. The aim is to build up a regular reporting of environmental data in these countries. This point could be better emphasised in the ToR.

(c) The work should be in line with the implementation of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting that will be undertaken in the EECCA and SEE countries in the coming years.

(d) The timeliness of environmental statistics is a problem in all countries. It was suggested to organise a seminar on methods to speed up the production of environmental statistics (including nowcasting).

Conclusion:

43. The Bureau expressed support for the work on environmental indicators and approved the ToR for the Joint UNECE Intersectoral Task Force on environmental indicators (document ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/9/Add.1) asking that the aspects of provision and collection of data be emphasized in it.

B. Task Force on climate change related statistics (progress report)
(ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/10 by the Task Force) **and presentation by the Chair via teleconference**

44. The Bureau discussed the progress of work of the Task Force on climate change related statistics. The following points were made in the discussion:

(a) The Bureau supported the initial recommendations included in the report of the Meeting on Climate Change Related Statistics for Producers and Users, held in November 2012. The Bureau asked the Task Force to establish priorities and identify practical steps that could be implemented in the short term to improve provision of climate change related data in statistical offices.

(b) The Bureau expressed the need to increase awareness in statistical offices for urgent action on climate change related statistics. A brief document providing a summary of the work of the Task Force and its first findings should be prepared. The document should include key directions for future and key policy messages.

(c) It would be useful to identify inter-linkages of the climate change related statistics to other statistical domains and infrastructure issues, such as statistical frameworks, standards and classifications. This will help Chief Statisticians to take into account the requirements of climate change related statistics in other activities undertaken under the CES umbrella.

(d) The Task Force should be clear in its communications that it is dealing with climate change related statistics and not with meteorological data.

(e) The issue of climate change related statistics should be proposed to be included in the agenda of a future United Nations Statistical Commission session.

(f) One practical example that could be followed up from the November meeting concerned the quarterly estimates of greenhouse gas emissions released by Statistics Netherlands. These

estimates are published together with the quarterly GDP 45 days after the end of each quarter. This practice can help to improve timeliness of climate change related statistics and increase policy relevance of these data.

Conclusion:

45. The Bureau expressed strong support for the work of the Task Force. The Bureau supported the main messages coming out of the Meeting of Producers and Users of Climate Change Related Statistics, held on 19-20 November 2012. The Bureau asked the Task Force to develop interim recommendations by June 2013 to inform the CES plenary session. A brief document providing a summary of the first findings of the Task Force and key policy messages should be also prepared. This would allow national statistical offices to launch work on climate change related statistics without further delay.

46. The Bureau agreed that it is necessary to hire an Editor for the Report of the Task Force, and encouraged statistical offices to provide funding for that purpose. The secretariat will send out a letter asking for contributions for hiring the Editor.

C. Gender statistics (progress report and ToR)

(ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/11 by UNECE)

47. The Bureau discussed the progress of work of the Steering Group on gender statistics, the Task Force on indicators of gender equality and the Task Force on gender-based violence. The following points were raised in the discussion:

(a) The work on gender-based violence is a good example of a focused approach where the work on gender statistics deals with a limited number of issues that are not yet well covered.

(b) The European Parliament decided not to carry out a Europe-wide victimization survey. Therefore, the EU countries, candidate countries and acceding countries may not be able to fulfil all the requirements of providing data for the related gender equality indicators.

Conclusion:

48. The Task Force on gender-based violence has completed its work and is therefore closed. The mandate of the Steering Group on gender statistics is extended for two years (until end 2014) and the mandate of the Task Force on indicators of gender equality for one year (until end 2013). The report on indicators of gender equality is planned to be ready in May 2013.

D. Time use surveys (final report)

(ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/12 by the Task Force)

49. The Bureau discussed the draft guidelines prepared by the Task Force on time use surveys. The work was launched as a result of an in-depth review carried out in 2010. The following points were raised in the discussion:

(a) The draft Guidelines are comprehensive, well structured, address the main aspects of time use surveys and fulfil the objectives of the Task Force. They are important for harmonising the content of time use surveys and for collecting the data on activities outside the national accounts economic production boundary.

