

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS
Group of Experts on Population and Housing Censuses
Geneva, Switzerland, 26-28 September 2018

**STATISTICAL OFFICE OF THE
EUROPEAN UNION (EUROSTAT)**

CALL FOR PAPERS

I. EXPLANATORY NOTES ON THE SUBSTANTIVE DISCUSSION TOPICS

Explanatory notes on the substantive discussion topics are provided below.

A. Methodology, new data sources including big data

Available information on plans for the 2020 census round show that a significant number of UNECE countries, particularly in Western Europe, will increasingly adopt alternative census methodologies, often making use of data from administrative and multiple sources.

In this session, countries will discuss their plans for the 2020 census round, focusing in particular on alternative census methodology and new data sources. The possible use of "big data" either as a direct source of census data or for improving the coverage and quality of address lists will also be discussed, possibly involving representatives of companies that produce or manage big data. 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.

In the framework of this session, the UNECE Task Force on Register-based and Combined Censuses is expected to present the draft *"Guidelines on the use of registers and administrative data for population and housing censuses"*.

B. Measurement of the quality of administrative sources for use in censuses

In February 2018, the Bureau of the CES established a new UNECE Task Force on Measuring the Quality of Administrative Sources for Use in Censuses. The task force will present at the meeting the progress of its work and seek feedback. Countries will also have the opportunity to share their experiences in measuring the quality of administrative sources for censuses with reference to past censuses or the preparations for the 2020 round.

C. Future censuses beyond 2020

The October 2017 UNECE-Eurostat Expert Meeting on Censuses included a panel discussion on the future of censuses beyond 2020. In the discussion, consensus emerged that providing data on a decennial basis will no longer be acceptable in future, and that more frequent updates will be necessary. It was also observed that the discussion on the future of censuses should not focus solely on incremental improvements based on the past, but may require a paradigm shift. The Expert Group proposed to undertake work on this subject at the UNECE level, building on the work done at the EU level.

In February 2018, the Bureau of the CES requested the UNECE Steering Group on Censuses to prepare by 2020 an in-depth analysis on the future of population and housing censuses after the 2020 round. The Steering Group will present at the meeting the progress of its work and seek feedback.

D. Technology

In view of the 2020 census round a significant number of UNECE countries are planning or at least considering the adoption of innovative census technologies, particularly for data collection. They include the Internet response option, which in some countries will be the main enumeration method, and the use of tablets or other handheld devices for field data collection. Many countries are also working on innovations that will allow geo-referencing census data, making use of digitized maps and GPS.

In this session, countries will discuss their plans for using innovative technology in the 2020 census round. The results of tests with new technology will be presented, if available.

E. Dissemination

The dissemination of census results should be given prominent importance in all countries regardless of the census methodology adopted, since “only used statistics are useful statistics”. Considering the huge resources normally spent to conduct the census and produce the most relevant and accurate results, it is fundamental that adequate resources are invested and appropriate means are identified to disseminate the census results.

Countries will have the opportunity to share information on their plans for census dissemination, including different media to be used and products to be developed to satisfy the needs of different categories of users.

F. Statistical disclosure control

In order to try to satisfy as much as possible user requirements, countries more and more produce census outputs that allow users to obtain customized census data, possibly at fine territorial

and/or information level. In this context it is very important that measure of statistical disclosure control (SDC) be implemented to ensure that data are released without giving away confidential information that can be linked to specific individuals or entities.

Various SDC procedures have been developed with the objective to ensure minimum information loss and maximum data utility. Countries will have the opportunity to share their experiences in this area.

G. Geo-spatial information

Over the last years, in most countries, the demand for geo-referenced census data has increased significantly. At the same time, the technology available to produce and disseminate geo-referenced statistical data has improved rapidly, and the costs have often decreased, making this technology relatively affordable for an increasing number of countries.

Some countries have already accumulated experience in producing and disseminating grid or other geo-referenced statistics as outputs of their censuses, while others still have limited experience. The session will provide an opportunity to exchange experiences, presents results, discuss opportunities and challenges.

H. Census content: design of questionnaire for paper, internet and tablets; compliance with the CES Recommendations

In this session, countries are expected to discuss various issues related to questionnaire design and, more in general, compliance with census recommendations for the next round.

Questionnaire design is a critical part of census preparations for all countries that will conduct a traditional or combined census. Many countries will use both paper and electronic questionnaires, for tablets and/or internet self-response. Particular challenges are faced by the countries that for the next census have to design an electronic questionnaire for the first time, with no or limited experience in this field.

Compliance with the CES Recommendations concerns all countries, regardless of the census methodology adopted. Countries using registers and administrative data – in particular - may face challenges in complying with recommended definitions or classifications, particularly for census topics that are new or have changed compared to previous census rounds.

I. Relation between censuses and other statistics, such as demographic, labour and regional statistics

Many countries in the UNECE region have moved or are moving towards census methodologies based on registers and administrative data, to improve the cost-effectiveness of the census, and to produce at least partial updates more frequently than every ten years. As part of this transition, the census is more and more integrated with the other statistical production of NSIs, in particular with annual demographic statistics and social surveys. This change has significant implications in

many areas, including the organization of the various surveys, the concepts, definitions and classifications adopted, and the outputs produced.

In this session, participants are expected to discuss their experiences with regard to the relation between censuses and other statistical activities carried out by NSIs, including demographic, labour and regional statistics.

II. INSTRUCTIONS AND DEADLINES

1. Participants are welcome to submit a paper for any topic on the agenda. Papers can be submitted in English, French or Russian. Papers will be translated within the limits of the translation capacity available.
2. All papers submitted will be disseminated on the meeting web page. However, not all papers will be presented at the meeting, to leave sufficient time to the discussion. The UNECE Steering Group on Population and Housing Censuses will review the papers submitted and select the papers that will be presented.
3. The following deadlines and requirements apply:
 - Meeting participants who intend to contribute a paper should inform the UNECE secretariat by **18 May 2018**, indicating the tentative title, the agenda item to which the paper refers, and attaching a short abstract (between 100 and 200 words).
 - The full final versions of papers, not exceeding 15 pages including charts, annexes and references, should be sent to UNECE in Word format by **8 June 2018**.
 - Presenters are encouraged to use power point presentations, and to send them to the UNECE Secretariat by 20 September 2018.
 - All submissions should be addressed to the UNECE Secretariat, Mr. Paolo Valente, e-mail paolo.valente@un.org with copy to social.stats@unece.org
4. Contributors are reminded that the success of the meeting depends upon the ability to translate materials in advance and the opportunity for participants to read the papers before the meeting. Therefore, these deadlines must be strictly adhered to.
5. Papers will be made available on the website of the UNECE secretariat at the following location: <http://www.unece.org/index.php?id=47796>.

III. INFORMATION AND CORRESPONDENCE

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