

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Approved

Meeting of the 2015/2016 Bureau
Luxembourg, 9-10 February 2016

Item VI of the Provisional
Agenda

IMPLEMENTATION OF THE UNECE STATISTICAL PROGRAMME 2015

Note prepared by the UNECE secretariat

*The document provides a short summary of the implementation of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Statistical Programme 2015. The report is based on the information in an online reporting system, the Integrated Monitoring and Documentation Information System (IMDIS), used within the United Nations secretariat. **The Bureau reviewed and approved the document.** Thereafter it will be submitted to the Conference of European Statisticians for approval in April 2016.*

I. Description of the main accomplishments in 2015

A. Coordination of international statistical work in the Economic Commission for Europe region

1. International statistical work was reviewed in depth in four statistical areas with the purpose to improve inter-agency coordination and eliminate overlaps and gaps in statistical activities in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) region. The four reviews addressed the following topics: (i) labour mobility; (ii) process-oriented approach to statistical production; (iii) strategic partnerships; (iv) diversification of population census methodology and sources. As a follow-up to these reviews, the Bureau launched two international task forces, namely to improve the measurement of labour mobility and population projections.

2. In 2015, 27 international organizations provided information to the ECE Database on International Statistical Activities (DISA). The classification of International Statistical Activities, originally developed for the DISA database, is being used as a reference at global level, for example by the Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange (SDMX) standard, Paris21, Global Inventory of Statistical Standards, FAO, and several countries. The classification is being adjusted to include emerging statistical areas, such as climate change-related statistics, composite indicators, geo-spatial data, etc.

B. Methodological work

3. In 2015, the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) and its Bureau endorsed four methodological guidelines that were developed in cooperation with countries and partner organisations, such as with the Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat), International Monetary Fund (IMF), International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) on: *global production; business registers; quality of employment; and population and housing censuses*. These standards contribute to enhanced international comparability beyond the UNECE region as many United Nations Member States outside the region expressed support for their endorsement.
4. In addition, the *CES Recommendations on Measuring Sustainable Development*, endorsed in June 2013, were used in 2015 as an input in the process of developing indicators to measure the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and related targets.
5. Three draft CES recommendations were prepared in 2015 for endorsement by the Conference in 2016, namely on measuring human capital, circular migration and ageing-related statistics. In addition, an interim report on the value of official statistics was prepared for discussion at the 2016 CES plenary session.
6. UNECE undertook methodological work, aiming at drafting new guidelines and collecting good practices in 27 out of 55 statistical areas of the Classification of International Statistical Activities.

C. Capacity building

7. In 2015, UNECE carried out 9 training workshops for the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia with the support of the regular budget, the budget for technical cooperation, funding from the United Nations Development Account and external funding sources. In addition, a number of advisory missions were conducted at the request of countries. With these activities UNECE supported countries' capacity to report on the internationally agreed development goals and gender-sensitive indicators, and contributed to assessing countries' readiness for monitoring progress towards SDGs. In total, 87 per cent of experts who took part in UNECE training workshops considered the training to be of highest quality and most useful for their work.
8. These activities contributed to progress in areas identified for improvement in Global Assessments of national statistical systems. Global Assessments analyse progress of countries with developing statistical systems in implementing international standards and compliance with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics. They are carried out at countries' request jointly with the Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat), the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the World Bank. In total, 6 member States developed a national strategy for sustainable development of statistics in line with recommendations contained in Global Assessments.
9. In 2015, UNECE developed, jointly with the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and Eurostat a Generic Statistical Law under a United Nations Development Account (UNDA) 9th tranche project. The beneficiaries of the project are the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. The model for a statistical law provides a reference for developing a solid legal basis for the functioning of national statistical systems and the production of high quality official statistics. The initiative will be discussed at the Conference of European Statisticians in April 2016.

D. UNECE Statistical database

10. Progress was made in the availability of high quality macroeconomic, social and demographic statistics in the UNECE statistical database. The country overview tables were among the most actively used data along with gender and economic statistics, Millennium Development Goals' indicators and the Migration Clearinghouse.

11. The timeliness, completeness, reliability and comparability of the statistical database were improved. In the end of 2015, in total 161 statistical time series were available in the database.

12. User satisfaction remained high, with an online survey indicating that 86 per cent of users considered the quality of data as excellent or good. In 2015, data downloads increased by 5 percent from the record levels of 2013. Automated processes and quality checks improved timeliness and reliability of data. In addition, UNECE developed a mobile application and redesigned the database website. These improvements along with quick statistics, maps, graphs and country rankings attracted new users.

