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ENGLISH ONLY

**UNITED NATIONS STATISTICAL OFFICE OF THE**

**ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE EUROPEAN UNION (EUROSTAT)**

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

**Group of Experts on Population and Housing Censuses**  
(Geneva, Switzerland, 28-30 September 2016)

INFORMATION NOTE

The **meeting** will be held in room VII at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland.   
It will start at 9.30 p.m. on Wednesday, 28 September 2016  
and finish on Friday, 30 September by 5.30 p.m.

# INTRODUCTION

1. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and Eurostat are jointly organizing a Meeting of the Group of Experts on Population and Housing Censuses on 28-30 September 2016. The Meeting will be held in room VII (3rd floor, nearest entrance doors are A11 and C6) at the Palais des Nations, Avenue de la Paix 8, Geneva.
2. Immediately before the Meeting, on 26-27 September, UNECE will organize a Workshop on Population and Housing Censuses for countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia, in cooperation with the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CISSTAT), and with financial support from the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA).

# PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

1. The main purpose of the meeting is to discuss about plans and preparations for the 2020 round of censuses, including methodological and technological aspects, and issues related to the implementation of the new Conference of European Statisticians (CES) Recommendations for the 2020 Censuses of Population and Housing, that were adopted by the CES at its June 2015 Plenary Session (the Recommendations are available here: <http://www.unece.org/publications/2020recomm.html>). The Meeting is organized under the CES work programme on population and housing censuses.
2. The target audience of the Meeting includes census managers and experts responsible for various aspects of census planning and management in national statistical offices and census agencies.

# AGENDA OF THE MEETING

1. The work programme of the meeting will consist of all or part 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 and other documents will be posted on the meeting’s web page at [www.unece.org/stats/documents/2016.09.census1.html](http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2016.09.census1.html)
2. Assessing costs and benefits of censuses
3. Alternative methods for counting of population, in particular  
   hard-to-count population groups
4. Possible uses of new data sources (e.g. “Big Data”) for censuses
5. Innovations in census methodology and technology,  
   and results of testing
6. Methods for assessing quality and usability of registers and  
   administrative sources
7. Frameworks and tools for bilateral and multilateral cooperation among NSIs with regard to censuses
8. Detailed explanatory notes on the above topics are provided below.

## Assessing costs and benefits of censuses

1. In most countries, population and housing censuses have to be conducted with limited budget since NSIs and census agencies face increasing financial constraints. This represents a challenge in particular when the census methodology adopted requires direct field data collection, which is very expensive. In these countries, special measures are often taken to improve the enumeration of specific hard-to-count population groups, resulting in additional costs.
2. Assessing in advance the census costs as accurately as possible is a basic requirement to obtain the funds necessary to conduct a census. In assessing the census costs, consideration is normally given to the costs of the previous census (unless a significantly different methodology is adopted), taking into account inflation and other relevant factors. Assessing the census costs is particularly difficult when a new methodology is adopted, which may result for instance in the reduction of costs for direct field collection, and in the increase of costs for technology and communication.
3. In order to convince the government (or other providers of funds) to allocate the funds required for the census, it can be useful to provide detailed information about the benefits of the census, which may include also estimates of the financial value of the census.
4. In this session countries are expected to share experiences and/or challenges with assessing the costs and benefits of censuses, in particular in the framework of reducing census budgets.

## Alternative methods for counting of population, in particular hard-to-count population groups

1. In the traditional census approach, the enumeration is based either on face-to-face interviews or on self-completion of the census questionnaire by the households. In recent years other methods emerged, like the Internet response options, which in some countries has become the main method of collection. In countries with a register-based or combined census, the enumeration is based on data derived from population registers and other administrative registers.
2. For each of those methods, there are some population groups that are difficult to count for various reasons. They may include, for instance, immigrants (especially those arrived in the country recently, with undocumented status, or stateless), refugees and asylum seekers, students, transient populations, homeless or roofless people. Information on sexual identity and/or gender identity is also difficult to collect.
3. Countries are expected to discuss in this session their past experiences or plans for the future census concerning the counting of the population in general and hard-to-count groups in particular.

