

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Approved

Meeting of the 2014/2015 Bureau  
Geneva (Switzerland), 21-22 October 2014

Item 8(c) of the Provisional  
Agenda

**TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE STEERING GROUP ON MIGRATION  
STATISTICS**

**Note by the Secretariat**

*This note provides **the terms of reference for the Steering Group on Migration Statistics**, as approved by the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians.*

**I. BACKGROUND**

1. Since the release of the United Nations 1998 Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration, various United Nations agencies and departments have undertaken activities to evaluate the consistency of international migration statistics. In January 2014, the Bureau decided that a steering group is needed with a strong role in identifying emerging issues and ensuring that the important work on migration statistics is focused and efficient.

2. In recent years, policymakers have linked international migration to issues such as national security, balance of payments, international relations, economic development, educational attainment, and health concerns. These demands for new data have increased the need for internationally comparable data, thereby highlighting the shortcomings of current data. To address these shortcomings, national statistical offices and international organizations must work together to outline a revised framework for the collection of more comparable data on international migration.

**II. MANDATE**

3. The work of the Steering Group is conducted within the work programme of the Conference of European Statisticians. The Steering Group will report annually to the CES Bureau on its activities as well as on emerging issues in migration statistics and possible ways of addressing them.

4. The Steering Group may identify new areas where methodological work could be undertaken and after having verified the interest by a sufficient number of CES member countries and the availability of resources, the Steering Group will submit proposals to the CES Bureau for review and approval.

### **III. OBJECTIVE**

5. The objective of the Steering Group is to provide direction to the CES work on migration statistics, advance methodological development and provide a mechanism for following up on the implementation of methodological guidance on migration statistics.
6. Tasks of the Steering Group include:
  - a) Create mechanisms for follow-up of the implementation of methodological guidance related to migration statistics;
  - b) Improve the availability, quality and comparability of international migration data derived from various sources, including population censuses, household surveys and administrative registers;
  - c) Initiate and coordinate international efforts to develop methodologies for measuring emerging patterns of migration, such as irregular migration and refugees or displaced persons;
  - d) Promote and facilitate the exchange of international migration data within and between countries, for example the use of “mirror statistics” to improve quality of migration data;
  - e) Promote and facilitate the dissemination of international migration data at national and international levels, and their use for policymaking and other purposes.

### **IV. PLANNED ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS**

7. The Steering Group is responsible for supervising and steering CES task forces working on migration statistics and reviewing their reports. Currently, these include the Task Force on Measurement of Socio-economic Conditions of Migrants and the Task Force on Measuring Circular Migration.
8. The Steering Group will identify new areas in migration statistics where methodological work needs to be undertaken. Based on the Steering Group’s proposal, the 2014 UNECE-Eurostat Work Session on Migration Statistics recommended to establish task forces to pursue methodological work on the following topics:
  - a) Integration of multiple data sources for measuring migration, including data sources within a country and between different countries, good practices in communication between national statistical offices and producers of administrative data, and increased collaboration with government agencies;
  - b) Assessment of the quality of migration data.
9. The Steering Group contributes to the implementation of the CES activities in the field of migration statistics, including:
  - a) Acting as an organizing committee for the joint UNECE-Eurostat Work Sessions on Migration Statistics (the next session is scheduled for 2016);
  - b) Providing advice on the capacity-building activities carried out by the UNECE Statistical Division in the field of migration statistics.

## **V. TIMETABLE**

10. The work of the Steering Group in relation to coordination and identification of new areas is ongoing. The terms of reference of the Steering Group will be reviewed at the meeting of the CES Bureau in autumn 2017.

## **VI. METHODS OF WORK**

11. The Steering Group will primarily work via email and regularly scheduled telephone conferences, to be held at least three times a year. Informal meetings could be organised at events attended by a significant number of Steering Group members, such as the joint UNECE-Eurostat Work Sessions on Migration Statistics and the Eurostat Working Group on Migration Statistics.

## **VII. MEMBERSHIP**

12. As of October 2014, the representatives of the following countries and organizations have expressed interest to participate in the Steering Group: Australia, Canada, Italy, Mexico, Netherlands, Switzerland, United Kingdom, United States, CIS-STAT, Eurostat, and UNECE.

13. UNECE acts as Secretariat to the Steering Group.

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