

Joint UNECE/Eurostat Work Session on Statistical Data Confidentiality
(Bilbao, Spain, 2-4 December 2009)

INFORMATION NOTICE No. 1

The meeting will be held at the Basque Government Main Office, Gran Via 85, Bilbao, Spain, from 2 to 4 December 2009, starting at 9.30 a.m.

I. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

1. The main objectives of the meeting are to facilitate the exchange of experience and identify the best practices in dealing with technical issues related to statistical data confidentiality in national statistical offices. The meeting is primarily intended for experts from national and international statistical offices as well as invited academics dealing with statistical disclosure limitation. At the kind invitation of the Basque Statistical Office (EUSTAT), the meeting will be held from 2 to 4 December 2009 in Bilbao (Spain).
2. Statistical disclosure limitation is an important issue influencing public perception of official statistics. Statistical confidentiality and protection of respondents' privacy is included in the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, which the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe adopted at its 1992 annual session.

II. AGENDA OF THE MEETING

3. The work programme of the meeting will consist of the following substantive topics:
 - (i) Harmonization of statistical data confidentiality – legal and methodological aspects;
 - (ii) Synthetic and hybrid data;
 - (iii) Research data centres and virtual labs;
 - (iv) Tools and software improvements;
 - (v) Statistical disclosure control methods for the next census round;
 - (vi) Case studies;
 - (vii) Risk/benefit analysis and new directions for statistical disclosure limitation.
4. Detailed explanatory notes on the nature and expected outcomes of topics (i) – (vii) are provided in Section V of this Information Notice.

III. PARTICIPATION AND ACCREDITATION

5. 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.** 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 Spain in the country in which the participant resides, with a reference to the joint UNECE/Eurostat Work Session on Statistical Data Confidentiality.

6. Organizations are requested to **inform the UNECE secretariat before 1 September 2009** whether they intend to participate at the meeting and/or submit a contribution on the topics mentioned above. Please indicate the topic to which the paper will refer as well as *participant(s) name(s) and their contact data*.

7. Participants are requested to fill in the attached Conference registration form, which is found on the last page of this document and which will also be available in Word format on the website at the address indicated in paragraph 14. It should be sent to both the UNECE secretariat and to the Basque Statistical Office, as indicated on the form by **30 October 2009** so that it may be processed well in advance of the meeting.

8. The UNESCO Chair in Data Privacy (<http://unescoprivacychair.urv.cat>) sponsors a limited number of travel grants for contributors and delegates from transition countries. For further information please contact gloria.pujol@urv.cat.

IV. DOCUMENTATION, METHODS OF WORK AND OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

9. The official language of the meeting is English. The documents should, therefore, be submitted in English only. The following deadlines and requirements apply:

- The papers, not exceeding 10 pages in length, should be sent to the UNECE secretariat **by 30 October 2009 at the latest**.
- Papers should be submitted in electronic format in **MS Word** or PDF by e-mail to Ms. Diane Serikoff (diane.serikoff@unece.org).
- Templates in Word and Latex will be made available on the web site or may be requested by e-mail (diane.serikoff@unece.org).

10. For each substantive item on the agenda the organizers will invite a small number of speakers to write an **invited paper** and to present them at the meeting. All other participants are welcome to submit a **supporting paper** on any topic of the agenda.

11. Authors of invited papers will have about 20 minutes per paper for their presentation. Time permitting, authors of supporting papers may have the opportunity to highlight the main issues raised in their papers. Presenters may use PowerPoint presentations or Adobe Acrobat full screen presentations. The UNECE secretariat cannot provide translations of the presentations.

12. Presentations in PowerPoint or Adobe Acrobat should be sent to the UNECE secretariat by **20 November 2009 at the latest**, so that these can be reviewed by Discussants and installed on the conference room computer prior to the meeting.

13. Statistics Netherlands will publish the proceedings of the conference, containing a wide selection of the papers presented. Selected papers will also be invited for publication in the journal "Transactions on Data Privacy". It would greatly facilitate their task if authors could adhere strictly to the layout in the document template that will be uploaded to the UNECE website at the address below.

14. 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/2009.12.confidentiality.htm>

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.

V. EXPLANATORY NOTES TO THE AGENDA

Topic (i): Harmonization of statistical data confidentiality – legal and methodological aspects

Session Organizer: Aleksandra Bujnowska, Eurostat (Aleksandra.Bujnowska@ec.europa.eu)

15. Harmonization of statistical data confidentiality (SDC) practices is an important step in the process of making data more consistent and comparable. The new legal framework for the production of the European Statistics (Regulation (EC) No. 223/2009) provides new measures for "harmonisation of principles and guidelines as regards the physical and logical protection of confidential data". It is therefore important to compare SDC practices in the Member States and develop some common standards that may be used in the entire European Statistical System. These standards could also be applied in non-EU countries.

