UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

STATISTICAL OFFICE OF THE EUROPEAN UNION (EUROSTAT)

Joint UNECE/Eurostat Work Session on Migration Statistics (Geneva, 17-19 October 2012)

INFORMATION NOTICE FOR PARTICIPANTS

The meeting will be held in Salle V at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on 17-19 October 2012. The meeting will start at 10:00 a.m. on Wednesday, 17 October 2012 and will finish on Friday, 19 October by 5:30 p.m.

I. INTRODUCTION

1. UNECE and Eurostat are organising a Joint Work Session on Migration Statistics, under the auspices of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES). The meeting will be held at the Palais des Nations, Avenue de la Paix 8, Geneva (Switzerland), from 17 to 19 October 2012. The present note provides information on the meeting.

II. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

2. The main purpose of the Work Session is to allow countries to exchange experiences on the methods and techniques used for the collection, processing and dissemination of data related to international migration statistics, as well as to improve measurement of the size, characteristics, and impact of international migration in the UNECE region and beyond.

III. AGENDA OF THE MEETING

3. The work programme of the meeting will consist of the substantive topics presented below. The agenda will be prepared before the meeting taking into account the papers contributed by meeting participants. The agenda will be posted, as soon as it is available, on the meeting’s web page at http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2012.10.migration.htm

   (i) Experiences with using data from the 2010 round of censuses for measuring migration

4. The population census is traditionally an important source of data on migration, particularly with regard to migrant stocks. It is expected that the 2010 census round has produced more and better data on migration, in part due to the increased number of “core topics” on migration included in the CES Recommendations for the 2010 round of censuses. Countries will have the opportunity to report on migration results from the 2010 Census round. This session could include presentation of migration data from the recent round of censuses, including preliminary results, as well as applications of these results to demographic programs, such as revision of intercensal population estimates.

   (ii) Producing migration data using household surveys and other sources

5. Statistics on migration and migrants can be produced using various sources, including many surveys or registers that are not designed exclusively or primarily for collecting migration data. Household surveys have the potential to be an important source for the production of data on migration and migrants. A task
force was created to work in this field, and a number of studies were launched with the participation of experts from countries and international organizations. The results of this work will be presented at the meeting, as well as other projects involving the collection of migration data via household surveys.

(iii) Circular migration

6. The Global Forum on Migration and Development sees the promotion of circular migration as one of the keys to international migration’s contribution to development. Circular migration has also become a priority for many migrant sending countries, thereby ensuring the temporary nature of their citizens’ outmigration. It is often seen as a “win-win” proposition, providing gains to both host countries (fulfilling immediate labour market needs, increasing economic productivity, limiting long-term integration concerns, etc.) and origin countries (providing unemployment relief, bringing capital and skills back to their country, offsetting population loss, etc.).

7. One of the main factors that affect the international comparability of migration statistics is the adoption by different countries of different practices and definitions. Particularly important are the length of stay definitions adopted to distinguish short-term and long-term migrants. A task force was created in 2008 to explore the impact of different length-of-stay definitions on migration flows, and consider available data on short-term migration from a number of countries to provide evidence for discussing these issues. One of the final recommendations of this task force was to prepare a common international definition of circular migration.

8. As a result of this work, a new task force on circular migration has been approved by the CES Bureau, which will prepare a proposal for a common international statistical definition of circular migration, taking into account the needs of data users, as well as available information from ad hoc studies on this phenomenon. Circular migration may need to be defined in terms of both duration of stay and a repetition of the change in place of usual residence. The potential implications on other population statistics concepts of this circular migration definition will also need to be considered. This session could provide critical inputs for the future development of this project.

(iv) Return migration

9. Return migration is an important concept with significant implications for both migrant sending and receiving countries. As a critical element of many destination country governments’ policies, it is seen by many as a strategy to deter irregular migration. From a source country perspective, many countries actively pursue a policy of encouraging return migration, as it can result in the bringing in of new skills, financial capital, brain-gain, and is even thought of as a strategy to offset population decline.

10. This session will include both methodological and analytical discussion on return migration. In addition to country experiences, methodological questions on how return migration should be defined, as well as what the short- and long-term impact return migration has on both origin and destination countries, could be discussed.

(v) Measurement of the socio-economic conditions of migrants

11. At the 2010 Joint UNECE-Eurostat Work Session on Migration Statistics, a task force on measurement of the socio-economic conditions of migrants was created. This task force studied how to better measure the social and economic situation of migrants, and to improve the availability, quality and comparability of data in this field, taking into account all available sources.

12. This session will present the results of this task force, as well as other relevant experiences from countries and international organizations on similar topics.

(vi) Redistribution of immigrant populations within destination countries

13. International migrants tend to arrive in specific urban geographic areas. However, after some time, these migrant groups often redistribute within their destination countries, impacting areas which do not normally receive migrant groups. In fact, some regional development plans have called upon the
redistribution of immigrants to rural areas as being one of the keys to revitalizing stagnant geographic areas suffering from economic decline and population loss. Other countries issue visas that require new arrivals to locate to specific regional areas. The future distribution of these migrants is of interest from the perspectives of internal migration, regional population growth/decline and regional labour market capability.

14. What does the evidence show regarding the secondary migration of international migrants? Have increases in international migration increased the future redistribution of immigrants within destination countries? How has this internal migration impacted regional development and the demographic makeup within these countries? This session could address these types of questions, as well as touch on the current state of the measurement of internal migration.

