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STATISTICAL COMMISSION and ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Forty-third plenary session

(Geneva, 12-15 June 1995)

PROGRAMMES OF INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL
WORK IN THE ECE REGION, 1995/96 AND 1996/97:
AN INTEGRATED PRESENTATION

SUB-PROGRAMME 2

TECHNICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND OTHER CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

The format of this integrated presentation

1. This is intended to be a fully integrated presentation of international work programmes in the ECE region. That is to say it includes not only the statistical work of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), but also the relevant statistical work carried out in the ECE region by the Commission of the European Communities, OECD, the UN Statistical Division (UNSD), ILO, WHO, IMF, the World Trade Organization (ex GATT), the World Bank, The Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS STAT) and many other agencies. The programmes are presented in six separate documents - one for each domain in the Conference's programme of work - as follows:

- Sub-programme 1: Organization and Operation of statistical services
(CES/1995/R.25/Add.1)
- Sub-programme 2: Technical infrastructure and other cross-cutting issues
(CES/1995/R.25/Add.2)
- Sub-programme 3: Economic statistics (CES/1995/R.25/Add.3)
- Sub-programme 4: Social and demographic statistics (CES/1995/R.25/Add.4)
- Sub-programme 5: Natural resources and environment statistics
(CES/1995/R.25/Add.5)

Sub-programme 6: Dissemination and support for secretariat activities
(CES/1995/R.25/Add.6)

2. The integrated presentation is prepared annually, according to the following timetable:

i) December-February : The ECE secretariat obtains information from the other organizations on their programmes of work and prepares a first draft of the integrated presentation for review by the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians at its February meeting of each year.

ii) March-June : The integrated presentation is updated and amended to include the Bureau's recommended decisions to the Conference in each field of statistics, and it is presented in draft form for review by the Conference at its annual meeting in June.

iii) July-August : The integrated presentation is amended to reflect the decisions taken by the Conference at its June meeting concerning its own work programme, and it is issued in its final form for the forthcoming two-year period.

3. Thus, the material presented in the six documents referred to above has been amended to reflect decisions taken by the Conference at its June 1995 plenary session. The Conference approved the parts of the integrated presentation that comprise its own work programme. It also offered suggestions and advice on planned future work in the parts of the integrated presentation that are the responsibility of other international organizations.

4. Each sub-programme is sub-divided into a number of programme elements, and each programme element is described within the following framework:

OBJECTIVES OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS: Broad aims of national statistical offices for international work in that field over the next several years.

EXPECTED COLLECTIVE OUTPUT IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS: Specific outputs expected by countries in the next two years.

ISSUES TO WHICH THE ATTENTION OF THE CONFERENCE IS DRAWN: List of issues in each field of statistics that the Bureau of the Conference brought to the attention of the Conference at its plenary session.

DECISIONS BY THE CONFERENCE AT THE 1995 PLENARY SESSION: List of decisions on its programme of work taken by the Conference at the plenary session.

MEETINGS IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS: Sponsoring agency, title, date.

RAPPORTEUR/FOCAL POINT: International organization that the Conference has recommended be assigned responsibility for monitoring on behalf of the Conference progress towards the objectives and outputs specified for a programme element.

ACTIVITIES AND MEANS IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS: Description of the major activities of agencies in that field in the coming two years. Information is also given in this section on ECE resource implications for the work to be carried out by the ECE secretariat (the resource implications are classified as follows: minimal (less than 3 work months; moderate (3-6 work months); and substantial (over 6 work months)), and on priority ratings for the Conference's own programme of work (which are labelled "Priority A", "B" or "C" - Priority A indicates work to be undertaken by the Conference in 1995/96; Priority B means work is planned for 1996/97 but not for 1995/96; Priority C indicates work is not planned to be undertaken by the Conference in that field during the next two years).

Priority menus and lists of meetings

5. The "priority menu" summarizing the major types of activities the Conference plans to work on during the next two years in all projects in the sub-programme is given at the end of this addendum, together with a consolidated list of meetings that the ECE, Eurostat and the OECD plan to organize under this sub-programme in the next two years.

List of programme elements in the programme of work of the Conference

6. The list of programme elements in the whole programme of work of the Conference is given in Table 1, together with an indication of the document in which information for that programme element can be found.