16. Possible topics for this session include presentation of the new legal framework in the EU, good practices regarding harmonization of SDC methods, lessons learned from past harmonizations etc. Papers on harmonization of procedures and administrative processes are also welcomed.

Topic (ii): Synthetic and hybrid data

Session Organizer: Josep Domingo-Ferrer, Rovira i Virgili University of Tarragona, Spain (josep.domingo@urv.cat)

17. Masked data for SDC may approximately preserve a broad range of distributional characteristics, although very few of them (if any) are exactly preserved. On the other hand, synthetic data exactly preserve the pre-selected statistics and may seem less disclosive than masked data, but they do not preserve at all any statistics other than those pre-selected. Hybrid data mixing the original data and synthetic data have been proposed in the literature to combine the strengths of masked and synthetic data. This topic is on papers seeking to expand the utility of synthetic and/or hybrid data.

Topic (iii): Research data centres and virtual labs

Session Organizer: Maurice Brandt, Federal Statistical Office, Germany (maurice.brandt@destatis.de)

18. In recent years many National Statistical Institutes or microdata producing institutions established facilities to access their microdata. Data users prefer solutions that are easy, provide good analysis potential and incur little expense. In summary, the user needs are evolving. From the data producer perspective, the first priority is the confidentiality of data.

19. This topic deals with the improvement of infrastructure and techniques in research data centres and virtual labs. New developments and methods to access microdata in a safe environment, whether in a safe centre or through remote access, will be presented. The on-site access to microdata is usually faster if the infrastructure is already set up, but there is still the part of output checking of the individual results of researchers. New concepts and methods to reduce the burden of output checking are also welcome in this session.

Topic (iv): Tools and software improvements

Session Organizer: Anco Hundepool, Statistics Netherlands (aj.hundepool@cbs.nl)

20. Software has always played an important role in SDC. Complex methods can only be used when appropriate software is available. This session seeks papers describing current developments in SDC tools as well as visions for future directions. Not only complete software packages, but also tools embedded in other systems are of great interest, as the availability of tools is a key issue in the promotion of SDC methodology.

Topic (v): Statistical disclosure control methods for the next census round

Session Organizer: Eric Schulte Nordholt, Statistics Netherlands (esle@cbs.nl)

21. The objective of this topic is to establish the link between the technical work carried out in the work session and the daily practice of implementing statistical disclosure control (SDC) methods for the next Census Round of 2010/2011 in national statistical institutes (NSIs). Bridging this gap helps to identify the need for further methodological and technical developments, thus enriching initiatives from both sides.

22. Contributions will report on on-going initiatives related to the protection of both microdata and tabular data covering the entire field of SDC. They should, however, focus on practical implementation and solutions for the next Census Round. Papers documenting progress in the state of development of standard tools, and implementations of recently proposed methods including prototypes, are encouraged.

Topic (vi): Case studies

Session Organizers: Luisa Franconi, Istat, Italy (franconi@istat.it) and Sarah Giessing, Federal Statistical Office, Germany (sarah.giessing@destatis.de)

23. Contributions to this session may report on applications of any kind of statistical disclosure limitation methodology. But they should focus on practical implementation, rather than on discussion and analysis of theoretical concepts. Papers documenting the implementation of statistical disclosure control (SDC) methodology and software tools into actual data production at a national statistical institute are welcomed. Papers may discuss concepts used to model the data structures and statistical properties of a particular data set in such a way as to create problems that can be handled by some standard SDC methodology or software tool. The focus may be on technical solutions, for instance for generating and processing the input and output of standard SDC software within a larger application, but also on methodological aspects like the particular approach taken to balance disclosure risk and data utility for a particular survey. Especially welcome are papers describing a productive application of a new emerging methodology like the production of perturbed tabular data.