II. Outputs prepared in 2015

A. Manuals, guidelines, recommendations, compilations of best practices

13. All manuals and guidelines are available at the following address: www.unece.org/statshome/publications-amp-resources/publications.html

(a) *Guide to measuring global production*

14. The Guide deals with global production arrangements that challenge the compilation of economic statistics. The Guide clarifies typology, concepts and definitions of global production and provides guidance in related data collection issues.

(b) *International guidelines on statistical business registers*

15. The Guidelines provide recommendations for developing and maintaining statistical business registers, increasing the efficiency of the statistical production processes and improving comparability of business statistics with business registers.

(c) *Recommendations for the 2020 round of population and housing censuses*

16. The recommendations provide the basis for collecting reliable, accurate and comparable census data on a core set of census topics, and for harmonizing definitions and classifications.

(d) *Statistical framework for measuring quality of employment*

17. The handbook provides practical recommendations to all countries interested in measuring the quality of employment.

(e) *Recommendations on measuring human capital (to be submitted in 2016)*

18. The recommendations provide guidance to countries intending to measure human capital. They provide a conceptual framework for human capital measurement, with a focus on developing experimental human capital satellite accounts.

(f) *Guidelines on circular migration (to be submitted in 2016)*

19. The guidelines assess current user needs, methodology and available data sources to measure circular migration; examine the impact of using different definitions for circular migration; and propose a common international statistical definition of circular migration.

(g) *Ageing-related statistics* (to be submitted to in 2016)

20. The recommendations aim at supporting countries in improving the availability, accessibility and comparability of statistical data in support of ageing-related policymaking.

(h) *Value of official statistics, interim report* (to be submitted to in 2016)

21. This interim report defines the value of official statistics and suggests ways for its measurement that would allow for better understanding and communication of this value to society. The work will continue based on the feedback from the CES plenary session in 2016.

(i) *Generic Statistical Law* (to be submitted to in 2016)

22. The Generic Statistical Law developed under a UNDA 9th tranche project. The beneficiaries of the project are the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. The model for a statistical law provides a reference for developing a solid legal basis for the functioning of national statistical systems and the production of high quality official statistics.

B. Global Assessments of national statistical systems in the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia

23. Six Member States developed a national strategy for sustainable development of statistics in line with the recommendations of Global Assessments of national statistical systems. Since 2009, Global Assessments were conducted jointly with Eurostat and EFTA in almost all target countries (Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Mongolia, Tajikistan and Ukraine).

24. To address Member States' requests for assistance in implementing the recommendations, UNECE carries out a United Nations Development Account project¹ to strengthen the capacity of countries for the sustainable development of statistics. The project supports producers of official statistics in eight beneficiary countries² and addresses statistical gaps to allow for the monitoring of economic, social and environmental reforms. The project builds on the recommendations of the global assessments of national statistical systems conducted between 2009 and 2013.

25. UNECE agreed in 2015 with its partners EFTA and Eurostat on new "rotating scheme assessments" that will be launched in 2016.

C. United Nations Economic Commission for Europe Statistical database

26. The statistical database is available at: <http://w3.unece.org/PXWeb/en>, providing:

- Macroeconomic data (national accounts main aggregates, industrial production, labour force, wages, price indices, purchasing power parities, exchange rates, balance of payments, external debt);
- Social and demographic data with gender breakdown (population, fertility, families and households, work and the economy, education, public life and decision making, health and mortality, crime and violence, science and ICT, and life balance);
- Regional MDG database covering all 8 Millennium Development Goals for more than 30 countries;

¹ The title of the UNDA 9th tranche project is "Supporting the implementation of the global assessment recommendations in the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia".

² Armenia, Georgia, Kyrgyzstan, Republic of Moldova, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Ukraine and Uzbekistan

- Transport and forestry statistics provided by other UNECE Divisions;
- Clearinghouse for migration statistics for the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries.

