

Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation
UNECE Activity Report
Fifth meeting of the SPECA Programme Working Group on Statistics
Paris, France, 8 June 2010

The fifth meeting of the SPECA Programme Working Group on Statistics took place in Paris on 8 June 2010. Representatives of National Statistical Offices of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan and Tajikistan participated in the meeting. EFTA, Eurostat and CIS-STAT also attended. OECD provided meeting facilities and simultaneous interpretation, and the participation of countries was financed by the World Bank. The meeting was organised by the acting Regional Adviser of UNECE Statistical Division, and chaired by the Agency on Statistics of the Republic of Kazakhstan.

The first session discussed the needs and plans for statistical capacity building in the SPECA member countries. The Regional Adviser presented the final report on the project for strengthening the statistical capacity on monitoring Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and underlined the significant progress achieved by countries, in particular, in population and housing censuses and measurement of non-observed economy. The Regional Adviser also pointed out the notable results achieved in a pilot on disability statistics carried out by Kazakhstan.

Ten different capacity building projects are either ongoing or starting in 2010. Training will be provided with partner organisations in statistical issues related to MDGs, international migration, sustainable development, violence against women, engendering statistical information, population and housing censuses, economic development, dissemination and production technology. In the discussion the participants expressed the need for receiving training on dissemination issues, production and database technology and implementation of the System of National Accounts (SNA).

It was noted that work towards the 2008 SNA is a continuation to the implementation of the 1993 SNA. The participants stressed the need for identifying priorities in the implementation of SNA. A session on SNA implementation plans is scheduled to take place in spring 2011 in Geneva. Special attention will be paid to the improvement of basic economic statistics. Therefore, new training workshops are prepared on government finance, short-term economic development and prices. Countries stressed the importance of translating the 2008 SNA into Russian, and thanked CIS-STAT for their joint work with ROSSTAT in translating the 2008 SNA. CIS-STAT informed that the translation should be finalised by May or June 2011, and that measures to ensure the quality of translation have been taken.

Progress on population and housing censuses in the SPECA member countries was the topic of the second session. Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Tajikistan are carrying out the 2010 round of population censuses. The good progress of these countries was pointed out, e.g. the measures they took in quality assurance, training of staff, application of new technologies and new survey design according to the

recommendations of Conference of European Statisticians (CES). The active exchange of experiences between the countries was seen as a useful practice.

CIS-STAT reported on increased cooperation with Turkmenistan, where a population and housing census will be carried out in 2012. Some concerns were expressed about Uzbekistan not planning to take a population and housing census. CIS-STAT requested for cooperation with UNECE in addressing the issue in a letter to the government officials of Uzbekistan. The letter should stress the importance of census taking.

Further training was requested for dissemination of census results. The need to develop an effective data transmission tool between National Statistical Offices and international organisations was emphasised. The current international work for development of data transmission standards may give rise to new solutions. Participants were informed that UNECE is actively involved in this work, and the topic is included in future capacity building activities.

Participants stressed that the meeting was an important opportunity to discuss issues of interest to the SPECA member countries. The chair from Kazakhstan and the director of UNECE Statistical Division thanked everyone for their contribution to the meeting and for the increased cooperation. The meeting was concluded by signing a memorandum of understanding between CIS-STAT and UNECE. The plans for joint activities between Eurostat, EFTA, UNECE and CIS-STAT were discussed further in a side meeting.

The materials of the meeting are available at:
<http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2010.06.speca.htm>

Thematic focus	Venue	Date	Total participants
Statistics	Paris	8 June 2010	8