(b) Time use surveys are costly; therefore, it is particularly welcome that the Guidelines underline the importance and policy relevance of these surveys. In a few cases, the Guidelines should be corrected to note that time-use surveys are not the only source of information but complement the other sources.

(c) People may change their time use at times of crises, therefore a more frequent use of light survey modules should be explored.

(d) The final chapter on issues requiring further work should include references to other work done in related areas.

(e) Time can be used as a possible metric to bring together the different dimensions of well-being. Time use surveys are also a possible data source on issues related to volunteering, social networks and social capital.

Conclusions:

50. The secretariat will send the draft Guidelines for electronic consultation to all CES members with a view to presenting the Guidelines to the CES 2013 plenary session for endorsement. As part of the consultation process, the secretariat will ask for proposals for further work regarding time use and on other data sources for this kind of data.

51. The comments by the Bureau members will be taken into account together with feedback from the electronic consultation. Italy will provide information on work done in related areas to be included in the final chapter of the draft Guidelines. Ukraine will provide some proposals for further work.

52. The Bureau will discuss follow-up work related to time use surveys in October 2013.

E. Task Force on ageing-related statistics (revised ToR)

(ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/13 by UNECE)

53. The Bureau discussed the draft terms of reference for a Task Force on ageing-related statistics, prepared as a follow-up to the in-depth review on ageing-related statistics carried out in November 2012.

Conclusion:

54. The Bureau approved the terms of reference for the Task Force on ageing-related statistics (document ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/13). The Task Force will submit a work plan to the 2013 October Bureau meeting for information.

F. Migration statistics

(a) Task Force on improving migrant data using household survey and other sources (progress report)

(ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/14 by UNECE)

55. The Bureau discussed the progress of work of the Task Force on improving migrant data using household surveys and other sources (also known as the Suitland Working Group). The

work plan comprised seven projects. Two projects have been fully completed and one project partially completed. One project (migration and remittance questionnaire) is ongoing. Three projects were not implemented due to lack of resources or insufficient support from countries.

56. It was noted that there is special interest in the ongoing project to develop a survey module on migration and remittances as part of household surveys. In some countries the volume of remittances is significant and the current measures do not capture it fully. The results, methods and lessons learned from the pilot survey carried out in Armenia should be carefully examined.

Conclusion:

57. The Bureau decided to close the Task Force on improving migrant data using household surveys and other sources (the Suitland Working Group). The Bureau thanked the members of the group for the important results achieved. The secretariat will continue its work on the survey module on migration and remittances.

58. The issue of linking registers and other administrative sources with surveys to provide socio-economic information on migrants should be explored. Italy will prepare a paper on this topic for a future CES Bureau meeting.

(b) Circular migration (ToR)

(ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/15 and Add.1 by UNECE)

59. The Bureau discussed launching work on circular migration based on draft terms of reference and a paper by the secretariat. The following points were raised in the discussion:

(a) The Bureau recognised the difficulties with the concepts of circular migration and short-term migration, and the practical difficulties in compiling data on circular migration.

(b) The Task Force should consider how the data from administrative registers can be used for measuring circular migration.

Conclusion:

60. The Bureau approved the terms of reference for the Task Force on circular migration (document ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/15 Add.1). Eurostat expressed interest in participating in the Task Force.

H. Task Force on global production (progress report)

(ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/17 by UNECE)

61. The Bureau discussed the progress of work of the Task Force on global production. The following points were raised in the discussion:

(a) Due to the complexity of the global production phenomenon, the Task Force should pay particular attention to drafting practical guidelines that will be easy to implement. The Task Force should avoid spending too much time on theoretical issues.