Other related information

7. As the integrated presentation is being presented in the same format in six separate documents, this explanatory note on the new format of the presentation is being reproduced in each of the documents. A separate short document (CES/1995/R.25) describes the background to the development of the format used here and provides additional information including an explanation of acronyms used.

Table 1. List of programme elements in the programme of work of the Conference (together with an indication of the document in which information for that programme element can be found)

Sub-programme	Programme element
<u>Sub-programme 1</u> : Organization and Operation of statistical services (See document CES/1995/R.25/Add.1)	1.1 Issues of statistical policy 1.2 Transition countries 1.3 Promotion and coordination of international statistical work 1.4 Technical assistance to developing countries
<u>Sub-programme 2</u> : Technical infrastructure and other cross-cutting issues (See document CES/1995/R.25/Add.2)	2.1 Management of statistical information technology 2.2 Statistical data collection and processing 2.3 Dissemination and interchange of statistical information 2.4 Industry, commodity and occupation classifications 2.5 Statistical methodology 2.6 Geography 2.7 Regional statistics 2.8 Training

Sub-programme	Programme element
<p><u>Sub-programme 3</u> : Economic statistics (See document CES/1995/R.25/Add.3)</p>	<p>3.1 Implementation of the system of national accounts</p> <p>3.2 Money and banking, government finance, and balance of payments</p> <p>3.3 International trade in goods</p> <p>3.4 Transport</p> <p>3.5 Distributive trades</p> <p>3.6 International trade in services</p> <p>3.7 Tourism</p> <p>3.8 Other marketed services, and non-marketed services</p> <p>3.9 Price statistics, including purchasing power parities</p> <p>3.10 Agricultural statistics</p> <p>3.11 Industrial statistics</p> <p>3.12 Energy statistics</p> <p>3.13 Science and technology statistics</p> <p>3.14 Business registers and administrative records in support of economic statistics</p> <p>3.XX Other work in the field of economic statistics</p>
<p><u>Sub-programme 4</u> : Social and demographic statistics (See document CES/1995/R.25/Add.4)</p>	<p>4.1 Social indicators and frameworks</p> <p>4.2 Gender statistics</p> <p>4.3 Multi-purpose social surveys</p> <p>4.4 Registers and administrative records for social and demographic statistics</p> <p>4.5 Population and housing censuses</p> <p>4.6 Health statistics</p> <p>4.7 Crime and criminal justice statistics</p> <p>4.8 Education and training statistics</p> <p>4.9 Culture statistics</p> <p>4.10 Labour statistics</p> <p>4.11 Demographic statistics (including projections, migration and fertility)</p> <p>4.12 Human settlements and housing statistics</p> <p>4.13 Statistics of household income and expenditures, of the welfare of the population, and of poverty and income inequality</p> <p>4.14 Statistics on population groups of special interest</p> <p>4.XX Other work in the field of social and demographic statistics</p>
<p><u>Sub-programme 5</u> : Natural resources and environment statistics (See document CES/1995/R.25/Add.5)</p>	<p>5.1 Standards and frameworks for environmental data and indicators</p> <p>5.2 Natural resources and environmental accounting</p> <p>5.3 Environmental database development and dissemination</p>

Sub-programme	Programme element
<u>Sub-programme 6</u> : Dissemination and support for secretariat activities (See document CES/1995/R.25/Add.6)	6.1 Dissemination of statistical data by the secretariats 6.2 Statistical support for other activities of the secretariats

SUB-PROGRAMME 2
TECHNICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND OTHER CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

2.1 MANAGEMENT OF STATISTICAL INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Objectives over the next several years: To improve the management of information technology (IT) in statistical agencies, including: the definition of appropriate architectures for computing, communications and information holdings; the choice of appropriate interface standards; the impact of technological developments on statistical agencies; and the financial management of EDP. This programme element also oversees the more technical work of elements 2.2 and 2.3. For the coming period, emphasis should be placed on the use of information technology to reduce costs in statistical agencies, particularly through re-engineering of processes. Budgetary constraint makes this an important objective for all agencies.

