

UN STATISTICAL COMMISSION and
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

STATISTICAL OFFICE OF THE
EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (EUROSTAT)

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Joint UNECE/Eurostat Meeting on Population and Housing Censuses
(28-30 October 2009, Geneva, Switzerland)

INFORMATION NOTICE No.1

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The UNECE and Eurostat are organising a Joint Meeting on Population and Housing Censuses. The meeting will be held at the United Nations, Palais des Nations, Avenue de la Paix 8, Geneva, from 28 to 30 October 2009. Information on the purpose and agenda of the Meeting is given in sections II and III below.

II. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

2. The main purpose of the meeting is to facilitate the exchange of experiences among countries and increase knowledge on various issues related to the planning and conduction of the population and housing censuses of the 2010 round. This will result in increased capacity by countries to plan and conduct the next population and housing censuses in compliance with the “CES Recommendations for the 2010 Censuses of Population and Housing”.

3. The target audience of the meeting includes managers and experts responsible for census planning and management in national and international statistical offices.

III. AGENDA OF THE MEETING

4. The programme of the meeting will consist of the following substantive topics:

- i. Compliance with CES Recommendations for the 2010 censuses and enumeration of homeless people
- ii. Census outputs to meet users' needs
- iii. Census quality and disclosure control
- iv. Online data collection

5. Detailed explanatory notes on the topics (i) – (iv) are provided below.

i. Compliance with CES Recommendations for the 2010 censuses and enumeration of homeless people

6. In this session, countries are expected to exchange their experiences with regard to the compliance with the CES Recommendations in the planning and conduction of the censuses of the 2010 round. Expected contributions could include reviews of different problems and issues faced in countries, or in-depth discussion of specific issues, such as: implementation of the definition of place of usual residence and treatment of students or other population groups; possible implications of the adoption of a specific census methodology (including the register-based census or other non-traditional census methods) on compliance with the CES Recommendations.

7. The enumeration of homeless people in the 2010 round of censuses will also be discussed in this session. Contributions on this subject are expected by countries, international organisations and possibly also by non-statistical agencies working with the homeless.

ii. Census outputs to meet users' needs

8. The main objective of the census is to produce timely and high-quality statistics that meet the needs of census users, regardless of the census methodology adopted. For this purpose, consultation with the users is a key aspect of the census preparations, to make sure that the census output will meet as much as possible the users' needs in terms of content and formats. In this session, countries are expected to discuss the mechanisms set up to make sure that census outputs would meet the needs of different categories of census users. Representatives of different categories of users will also be invited to participate to contribute to the discussion.

iii. Census quality and disclosure control

9. A key aspect of the census preparations is to assure that adequate attention is paid to the different attributes of quality (including relevance, accuracy, timeliness, cost-effectiveness) in all census phases and processes. Aspects related to the measurement of different attributes of quality will be discussed on the basis of contributions of countries and international organisations. Special attention will be paid to issues related to the accuracy of census results, also in relation to the characteristics of the census methodology adopted. For instance, when some census variables are collected adopting sampling strategies (for instance using "long forms") or are based on results of sample surveys, then the introduction of sampling error has an impact on the accuracy of the results that must be carefully evaluated.

10. One of the main characteristics of the census results, which makes them particularly relevant compared to the results of most of the other statistical sources, is the possibility to provide data at very fine territorial level and for very small population groups. However, in providing data at such levels of detail, measures have to be taken to guarantee the confidentiality of the results. The issue of disclosure control is particularly relevant for census variables collected adopting sampling strategies or based on results of sample surveys, given the limited number of cases that may be found in the cells for these variables. In this context, the issue of disclosure control is linked to the issue of accuracy and statistical significance of the census results.

iv. Online data collection

11. The possibility to fill online the census form is offered as an option by an increasing number of countries, for different purposes, including the attempt to increase the coverage of some difficult-to-count population groups (such as very mobile young professionals) and to improve data quality, the need to respond to expectations and demand by the public or to comply with "e-government" policies. The available experiences with regard to the internet census confirm that some of these objectives can be met, at least partially, but no cost savings can be expected at least in the short-medium term. There are also important implications of the internet census in terms of technology and census organisation. Large investments have to be made and there are potentially serious risks for the overall census success in case of any real or perceived breach in the security of the internet census channel. Countries are expected to discuss in this session about their experiences with the internet census, based on past censuses or on the preparations for the next census.

IV. PARTICIPATION, ACCREDITATION AND REGISTRATION FOR THE MEETING

12. Representatives of all Member States of the United Nations, and interested intergovernmental organizations, are welcome to participate in the meeting. All delegates must be accredited by the competent authority of their country or international organization. All delegates attending the meeting are requested to have a valid passport and, if required, a visa. Applications for visas must be made as soon as possible to the Embassy of the Switzerland in the country in which the delegates reside, with a reference to the Joint UNECE-Eurostat Meeting on Population and Housing Censuses. If necessary, the UNECE secretariat can provide a letter to facilitate obtaining a visa. This can be requested from the UNECE secretariat (e-mail: mijidgombo.oyunjargal@unece.org)

13. Delegates should complete the registration form sent with this notice and return it to the UNECE Secretariat by 30 September 2009. Those intending to submit a paper should take note of the deadlines and requirements under Section VI below.

14. In order to enter the Palais des Nations where the meeting 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. at the latest on Wednesday, 28 October 2009. 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.

15. Maps of Geneva, list of hotels and information for visitors to the Palais des Nations are available on the following website: <http://www.unece.org/stats/geneva.e.htm>. Please see map of the Pregny Gate on the above website: Geneva', 'Plan of the UN building').

V. ACCOMMODATION

16. Delegates are requested to make their own accommodation arrangements. Information about accommodation options in Geneva can be found at <http://www.geneva-tourism.ch>.

VI. DOCUMENTATION, METHODS OF WORK AND OFFICIAL LANGUAGES OF THE MEETING

17. The working languages of the meeting are English and Russian, simultaneous interpretation will be provided and documents will be available in English and Russian.

18. 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. The supporting papers will be distributed to the delegates via the Meeting's website. They will not be presented but only summarized by discussants.

19. Both invited and supporting papers can be submitted in English or Russian. Invited papers will be translated and therefore they will be available in both English and Russian, provided that they will be submitted to UNECE **by 8 July 2009**. Supporting papers will not be translated and will be available only in the language in which they will be submitted. If papers will be submitted in Russian, the authors are invited, if possible, to also submit a short abstract (maximum one page) in English.

20. Invited and supporting papers will be made available on the website of the UNECE secretariat at the following location: <http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2009.10.census.htm>

21. **The following deadlines and requirements apply:**

- Interested national statistical offices and other government bodies should inform the UNECE secretariat of their intention to contribute a supporting paper (indicating the topic) by sending an e-mail message to paolo.valente@unece.org **by 15 June 2009**. The message should include a short abstract, (maximum one page) of the paper, possibly in English.
- The full versions of papers, *not exceeding 8 pages in length (including tables, references, annexes, etc.)*, should be sent to the UNECE secretariat by the following deadlines:
 - Invited papers should be submitted **by 8 July 2009** at the latest;
 - Supporting papers should be submitted **by 25 September 2009** at the latest;
- Papers should be submitted in Word format electronically to paolo.valente@unece.org

22. 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.

VII. FURTHER INFORMATION

23. For further information, please contact the following organizers:

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