## Possible uses of new data sources (e.g. “big data”) for censuses

1. Many countries have changed or are considering changing the method used to conduct the census, often adopting methods based on multiple data sources, such as registers and administrative datasets. Some countries are also considering the use of “big data” (from public administrations or the private sector) in the census, either as direct source of data, or to improve the coverage and quality of address lists.
2. In this session countries are expected to exchange experiences on the possible uses of new data sources for censuses.

## Innovations in census methodology and technology, and results of testing

1. Plans for the 2020 census round show that a significant number of UNECE countries, particularly in Western Europe, will increasingly use data from registers and multiple sources, and apply innovative census technologies. They include an Internet response option, which in some countries will be the main enumeration method. Many countries are also working on innovations that will allow geo referencing census data, making use of digitized maps and GPS.
2. In this session, countries will discuss their plans for using alternative census methodology and innovative technology the 2020 census round. The results of tests, when available, will be presented, so that the experiences of single countries will be discussed and possibly compared with those from other countries.

## Methods for assessing quality and usability of registers and administrative sources

1. Many countries are considering adopting in the 2020 round alternative census methods that make use of data from different types of registers and administrative sources. For these countries, a critical issue is the assessment of the quality and usability of these sources for the census. The session will provide an opportunity to exchange experiences, presents results, discuss opportunities and challenges.
2. The UNECE Task Force on Register-based and Combined Censuses, established by the Bureau of the CES in February 2016 with the objective to prepare guidelines on register-based and combined censuses, will have the opportunity to discuss in this session the draft outline of the future guidelines and some preliminary results of its work.

## Frameworks and tools for bilateral and multilateral cooperation among NSIs with regard to censuses

1. Cooperation at the international level between NSIs is important and useful for population and housing censuses as in all statistical areas. Many countries have recently developed alternative methodologies and technologies, with the objective to increase efficiency and reduce costs. Countries sharing their experiences with other countries can often provide useful information on lessons learned, best practices, requirements and the implications of different innovative methodologies and technologies on census planning, implementation, and data quality.
2. In addition to expert meetings and other initiatives promoted by international organizations, bilateral and multilateral cooperation among NSIs plays a fundamental role. This session will be dedicated to discuss some examples of frameworks and tools for bilateral and multilateral cooperation among NSIs, and collect feedback on how to further improve cooperation.

# DOCUMENTATION, METHODS OF WORK AND LANGUAGES

1. The working languages of the meeting are English and Russian. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in these languages.
2. Participants are welcome to submit a paper for any topic on the agenda. Authors of papers submitted in Russian are encouraged to provide a short abstract in English (maximum one page), if possible.
3. The following deadlines and requirements apply:

* Meeting participants who intend to contribute a paper should inform the UNECE secretariat indicating the topic of the paper and attaching a short abstract) by **25 May 2016**.
* The full final versions of papers, not exceeding 15 pages including charts, annexes and references, should be sent to the UNECE Secretariat in Word format by **22 June 2016**.
* Presenters are encouraged to use power point presentations, and to send them to the UNECE Secretariat by **15 September 2016**.
* All submissions should be addressed to the UNECE Secretariat, Mr. Paolo Valente, e-mail [paolo.valente@unece.org](mailto:paolo.valente@unece.org), copy to social.stats@unece.org

1. Papers will be made available on the website of the UNECE secretariat at the following location: [www.unece.org/stats/documents/2016.09.census1.html](http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2016.09.census1.html) The documents posted on the meeting web page will not be distributed in the meeting room. Participants are encouraged to download them and bring their own copies to the meeting.

# PARTICIPATION, ACCREDITATION and REGISTRATION

1. The Work Session is open to representatives of all member States of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE). Representatives of other Member States of the United Nations, specialized agencies of the United Nations, other intergovernmental organizations and non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC) may also participate in a consultative capacity, according to the terms of reference of UNECE (E/ECE/778/Rev.3, paras. 11, 12 and 13). All delegates must be accredited by the competent authority of their country or international organization.
2. All participants should register by **1 September 2016** by completing the online registration for the

Expert Meeting: <https://www2.unece.org/uncdb/app/ext/meeting-registration?id=uik8WW>