Expected collective output in the next two years:

For ECE, the report of the ISIS'96 Seminar to the 1996 plenary session.

Attention of the Conference was drawn to the following:

- Developments taking place in the fields of metadata and EDI.

Decisions by the Conference at the 1995 plenary session: The Conference agreed

- To include the Seminar ISIS'1996 in the Conference's 1995/96 meeting programme.

Meetings in the next two years:

ECE: Seminar ISIS' 96 (Bratislava, Slovakia, May 1996).

ECE: 25th session of the Working Party on EDP (February 1997)

UNSD: Ad hoc expert group meeting on development of advance user access and output systems for the Statistical Division databases (19..)

Rapporteur/focal point: (to be designated at the 1996 plenary session)

Activities and means in the next two years:

Activities of ECE: (CES Priority A)

(a) Seminar on Integrated Statistical Information Systems and related matters (ISIS'96) in 1995/96 to consider: (i) Experiences in the implementation and use of existing standards metadata and classifications in statistical data processing; (ii) Electronic processing of statistical surveys - methods, software and organization, sampling, weightings and estimation; (iii) Data processing architectures for statistical processing, including client-server architecture and "right-sizing"; (iv) Electronic forms of the exchange, dissemination and marketing of statistical; and (v)

Innovative means to harnessing technology to reduce costs in statistical agencies.

(b) Twenty-fifth session of the Working Party on Electronic Data Processing (1996/97, and convened for documentation purposes as a seminar) to consider: (i) Impact of new technology on statistical data processing with special attention to strategic management issues related to technological changes such as the growth of client-server approaches to computing; (ii) The use of efficient methods and techniques in collection and processing operations, and assessment of the planned direction of work in the project on statistical data editing in the CES work programme; (iii) New methods and techniques in the dissemination of statistical information focusing on EDI, and assessment of the planned direction of work in the projection statistical metadata in the CES work programme; and (iv) Assessment of other activities related to statistical information technology being undertaken in subprogramme 2 of the programme of work of the Conference of European Statisticians.

Secretariat resources: Substantial.

Activities of OECD: Exploiting opportunities provided by new computing and communications technologies to further improve the effectiveness of its statistical activities. Thus the architecture for the Organisation's new statistical information management environment will be based on open-system technologies. Open-system architecture will facilitate integration of a variety of software tools and provide easy sharing of data among different information systems on a range of computing platforms. Taking advantage of possibilities provided by evolving international network technologies, to enhance methods and procedures for exchange of statistical information. Direct computer-to-computer links with statistical agencies in Member countries are being expanded, based on the OECD World data Network (OWN/d).

Activities of Eurostat: (Themes 10, 11,13: Data security; General and support services; Computer architecture)

Development and introduction of an integrated set of services intended to cover the needs generally observed in the fields of processing and disseminating information and office automation. In particular, the introduction of the local office automation scenario will be continued; possibilities of the use of electronic mail both within and outside the Commission (X400) will be explored; the final version of a classifications server will be developed; design of a new graphic architecture for Eurostat.

The smooth operation of the local computer infrastructure and improvement of local network management will be ensured.

Activities of other organizations:

UN Statistical Division (UNSD) : Activities will be focused on developing cost-effective methods and systems for collecting, assessing and compiling data and their dissemination, using new technologies for preparing major databases, publications and other statistical outputs, with particular emphasis on using new technologies to improve timeliness in reaching users and the quality of data and estimates presented; and implementing in-depth review of techniques, methods and content of the major statistical general-purpose publications, such as the Statistical Yearbook and Monthly Bulletin of Statistics, to consolidate the results of ongoing review and adjustments that have been made over recent years. Development of new databases to meet the growing need for multisectoral and integrated statistics and indicators in individual fields of statistics and on related work in other international organizations will receive further attention. Concerning economic and social statistical data, the Department for Economic and Social Information and Policy Analysis (DESIPA), in cooperation with the United Nations regional commissions, has undertaken the development of an Economic and Social Information System (UNESIS). The system is aimed at improving the way economic and social statistical data are collected, processed, stored, analyzed and disseminated.