(b) Early consultations with the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts (ISWGNA) and the Advisory Expert Group (AEG) on National Accounts are important regarding

the issues that may require further clarification in the 2008 System of National Accounts (SNA) and the Balance of Payments Manual.

(c) It will be important to avoid delays in the work of the Task Force as the forthcoming guidelines will influence the implementation of the 2008 SNA.

(d) The issue of how to report and measure the output of factoryless production requires careful consideration and should be described with practical examples.

(e) Treatment of intellectual property products is a core issue in various economic statistics. Guidelines in this area will greatly benefit the quality of statistics.

Conclusion:

62. The Bureau supported the work of the Task Force on global production and highlighted its importance in the context of the SNA 2008 implementation. The Bureau expressed concern with a possible delay of the work, while agreeing that the report is scheduled to be ready for consultation before the CES plenary session that will take place in April 2014.

I. Task Force on business registers (progress report)
(ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/18 by UNECE)

63. The Bureau discussed the progress of the work of the Task Force on business registers. The following points were raised in the discussion:

(a) Developing statistical business registers is a fundamental issue for business statistics. Considering the importance of these recommendations, more time may be needed for the drafting of and commenting on the chapters.

(b) Translating the guidelines into other languages, including Russian, is important.

Conclusion:

64. The Bureau expressed support for the work of the Task Force on business registers. The Bureau asked the Task Force to review the work plan to reserve sufficient time for drafting the final report. The Bureau took note of a possible delay with the report.

65. CIS-STAT will consider the possibility of translating the Guidelines into Russian.

J. Human resources management and training (ToR)
(ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/19 and Add.1 by UNECE)

66. The Bureau discussed the ToR for a Steering Group on human resources management and training (HRMT) that were revised to reflect the comments at the November 2012 Bureau meeting and the subsequent electronic consultation. The following points were raised in the discussion:

(a) The meetings on HRMT provide a unique platform for the staff in charge of human resource development in statistical offices to exchange experience and discuss the related issues. The last meeting on HRMT was organised in an innovative way by making use of group work, poster sessions and facilitators. This can serve as a model for other expert meetings.

(b) It is important to ensure close coordination with relevant initiatives of the Modernisation Committee on Framework and Evaluation under the HLG. However, the Steering Group on HRMT needs to consider the broad spectrum of topics related to human resources management and training in statistical offices that goes beyond the modernization issues dealt with by the HLG.

(c) The Steering Group will develop a detailed work plan. The work plan should take into account the need for coordination with the initiatives of the HLG. The Steering Group will follow its own work plan while the HLG will move into its new governance structure. The coordination mechanisms between the two groups will be worked out during a transition period.

Conclusion:

67. The Bureau supported the work on Human Resources Management and Training (HRMT) and approved the Terms of Reference for the Steering Group on HRMT (document ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/19).

V. HEALTH STATISTICS

(ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/20 by UNECE)

68. The Bureau discussed the coordination of initiatives in health and disability statistics based on a note by the secretariat. The World Health Organisation (WHO) and the World Bank are developing a Model Disability Survey without taking into account the results of the work of the Washington Group on Disability Statistics and the Budapest Initiative on the Measurement of Health Status. The WHO does not plan to involve the national statistical offices in the Survey. The following points were raised in the discussion:

(a) There is a lack of coordination between international organizations working on health issues and the international statistical community. Improved coordination would be important to ensure consistency of methodologies and optimize the use of international and national resources.

(b) Several options for improving cooperation with the World Bank and WHO were discussed: a letter by the Chair of the CES, raising the issue at the United Nations Statistical Commission and at the Committee on Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA), and inviting WHO to present its statistical work at the October meeting of the Bureau.

Conclusion:

69. The Chair of the CES will raise the issue at the United Nations Statistical Commission. The secretariat will raise the issue at the CCSA meeting prior to the UNSC session. If necessary, the Bureau will consider the coordination of health and disability statistics at its future meeting.

