

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Approved

Meeting of the 2014/2015 Bureau  
Geneva (Switzerland), 17-18 February 2015

Item 3 (a) of the Provisional  
Agenda

**TERMS OF REFERENCE OF THE STEERING GROUP  
ON NATIONAL ACCOUNTS**

**Note by the Steering Group**

*The Bureau discussed and approved the revised terms of reference of the Steering Group on National Accounts.*

**I. BACKGROUND**

1. At its 40th session, in February 2009, the United Nations Statistical Commission supported the Implementation Strategy for the 2008 SNA proposed by the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts (ISWGNA), and “recognized the importance of the role of the Regional Commissions and their advisory committees on the System of National Accounts to facilitate coordination and regional cooperation on the implementation programme.”<sup>1</sup> *The Implementation Strategy for the 2008 System of National Accounts (SNA)*, adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission, emphasises the role of UN Regional Commissions in ensuring coordination of the activities towards the implementation of the 2008 SNA. The Strategy also asked that the Regional Commissions should be supported by existing statistical committees or by newly set up Steering Groups.

2. As a result, in 2009, the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) established the UNECE Steering Group on National Accounts with an initial mandate of two years. The mandate, activities and outputs have been periodically reviewed by the Bureau.

**II. MANDATE**

3. The work of the Steering Group is conducted within the CES work programme. The Steering Group reports to the Bureau on CES activities on national accounts and globalization, as well as on emerging issues in the area and possible ways of addressing them.

4. The Steering Group will regularly consult with ISWGNA to ensure international coordination of work related to the 2008 SNA implementation.

<sup>1</sup> See Statistical Commission, Report on the fortieth session  
doc. E/2009/24-E/CN.3/2009/29 available at: <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/doc09/Report-English.pdf>

5. The Steering Group will identify new areas where methodological work could be undertaken. In such cases, 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**

6. The objective of the Steering Group is to provide direction to the CES work on national accounts and globalization, advance methodological development and provide a mechanism for following up on the 2008 SNA implementation.

7. The Steering Group will:

(a) Coordinate CES work in the area of national accounts and globalization. Launch and steer research projects, contribute to the SNA research agenda, oversee the development of guidelines and surveys of best practice and follow up on their implementation. Oversee the work of CES task forces working in the area of national accounts and globalization;

(b) Promote internationally agreed standards and best practices in national accounts;

(c) Monitor the implementation of 2008 SNA in the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) and South East Europe (SEE) taking into account the specific regional priorities and needs;

(d) Advise the UNECE Secretariat on capacity building activities in support of EECCA and SEE countries. These activities should be closely coordinated with Eurostat and other regional partners;

(e) Facilitate the sharing of methods, statistical techniques, research, training materials and other resources related to the 2008 SNA implementation.

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

8. The main outputs of the Steering Group on National Accounts in 2015-2018 will be:

(a) Organize and follow-up on activities related to national accounts and measuring global production, such as the collection of country experiences with factoryless goods production;

(b) Review progress and outcomes of CES tasks forces working in the area of national accounts and globalization;

(c) Carry out studies on the implementation of CES recommendations and guidelines in all CES member countries;

(d) Continuously review the support needed for EECCA and SEE countries in line with the regional recommendations for the 2008 SNA implementation;

(e) Organize meetings of the joint biennial UNECE/Eurostat/OECD Group of Experts on National Accounts in 2016 and 2018 and the Expert Meeting on Global

Production Arrangements in 2015. Advise the UNECE Secretariat in the preparation of other meetings and workshops related to national accounts and globalization;

(f) Advise the UNECE Secretariat in the preparation of a workshop on 2008 SNA implementation in EECCA and SEE countries for representatives from statistical offices, ministries of finance and central banks in spring 2015, and in the organization of special sessions for EECCA and SEE countries at the joint UNECE/Eurostat/OECD Expert Group meetings on National Accounts;

(g) Implement decisions of the Group of Experts on National Accounts, including sharing generic material on communication of the 2008 SNA revision and defining activities for sharing information on measuring non-observed economy.

## **V. TIMETABLE**

9. The work on implementation of 2008 SNA and research on the impact of globalization on national accounts is ongoing. Most EECCA and SEE countries foresee major developments to improve their key economic indicators, such as GDP, GNI etc. The Task Force on Global Production will finalize the *Guide to Measuring Global Production* and proposals for further work in spring 2015. The CES Bureau will review the terms of reference of the Steering Group in 2018.

## **VI. METHODS OF WORK**

10. The Steering Group will primarily work via email and telephone conferences. The Group will have face-to-face meetings on the occasion of meetings of the Group of Experts on National Accounts. Additional meetings may be organised at events attended by a significant number of Steering Group members, such as the OECD Working Party on National Accounts.

11. Following the example of the Advisory Expert Group on National Accounts and the ISWGNA, the Steering Group should aim to reach consensus in its work to the highest extent possible.

## **VII. MEMBERSHIP**

12. The Steering Group is composed of members representing different sub-regions of the UNECE. The group comprises: United States (Chair: Brent Moulton, US Bureau of Economic Analysis), Armenia, Canada, Netherlands, Norway, the Russian Federation, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (to be confirmed), Eurostat, OECD, CIS-STAT, UNSD and IMF. If needed, other experts and agencies can also be consulted or invited to contribute to the work of the Steering Group.

13. UNECE acts as Secretariat to the Steering Group.

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