2.2 STATISTICAL DATA COLLECTION AND PROCESSING

Objectives over the next several years: To promote the use of efficient methodology and software in the common collection and processing operations carried out by statistical agencies (e.g. sampling, data entry, editing, coding, estimation). Best practices and best software tools are to be identified and shared. For the coming period there should be two main objectives: (a) to support the identification of innovative approaches to cost reduction through technology being undertaken in 2.1; (b) to assess the current status of the useful work already accomplished in this area and to identify further work that would be of benefit.

Expected collective output in the next two years: A report to a future plenary session identifying proposals for further work under this program element and the benefits of such work. Input to the report required from element 2.1. For ECE, report from the work session on data editing to the 1996 plenary session.

Attention of the Conference was drawn to the following:

- The growing importance of the use by national and international statistical services of information technology for both data collection and dissemination as opposed to data processing (this reflects a move beyond concerns of efficiency to encompass concerns about effectiveness as well).

Decisions by the Conference at the 1995 plenary session: The Conference agreed

- To include the work session on data editing in the Conference's 1995/96 meeting programme.
- To include the publication "Data Editing Methods and Techniques, Volume 2" as a product of the Statistical Division in its 1995/96 work programme.

Meetings in the next two years:

ECE: Work session on Statistical Data Editing (Athens, Greece, November 1995)

Rapporteur/focal point: (to be designated at the 1996 plenary session)

Activities and means in the next two years:

Activities of ECE: (CES Priority A)

a) Work session on data editing (1995/96) to consider: (i) National reports on data editing experiences emphasizing new technology, impact of implementation of new methodology, issues in setting data editing standards, preparation for next censuses; (ii) How to evaluate data editing process; (iii) How to design sets of edits; (iv) How graphics may be applied to data editing; (v) How new technology impacts the data editing process; (vi) What to do when an edit fails; (vii) How the computer can speed the coding process; and (viii) Glossary.

b) Preparation of the publication "Data Editing Methods and Techniques -- Volume 2", the aim of which is to recommend efficient techniques for individual data editing operations.

Secretariat resources: Moderate

Activities of OECD: A common statistical information management environment is progressively being implemented, integrating the functions of data collection, storage, manipulation, analysis and dissemination, as well as associated metadata and data catalogue. This environment will provide expanded functionality; improved performance; greater ease of use, maintenance and upgrade; improved integration with document and publication production technologies; and lower costs.

Data collection methods and procedures are being further improved through progressive replacement of paper- and fax-based media with electronic media. Existing online services will be enhanced to provide for automated capture of data from statistical agencies. Operating over OWN/d, this enhanced service, will increase timeliness of statistical information received, eliminate errors inherent in manual procedures, and reduce the reporting burden.

Activities of Eurostat: (Theme 14: Sectoral applications)

Five broad lines of action have been identified: development of the work programme by the Working Party on Statistics, Telematic Networks and EDI with the following five priorities: metadata, reference environment, design and integration of EDI messages, collection of basic data, inter-organisational telematic network; meeting the needs resulting from enlargement making CRONOS-based information systems available on open systems; meeting the needs identified in the Corporate Planning exercise; changing over to X400 electronic mail.

Activities of other organizations:

UN Statistical Division (UNSD) : Activities will be focused on improving the timeliness, quality and relevance of statistical outputs in subject-matter areas such as national accounts, international trade, industry, energy, social and demographic statistics. Existing specialized databases will be strengthened, with particular attention to the COMTRADE database for international trade and the national accounts, industry and demographic statistics databases. Recently established databases on women and disability will be maintained. Work on compilation of selected environmental indicators will be initiated. Special efforts will also be made to ensure more comprehensive and comparable economic data for developing countries and countries in transition in European region.

Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS STAT) : In pursuance of the tasks arising from a number of international agreements (on the establishment of an economic union, the exchange of economic information, the provision of information to support the implementation of multilateral agreements, the exchange of information relating to external economic activity, on the establishment of the Interstate Economic Committee, and other), work will be continued to improve the collection, storage, processing and distribution of information, including further work on a list of indicators to be exchanged, the creation of a common statistical base and continued work to standardize the electronic exchange of statistical information.