VI. INITIATIVES RELATED TO FOLLOW-UP TO RIO+20

(a) Oral report by the Chair on the High-level forum to be held at the United Nations Statistical Commission in New York

70. The Chair of the Conference provided information on the High-level Forum on Official Statistics on "Response to the Rio+20 Mandate for Broader Measures of Progress" scheduled to

take place on 25 February 2013 in New York, back-to-back with the United Nations Statistical Commission.

71. The Forum is held in response to paragraph 38 of the Rio+ 20 outcome document requesting to launch a programme of work on broader measures of progress to complement gross domestic product, and to the process of setting up the Sustainable Development Goals.

72. The following points were raised in the discussion:

(a) One of the lessons learned from the Millennium Development Goals (MDG) is that statisticians were not involved in the selection of indicators to measure the achievement of the goals. Statistical offices of many developing countries have persistent problems with availability and quality of the data on MDGs.

(b) There is a risk that the SDGs would be defined in a way that makes monitoring difficult and resource-demanding for statistical offices. Furthermore, as the SDGs will be valid for all countries, the viewpoint of developed countries should be taken into account when establishing the Goals.

(c) The framework and the indicators developed by the Joint UNECE/Eurostat/OECD Task Force on Measuring Sustainable Development can provide a significant contribution to the SDG process. Therefore it is important to disseminate information about the Task Force Report on the framework for measuring sustainable development at the High-level Forum and the UNSC as widely as possible.

Conclusion:

73. The Bureau asked the secretariat to prepare a leaflet on the Framework for Measuring Sustainable Development to be distributed at the High-level Forum and the UNSC session.

74. The CES will continue to discuss how to respond to the process of establishing the SDGs during the CES seminar on “Measuring sustainable development, SEEA and follow-up to Rio+20” on 10 June 2013.

(b) Economic Commission for Europe Session in April 2013 – discussion on sustainable development

(ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/21 by UNECE)

75. The secretariat informed the Bureau about the session of the Economic Commission for Europe that will take place on 9-11 April 2013. The Chair of the Conference has been invited to participate in the panel discussion during the high-level segment devoted to sustainable development and follow-up to Rio+20. This can be used as an opportunity to raise the profile of statistics among the policy makers in UNECE.

VII. PROGRAMME OF WORK

(a) Progress with the UNECE review

76. The secretariat informed the Bureau of the progress with the UNECE review. The assessment of the work undertaken by the UNECE subprogramme on statistics is positive. As a result of the review, the UNECE Executive Committee recommends to maintain the resources of the UNECE

Statistical Division at the same level. The review outcome document will be submitted for approval by the Economic Commission for Europe at its April 2013 session.

77. The EXCOM agreed on the following text in the draft outcome document of the UNECE review:

“11. The UNECE Statistics subprogramme, the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) and its related subsidiary bodies, work within current mandates in an efficient way, producing concrete results (methodological principles, recommendations, guidelines and databases) in a regular and on-going way that have clear value added for the region and beyond, and that attract extra budgetary funding including from outside the region.

12. *On the basis of the above:*

- *The subprogramme and its subsidiary bodies should continue implementing existing mandates under the overall guidance of the Conference of European Statisticians and the EXCOM, and should continue the good cooperation with partner organizations like, Eurostat, CIS Statistical Committee, OECD, World Bank and IMF. Particular attention should be given to the work on measuring sustainable development, and the subprogramme should continue its capacity-building activities from extrabudgetary resources of particular benefit to the countries in the ECE region.*
- *In allocating regular budgetary resources, due regard should be given to the needs of the subprogramme and the Statistics Division so that they can continue, without reduction in their resources and capacities, to do their work and service all the subsidiary bodies in an efficient way in the future.”*

(b) UNECE programme of work documents

(ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/22, Add.1-3 by UNECE)

78. The Bureau reviewed the United Nations biennial planning documents for subprogramme on statistics for 2014-2015, and the report on the implementation of the Statistical Programme 2012.