Topic (vii): Risk/benefit analysis and new directions for statistical disclosure limitation

Session Organizer: Lawrence H. Cox, U.S. National Center for Health Statistics (lgc9@cdc.gov)

24. Modern development and practice of statistical disclosure limitation (SDL) is concerned with protecting data while preserving analytical and usability properties of original data. What was described as the *confidentiality/quality tradeoff* during the 1970s has evolved to *balancing risk* (of disclosure) *and benefits* (of more accurate, complete, usable data). In addition, the introduction of data quality explicitly into confidentiality research and practice has resulted in new and enhanced directions for SDL research and assessment, and the emergence of a framework within which SDL methods can be compared based on risk/benefit. Papers and discussion on this theme will address these issues. Potential topics include: risk/benefit assessment of an SDL method; comparison of two or more SDL methods based on quality-preserving criteria; informative reports on actual risk/benefit analyses; proposed criteria, frameworks or metrics for risk/benefit analyses; and, new and proposed SDL methods based on quality-preserving or risk reduction techniques. The possibility of a panel discussion on the topic “perturbation vs. suppression” is also envisioned.

VI. CONFERENCE VENUE AND ACCOMMODATION

25. Participants are reminded that they are responsible for making their own hotel reservations and are encouraged to do so as early as possible. The Work Session will take place at the Basque Government Main Office, Gran Via 85, Bilbao (see map in annex). Below is a list of hotels located within walking distance. Please note that all prices are indicative only, and may be subject to change.

HESPERIA ZUBIALDE

SINGLE ROOM	72 € (77.04)
DOUBLE ROOM:	80 € (85.60)

Prices per room per night, breakfast included (7% VAT not included)

hotel@hesperia-zubialde.com

<http://www.hesperia.com/hotels/Hesperia-Zubialde/#>

tel: 94 400 81 00

NH DEUSTO 3*

SINGLE ROOM	79 € (84.53)
DOUBLE ROOM	89 € (95.23)

Prices per room per night, breakfast included (7% VAT not included)

<http://www.nh-hotels.com/>

tel: 94 476 00 06

ERCILLA

SINGLE ROOM	99 € (105.93)
DOUBLE ROOM.....	115 € (123.05)

Prices per room per night, breakfast included (7% VAT not included)

<http://www.hotelercilla.es/>

tel: 94 470 57 00

SILKEN INDAUTXU

SINGLE ROOM	75 €
DOUBLE ROOM	80 €

Prices per room per night, breakfast and 7% VAT included

www.hotelindautxu.com

www.hoteles-silken.com

tel: 94 421 11 98

NH VILLA DE BILBAO

SINGLE ROOM	88 € (94.16)
DOUBLE ROOM	96 € (102.72)

Prices per room per night, breakfast included (7% VAT not included)

<http://www.nh-hotels.com/>

tel: 94 441 60 00

ABBA PARQUE 3*

Double room-single occupancy with breakfast buffet	83.50 €
Double room with 2 breakfast buffet	94 €
Executive room supplement.....	10.75€

Prices per room per night, breakfast and 7% VAT included

<http://www.abbahoteles.com/>

tel: 94 441 31 00

ALBERGUE BILBAO

SINGLE ROOM	21.10 €
DOUBLE ROOM	19.40 €

Prices per room per night, breakfast and 7% VAT included

<http://albergue.bilbao.net/cast/introcast.html>

tel: 94 427 00 54

VII. FURTHER INFORMATION

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

EUSTAT: Ms. Cristina Prado
Subdirector of Technical Coordination and Dissemination
Basque Statistical Office (EUSTAT)
C/Donostia-San Sebastián 1
01010 VITORIA-GASTEIZ, Spain
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UNECE: Mr. Steven Vale
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Fax: +41 22 917-0040
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Eurostat: Ms. Aleksandra Bujnowska
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REGISTRATION FORM

Joint UNECE/Eurostat Work Session on Statistical Data Confidentiality (Bilbao, Spain, 2-4 December 2009)

This form should be completed in duplicate by each participant and returned **by 30 October 2009**

1 copy to: Ms. Diane Serikoff
Tel: +41-22 917-2241
Fax: +41-22 917-0040
E-mail: diane.serikoff@unece.org

1 copy to: Ms. Elena Goni
Tel: +34-94 501-7522
Fax: +34-94 501-7501
E-mail: elena_goni@eustat.es

1. Surname (Family name):	Mr. <input type="checkbox"/> Ms. <input type="checkbox"/>	2. First name:
3. Representing (country or organization):		
4. Official function (in home country):		
5. Mailing address:		
6. Tel. No.:	7. Fax No.:	
8. E-mail address:		
9. Please indicate topic ((i)-(vii)) and title, if you intend to present a paper:		
10. Date and time of arrival in Bilbao:	11. Date and time of departure from Bilbao:	
12. Special requirements:		

Date _____

Signature _____

Annex – Map of Central Bilbao Showing Conference Hall and Hotels

