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Conference of European Statisticians

Group of Experts on National Accounts**Tenth session**
Geneva, 26–29 April 2010**Report****Note by the secretariat***Summary*

The Conference of European Statisticians, at its fifty-seventh plenary session in June 2009, approved the activities undertaken under the UNECE Statistical Programme 2009, and endorsed the list of meetings planned to be organised from June 2009 to June 2010, as provided in document ECE/CES/2009/2/Add.1 (Report of the fifty-seventh plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians, ECE/CES/76, page 67). This list included a meeting of the Group of Experts on National Accounts, which was held in Geneva on 26–29 April 2010.

The present document is the report of that Group of Experts, and is provided to inform the Conference of European Statisticians of the organization and outcomes of the meeting.

I. Introduction

1. The Group of Experts on National Accounts was held in Geneva from 26 to 29 April 2010. It was attended by Albania, Austria, Armenia, Australia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Bosnia & Herzegovina, Canada, Chile, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Japan, Kazakhstan, Latvia, Luxembourg, Malta, Mexico, Mongolia, Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovenia, South Africa, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States and Uzbekistan. The European Union (Delegation of the European Union to the OECD & UNESCO and Eurostat), and the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) attended. Representatives of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA), the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO), the United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD) and the United Nations Mission in Kosovo (UNMIK) were also present. The following specialised agencies and intergovernmental organizations attended: the European Central Bank (ECB), the European Free Trade Association (EFTA), the Interstate Statistical Committee of the CIS-STAT, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Trade Organisation (WTO).

2. The provisional agenda was adopted.

3. Mr. Gabriel Gamez (EFTA), Ms. Karmen Hren (Slovenia) and Mr. Peter van de Ven (the Netherlands) were elected Chairs for the respective modules of the meeting.

II. Organization of the meeting

4. The meeting was organised in three modules. The following substantive topics were discussed on the basis of invited papers and supporting papers:

A. First module: Special session for transition economies

- Towards an implementation strategy for the 2008 System of National Accounts (SNA) in the Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) and South East Europe (SEE) countries (organised by UNECE)
- Government finance statistics and national accounts (organised by EFTA)

B. Second module: Expert group on national accounts

- National accounts and natural resources (organised by Statistics Netherlands)
- Financial accounts and balance sheets (organised by Statistics Canada)
- Measuring and recording of pensions (organised by the United States)

C. Third module: Impact of globalisation on national accounts

- Labour mobility (organised by CBS, Israel)
- Impact of the Financial Crisis (organised by ECB)
- Other household related issues: Second homes (organised by Statistics Norway)
- Other household related issues: E-commerce (organised by Statistics Netherlands)
- Review of the first draft of the publication (organised by the UNECE and Statistics Netherlands)

III. Summary of the main conclusions reached at the meeting

5. Recommendations for future work are given below. Other conclusions that the participants reached during the discussion on the above topics will be presented in an annex to this report. All background documents for the meeting are available on the UNECE website (<http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2010.04.sna.htm>).

IV. Future work and adoption of the short report

A. First module: Special session for transition economies

6. Participants welcomed the UNECE paper presenting the main issues and challenges in implementation of the SNA in the East Europe, Caucasus, Central Asia, South-East Europe and Mongolia. The UNECE will further develop the paper to include more detailed country metadata using the information provided.

7. The meeting recommended that the ISWGNA provide guidance on the main priorities in the implementation of the 2008 SNA. Both countries and regional organisations will benefit from such guidance in developing their implementation plans.

8. The meeting proposed that a training workshop on the use of Government Finance Statistics for Compilation of National Accounts targeting economies in transition and other interested countries be organised in the course of 2011. The workshop will be co-organised by the IMF, UNECE and EFTA. It is important that experts from ministries of finance and national accountants are brought together.

9. Participants recommended that UNECE continue to provide assistance to economies in transition for the implementation of the SNA in cooperation with other regional partners. When appropriate other interested countries would also be invited.

B. Second module: Expert group on national accounts

10. Participants recommended that a further meeting of the Group of Experts on National Accounts be organised in spring 2012 in Geneva to discuss the following substantive topics:

- (a) Measurement of financial services, including FISIM
- (b) Volume measurement of services, including non-market services
- (c) Globalisation issues

- (d) Household sector and unincorporated enterprises.

11. The following countries and international organizations expressed interest in organising or contribute to the sessions for the 2012 meeting: for topic (a) The United States and Japan, for topic (b) – Statistics Canada, for topic (c) – IMF, Statistics Netherlands and UNECE. UNECE will invite the newly established Task Force on Measurement of FISIM and the Federal Statistical Office of Germany to contribute to topic (a).

12. Participants also proposed that UNECE considers the inclusion of financial accounts issues in the agenda of future meetings.

C. Third module: Impact of globalisation on national accounts

12. The authors of the four issue papers that were presented for in-depth discussion, namely: (a) Labour Mobility; (b) Impact of the Financial crisis; (c) Second homes; and (d) E-commerce should redraft them to incorporate comments received and should present them in the form of chapters for the final document.

13. The authors of the chapters that were discussed at previous meetings and presented on the last day of the meeting for follow up review will also revise them to reflect the feedback from the countries.

14. The OECD will further elaborate the suggested treatment of transfers between affiliates, presented in the chapter “International transactions in intellectual property products”. The proposal will be finalised in consultation with Israel, Ireland and other interested countries, e.g. Slovak Republic.

15. In preparing the chapter on Labour Mobility the author will include the supporting paper from Germany as a case study. Ukraine will also consider providing a case study for this chapter.

16. The participants recognised the need for inventory of country practices in respect of the treatment of second homes. Ireland, Mexico and the United States will provide case studies that will be incorporated in the final chapter on Second homes.

17. Countries are encouraged to provide a description of their practical experience in relation to any of the topics covered in the publication “The Impact of Globalisation on National Accounts: Practical Guidance”. Countries are requested to inform the UNECE by 20 May 2010 and send the studies before 30 June 2010. Case studies received after this deadline will be available on the website of the Group of Experts on National Accounts, but not included in the publication itself.

18. Authors of chapters should identify areas for further research and provide them to the UNECE Secretariat by the end of June 2010. Countries are also invited to propose new issues for the research agenda. The consolidated list will be included in the publication.

19. The revised chapters will be reviewed and consolidated by the Editor, Peter Bull (ECB) in consultation with the Leadership Group. The first draft should be finalised by the end of 2010 and submitted to the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES). On approval of the Bureau, the publication will be sent for a global consultation, to be presented for endorsement by the CES in June 2011.

20. This report was adopted by the Meeting of the Group of Experts on National Accounts held in Geneva on 26-29 April 2010.