D. Websites and wikis maintained by the UNECE Statistical Division

- UNECE Statistical Division's website: www.unece.org/stats
- Statistical database website: <http://w3.unece.org/PXWeb/en>
- UNECE Data Locator:
www1.unece.org/stat/platform/display/DLoc/Welcome+to+the+UNECE+Data+Locator
- Gender statistics website with multimedia training videos:
www.unece.org/stats/gender.html
- Library of training materials on statistics:
www1.unece.org/stat/platform/display/train
- Wikis and knowledge bases on different subjects:
www1.unece.org/stat/platform/dashboard.action
 - 2008 System of National Accounts implementation
 - Price Index Processor software
 - Active Ageing Index
 - Administrative and Secondary Sources in Statistics (ASSIST)
 - Big data in official statistics
 - Climate change-related statistics – Steering Group and Task Forces
 - Data collection – sharing resources and experiences
 - Dissemination and communication
 - Generic Activity Model for Statistical Organizations (GAMSO)
 - Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GSBPM)
 - Generic Statistical Information Model (GSIM)
 - High-Level Group for the Modernisation of Official Statistics
 - Human resources management and training in statistical offices
 - K-base: Data editing knowledge base
 - Statistical network
 - Managing statistical confidentiality and microdata access
 - Management of statistical information systems (MSIS)
 - Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)
 - Population and Housing Censuses - several wikis for Task Forces
 - Statistical literacy
 - Statistical metadata (METIS), including the Common Metadata Framework
 - Virtual standards helpdesk – a one-stop shop on standards for modernisation
 - Several wikis for active Task Forces, modernisation committees and one for the CES Bureau

III. List of meetings organized in 2015

27. Documents for public meetings are available at: www.unece.org/statistics/meetings-and-events.html. In 2015, the UNECE Statistical Division organized 29 meetings presented in the table below.

List of meetings from January to December 2015

<i>Jointly with</i>	<i>Meeting (venue)</i>	<i>Date</i>	<i>Capacity Building</i>
	CES Bureau meeting (Geneva, Switzerland)	17-18 February 2015	
	Workshop on Big Data (Brussels, Belgium)	9 March 2015	
	Workshop on the modernisation of statistical production (Geneva, Switzerland)	15-17 April 2015	
	Workshop on statistical communication (Washington, DC)	27-29 April 2015	
	Workshop on statistical data collection (Washington, DC)	29 April – 1 May 2015	
	Workshop on poverty measurement (Geneva, Switzerland)	4 May 2015	X
	Seminar on poverty measurement (Geneva, Switzerland)	5-6 May 2015	
	Task Force on poverty measurement (Geneva, Switzerland)	7-8 May 2015	
	Workshop on international collaboration for standards-based modernisation (Geneva, Switzerland)	5-7 May 2015	
EFTA	Workshop on the implementation of the 2008 SNA in EECCA countries and linkages with BPM6 and GFSM 2014 (Istanbul, Turkey)	6-8 May 2015	X
Env. Progr.	Joint Task Force on Environmental Indicators (Geneva, Switzerland)	11-13 May 2015	X
	Workshop on migration statistics (Minsk, Belarus)	28-29 May 2015	X
	63rd plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians (Geneva, Switzerland)	15-18 June 2015	
	Workshop on developing entrepreneurship statistics by gender (Chisinau, Republic of Moldova)	30 June-1 July 2015	X
Eurostat, OECD	Group of experts on national accounts on global production (Geneva, Switzerland)	7-9 July 2015	
	Expert forum for producers and users of climate change-related statistics (Geneva, Switzerland)	2-3 September 2015	
	Work Session on statistical data editing (Budapest, Hungary)	14-16 September 2015	
	Group of experts on business registers (Luxembourg)	21-23 September 2015	
	Workshop on population and housing censuses (Geneva, Switzerland)	28-29 September 2015	X
Eurostat	Group of experts on population and housing censuses (Geneva, Switzerland)	30 September – 2 October 2015	
Eurostat	Work session on statistical data confidentiality (Helsinki, Finland)	5-7 October 2015	
OECD	Seminar on the implementation of SEEA (Geneva, Switzerland)	14-15 October 2015	

	CES Bureau meeting (Geneva, Switzerland)	20-21 October 2015	
	Workshop on gender statistics dissemination and training (Chisinau, the Republic of Moldova)	3-4 November 2015	X
	Workshop for users of gender statistics (Yerevan, Armenia)	16-17 November 2015	X
	Workshop on statistical modernisation (Geneva, Switzerland)	24-25 November 2015	
	Task Force on valuing unpaid household service work (Geneva, Switzerland)	26-27 November 2015	
EFTA	10th SPECA Project Working Group on statistics (Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan)	1-3 December 2015	X
	Seminar on the role of national statistical offices in the production of leading, composite and sentiment indicators (Geneva, Switzerland)	8-10 December 2015	