Workshop: <https://www2.unece.org/uncdb/app/ext/meeting-registration?id=Ryp09w>

1. The online meeting registration guideline is available at: [https://www2.unece.org/wiki/display/OMR](https://www2.unece.org/wiki/display/OMR/Online+Meeting+Registration+Guidelines).
2. 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 at the Embassy of Switzerland in the country in which the participants reside, with reference to the UNECE/Eurostat Meeting on Population and Housing Censuses. If necessary, the UNECE secretariat can provide a letter to facilitate obtaining a visa. Please indicate this need on the registration form or contact the Secretariat at [social.stats@unece.org](mailto:social.stats@unece.org).
3. In order to enter the Palais des Nations, 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 the Pregny Gate of the Palais des Nations (Avenue de la Paix 14, 1210 Geneva; buses 8, F, V, Z and 28, stop Appia) by 8.30 a.m. on Wednesday, 18 May. The Security Identification Office is open Monday to Friday from 8 a.m. to 5 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. 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>

# ACCOMMODATION

1. Participants are requested to make their own accommodation arrangements. The UNECE secretariat in Geneva is not in a position to provide such services to participants. Participants are advised to book hotel accommodation well in advance of the meeting since available rooms may be limited due to other meetings and events taking place in Geneva during the month of September. 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/meetings/practical.htm>. The following information is also available:

* The closest hotel to Palais des Nations is the 5-Star Intercontinental.
* There are several three-star and four-star hotels near Cornavin, the main train station. These hotels are moderate in price and are 10 minutes by bus or tram and 25-30 minutes on foot from the Palais des Nations. Examples include: Ibis Genève Centre Nations, Eden, Manotel, Mon Repos, des Alpes, International and Terminus, Montana, Savoy, Suisse, and Windsor.

# FREE PUBLIC TRANSPORT IN GENEVA

1. Geneva International Airport now offers incoming passengers a free ticket for public transport. The free tickets are available from a machine in the airport’s baggage collection area and allow you to use any public transport (train, tram, bus) in Geneva and surrounding areas for a period of 80 minutes. Look for the machine pictured below after collecting your luggage and before walking out through the customs area.



1. When checking-in at your hotel you should receive a free [Geneva Transport Card](http://www.geneve-tourisme.ch/index.php?rubrique=0000000417&lang=_eng), enabling you to use the entire Geneva public transport system free of charge throughout your stay.
2. The Geneva Airport is approximately 4 kilometres from the city centre. The train is the most efficient way to get into the city. Follow the signs to the airport railway station from the arrivals area. All trains leaving from the airport stop at the central Geneva-Cornavin station. The journey takes six minutes. The buses 5 and 28 will bring you from the airport to the Place des Nations.
3. Taxis are readily available from the airport. They are metered, so costs will vary, the journey from the airport into the city centre will usually cost around CHF 30.
4. Tourist and public transport information is available at the [Unireso](http://www.unireso.com/) information desk in the airport arrival hall after you go through customs. More information on Geneva’s free public transport initiative is available from:

* Public transport from Geneva Airport: <http://www.gva.ch/en/desktopdefault.aspx/tabid-67/>
* Free Geneva Transport Card: <https://www.geneve.com/en/block/free-public-transport-134/>

# WEATHER

1. The weather in Geneva in September is pleasant, although it may rain. The average day temperature is 17ºC. You can check the weather forecast at the local website: <http://www.meteoswiss.admin.ch/web/en/weather.html>. The conference room where the meeting will be held is air-conditioned and the temperature is maintained in the range of 20-22ºC.

# CURRENCY

1. The exchange rate of the euro and the Swiss franc is now around 1.09 francs per 1 euro and is subject to daily market fluctuations. For conversion rate, please consult <http://www.ubs.com/global/en/bcqv/calculator.html>. Currency exchange facilities are available in the city centre and at the UBS bank branch at Palais des Nations, located on the ground floor of C building (door C6). It is open from 08:30 to 16:30, with no lunch break, from Monday to Friday.

# INFORMATION AND CORRESPONDENCE

## UNECE Secretariat

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## Map of the United Nations premises in Geneva

## (Directions to Room VII, 3th floor, nearest entrances Door A11 and Door C6)