(vii) Migration and development

15. In light of the upcoming 2013 High-Level Dialogue on International Migration and Development at the United Nations General Assembly, the need for the improved collection of migration data is critical. The previous 2006 High-Level Dialogue and the subsequent Global Forums on Migration and Development concluded that international migration could play an important role in national development, provided it was supported by appropriate policies and development strategies. These events have also emphasised the importance of using appropriate statistical data in designing such policies and strategies and in measuring their effectiveness.

16. Many of these policies have been in relation to populations living outside their countries of origin, often referred to as the diaspora. There has been a gradual realization of the diaspora’s potential positive social and economic contributions towards the development of origin countries, for example, in terms of transfer of financial assets, knowledge and skills, and/or increased business opportunities. There is an implied post-migration relationship between the diaspora and its origin country, meaning they live abroad but maintain ties with their countries of origin or ethnic groups (as in the case of the 2nd generation).

17. Despite the growing impact of the diaspora on development, there is a lack of internationally agreed standards with regards to its measurement, leading to disparities when individual countries report the size of their diaspora. Focusing more on the stock of emigrants living abroad than flows, how should the diaspora be defined, and how could we measure its size and impact on countries of origin?

18. This session will look at the connection between the need for data collection and measurement of migration’s impact on development, and could include information on measuring the size, characteristics, and impact of diaspora populations.

IV. PARTICIPATION, ACCREDITATION AND REGISTRATION

19. Representatives of all Member States of the United Nations and of interested intergovernmental organizations are welcome to participate in the meeting. Participants representing non-governmental organizations in a consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council may also attend. All participants must be accredited by the competent authorities of their country or international organization.

20. All participants attending the meeting are requested to have a valid passport and, if required, a visa. Applications for visas should be made as soon as possible to the Embassy of Switzerland in the country in which the participants reside, with a reference to the Joint UNECE/Eurostat Work Session on Migration Statistics. If a formal invitation letter is required by the embassy, this can be requested from the UNECE secretariat (fax +41 22 917 0040 or e-mail mijidgombo.oyunjargal@unece.org).

21. Participants are requested to fill in the attached registration form and send it to the UNECE secretariat by fax (+41 22 917 0040) by 27 September 2012 at the latest so that it may be processed well in advance of the meeting. The information will be used to register participants with the UN Security Section and for the list of participants.
22. In order to enter the Palais des Nations where the Work Session is being held, all participants need to obtain a security pass (ID badge). For this purpose, please present yourself with your passport at the UN Security Identification Office at Pregny Gate of the Palais des Nations (Avenue de la Paix 14, Buses 8 and 18, Stop Appia), by 8:30 a.m. on Wednesday, 17 October 2012. The Security Identification Office is open Monday to Friday from 8.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. (non-stop). For identification and security reasons, delegates are requested to wear their security badges at all times while inside the Palais des Nations.

23. Practical information for meeting participants, including links to maps of Geneva and the Tourist Office where hotel reservations can be made, is available at http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.htm. A map of the Palais des Nations where you can find the Security Identification Office located at the Pregny Gate is available at http://www.unece.org/meetings/UN_Map.pdf

V. DOCUMENTATION, METHODS OF WORK AND OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

24. The working languages of the work session are English, French, and Russian. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in these languages. For each substantive item on the agenda, the organizers will invite a limited number of speakers to write and present an invited paper. All other participants are welcome to submit a supporting paper for any topic on the agenda.

25. A limited number of invited papers will be officially translated. Supporting papers can be submitted in English or Russian and will be available only in the language in which they will be submitted. Authors of papers submitted in Russian are encouraged to provide a short abstract in English (maximum one page), if possible.

26. The following deadlines and requirements apply:
   • Interested national statistical offices and other government bodies should inform the UNECE secretariat of their intention to attend the meeting and contribute a paper (in this case, please indicate the topic of the paper and attach a short abstract) by 11 May 2012.
   • The full final versions of invited papers, not exceeding 8 pages including charts, annexes and references, should be sent to the UNECE secretariat in Word format by 20 July 2012.
   • The full final versions of supporting papers, not exceeding 8 pages including charts, annexes and references, should be sent to the UNECE secretariat in Word format by 25 September 2012.
   • Presenters are encouraged to use power point presentations, and to send them to the UNECE Secretariat by 11 October 2012.
   • Papers and presentations should be submitted electronically to Mr. Jason Schachter (jason.schachter@unece.org).

27. Invited and supporting papers will be made available on the UNECE website at the following location: http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2012.10.migration.htm

28. Delegates are encouraged to download the papers from the website and bring their own copies to the meeting. Documents posted on the website before the meeting will not be distributed in the conference room.

VI. ACCOMMODATION IN GENEVA

29. Participants are requested to make their own hotel reservations. The UNECE secretariat in Geneva is not in a position to provide such services to delegates. Participants are advised to book hotel accommodation well in advance of the meeting, because hotels in Geneva are often fully booked because of the many conferences and other events taking place in the city. If difficulties are encountered, participants may contact the Permanent Mission in Geneva of their respective country for assistance.
VII. INFORMATION AND CORRESPONDANCE

30. All queries concerning the meeting should be addressed to:

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