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EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (EUROSTAT)

ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC
COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT
(OECD)
STATISTICS DIRECTORATE

Joint UNECE/Eurostat/OECD meeting on management of statistical information systems (MSIS)
(Oslo, 18-20 May 2009)

THE REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE ON SOFTWARE SHARING, AND PROPOSALS FOR A SHARING ADVISORY BOARD

Prepared by the Task Force ¹

I. INTRODUCTION

1. During the 2008 MSIS meeting, it was agreed to launch a Task Force under the auspices of the MSIS Steering Group to prepare a report on possible future work on sharing statistical software and components. The Task Force was asked deliver a first report in September 2008, which would serve as an input for a proposed Eurostat project on sharing software and components.

2. This paper summarizes the report and proposals of that Task Force, and presents them for the approval of the 2009 MSIS meeting. As well as the main paper, there are four addenda as follows:

- Addendum 1: MSIS Task Force on Sharing Statistical Software - Final Report
- Addendum 2: Sharing Advisory Board – Mandate And Mission
- Addendum 3: Sharing Advisory Board – Operating Procedures
- Addendum 4: Sharing Advisory Board – Programme of Work

II. SUMMARY OF THE PROPOSALS

3. Two approaches are proposed; tactical and strategic. The tactical approach is being carried out by an ESSnet (European Statistical System network) led by Italy, which will take care of the more immediate needs like enhancement of the statistical community on the Open Source Observatory and Repository (OSOR) website, an inventory of shared software and proposals for harmonisation of architectures. This ESSnet is due to end in early 2010, but similar projects, also with a focus on specific short-term goals may follow. The results of this work will be open to all countries. The second approach involves the setting up of a Sharing Advisory Board to provide strategic direction and long term continuity.

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4. As the ESSnet is already under way, and is the subject of a separate report, this paper and the addenda focus on the strategic approach and the proposal to establish the Sharing Advisory Board. The detailed terms of reference for this board can be found in addenda 2 and 3, but in summary, the proposal is to set up a board consisting of seven experts to provide strategic direction to international work on the convergence of statistical business architectures and to promote favourable conditions for the sharing and joint development of software tools and components amongst national and international statistical organizations.

III. ACTION REQUESTED FROM THE MSIS MEETING

5. The 2009 MSIS meeting is asked to consider the proposals of the Task Force, in particular the establishment of a Sharing Advisory Board. If the proposals for the Sharing Advisory Board are accepted, preparatory work will commence and a formal mandate will be sought from the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians at its October 2009 meeting. The Bureau has already given a favourable opinion in principle to the creation of the Sharing Advisory Board.