Conclusion:

79. The Bureau approved the Programme of work for 2014-2015 including the Biennial Evaluation Plan, the Publications Programme 2014-2015, and the report on the implementation of the Statistical Programme in 2012 (documents ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/22, Add.1, Add.2 and Add.3).

VIII. FIRST DISCUSSION ON ORGANIZATION OF THE CES PLENARY SESSIONS AND CES SEMINARS

(ECE/CES/BUR/2013/FEB/23 by UNECE)

80. The Bureau had a first exchange of views on the organization of the CES plenary sessions. The following points were made in the discussion:

(a) The ‘formal business’ part of the CES plenary session is well streamlined and does not need to be changed.

(b) The role of the Seminar and Session Organisers is crucial in making the CES seminars successful. The Seminar and Session Organizers should work closely with the authors of papers to ensure that papers are of good quality. The Session Organisers are responsible for

managing the discussion at the seminar: ensuring that the timetable is followed and the discussion focuses on issues of interest to the Heads of statistical offices.

(c) Instead of a keynote speech, the Seminar Organiser could prepare an issue paper to help focus the seminar and describe the main issues to be discussed. One possibility would be to write such a paper in the early stages of the seminar preparation to guide the Session Organisers and authors of papers. Another possibility would be to prepare the issue paper after the country contributions to the seminar are received to draw out main points from the papers and guide the discussion.

(d) It is not considered useful to make a distinction between invited and contributed (supporting) papers. However, it was noted that the Seminar and Session Organisers can influence the preparation of the invited papers to ensure that they address the issues that are planned to be covered under the seminar.

(e) Translation of papers into Russian is important for many countries. The capacity to translate papers in the United Nations is limited and imposes early deadlines for submission of the papers. Therefore, only invited papers are translated.

(f) The papers should be presented to the Conference in an efficient manner. A summary presentation by the Session Organisers instead of individual presentations by authors of papers saves time. The Session Organisers should focus in their summary on the main issues instead of going through country practices paper by paper.

(g) Some Bureau members were in support of allowing invited authors to present the main points of their paper. It was noted that the authors may not be willing to submit papers if they are not given the floor at the seminar.

(h) The questions by Session Organisers should target all authors of papers and focus on main issues instead of covering papers one by one. These questions can be used to start the general discussion. A possibility is to set up a panel discussion to address the issues raised by the Session Organiser.

(i) The seminar conclusions should be clearly highlighted. Participants should have a possibility to contribute and comment on the conclusions before the seminar closes.

(j) Organization of the CES seminars can be flexible, different topics may require a different approach.

Conclusion:

81. The Bureau will discuss the organization of the CES seminars in more detail at its October 2013 meeting. The secretariat will update the note based on the comments made at the Bureau meeting.

82. The organizers of the CES 2013 seminars are welcome to use the suggestions made during the discussion already in the CES seminars in 2013.

IX. DATES AND VENUE OF THE NEXT MEETINGS

83. The CES Bureau confirmed the dates for its next meetings as follows:

- (a) A short Bureau meeting will take place during the CES 2013 plenary session to decide on the topics for the 2014 CES seminars and any other urgent matters (a meeting of 15-20 minutes during the lunch break on 10 June 2013);
- (b) The next CES Bureau meeting will take place on 22-23 October 2013 (possibly in the country of the Chair of the Bureau);
- (c) The subsequent meetings are planned to take place on 28-29 January 2014 in Geneva and on 21-22 October 2014, venue to be decided.

84. The 61st CES plenary session will take place on 10-12 June 2013 in Geneva, starting at 9:30 on 10 June and finishing by 12:30 on 12 June. The OECD Statistics Committee meeting will start at 14:30 on 12 June 2012. The UNECE secretariat will organize a seminar for the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia starting on 12 June afternoon.

85. The 62nd CES plenary session will take place in Paris, during the week of 7-11 April 2014, back-to-back with the OECD Statistics Committee meeting.

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