2.3 **DISSEMINATION AND INTERCHANGE OF STATISTICAL INFORMATION**

Objectives over the next several years: To design and develop methodologies for a standard description of statistical data and metadata. To improve the dissemination of statistical information by statistical agencies with emphasis on the development of electronic products to supplement traditional paper outputs. With the growth in electronic communication, statistical agencies need to be able to deliver their information through media that meet the needs of their clients (e.g. via such means as FAX, CD-ROMs, and on-line services). This programme also embraces standards for managing metadata. Policy issues concerned with marketing and pricing fall under programme

element 1.1. In the near term emphasis should be placed on the development of common approaches and standards for the presentation of data on screens, for the electronic exchange of data, and for the management of statistical information and its descriptors.

Expected collective output in the next two years: For ECE, Status reports on progress on standards for electronic data exchange; Publication of the Inventory for the Presentation of Statistical Data and Metadata -- second issue; Publication of the Guidelines for the Modelling of Statistical Metainformation System; Publication of the standardization of Statistical Indicators and metadata; Dissemination of information on EDIFACT standards to transition countries; and reports of the work session on statistical metadata and of the work session on statistical outputs and dissemination to information media to the 1996 plenary session.

Attention of the Conference was drawn to the following:

- Work underway on the development and implementation of electronic data interchange based on EDIFACT standards;
- The importance of the statistical metainformation system as an integration tool in distributed data processing and as a facilitating tool in data dissemination.

Decisions by the Conference at the 1995 plenary session: The Conference agreed

- To include the preparation and distribution of metadata materials on statistical metadata in the Conference's 1995/96 work programme;
- To continue cooperation in development of EDIFACT Standards for statistics;
- To include the work session on statistical outputs and dissemination to information media in the Conference's 1995/96 meeting programme.

Meetings in the next two years:

ECE: Work session on statistical output for dissemination to information media (February 1996)

ECE: Work session on statistical metadata (Berlin, Germany, October 1996).

EUROSTAT: Telematics networks and EDI working group (4-6 October 1995)

EUROSTAT: SERT Working Party (5 December 1995)

Rapporteur/focal point: (to be designated at the 1996 plenary session)

Activities and means in the next two years :

Activities of ECE: (CES Priority A)

- a) Preparation and distribution of the methodological materials "Standardization of Statistical Indicators and Metadata", and "Guidelines for the Modelling of Statistical Metainformation Systems".
- b) Maintenance and publication of the Inventory of Standards for the Presentation of Statistical Data and Metadata.
- c) Work session on statistical metadata (1996/97) to consider: (i) national reports on progress in implementation of Statistical Metainformation Systems (SMSs); (ii) progress reports on common terminology for SMSs and inventory of standards suitable for statistics; (iii) architecture and design of metadata holdings and metadata systems including issues of quality assurance, comparability and flexibility; (iv) role of metainformation in the statistical life-cycle including the following phases: design of concepts and surveys, data capture, data processing, retrieval of data, dissemination and marketing; (v) exchange of metadata tools and metadata holdings.
- d) Participation in the development of international standards for statistical EDI (Group MD 6 of the Western European EDIFACT BOARD). Coordination of implementation of those standards in transition countries. Development of trial electronic collection of macroeconomic data from transition countries.
- e) Work session on statistical output for dissemination to information media (1996/97) to consider: (i) Objectives, principles and management issues in data dissemination; (ii) Techniques and technologies of improved information flow between statistical offices and media; (iii) Coordination of policies of statistical offices towards international news organizations; (iv) Relations with media outside dissemination.

Secretariat resources: Substantial.

Activities of OECD: Improvement of the speed, quality and flexibility with which the Organisation's statistical publications are produced. A database publishing facility, integrated with the statistical information management environment, will be established for the automated production of statistical publications. Standards are being defined to facilitate the production of publications in a variety of paper-based and electronic media.

Broadening use of electronic media for dissemination of statistical information. Existing online services will be extended to provide for query and retrieval of OECD statistics; operating through OWN/d, this will increase the accessibility of OECD statistics for external users. Will adhere to international standards for the electronic exchange of statistical information, as these emerge (e.g., EDIFACT).

Activities of Eurostat: (Theme 12, 53: New EDP methods, Business Statistics and telematic networks)

Design and coordination of activities in the field of standardisation of electronic data interchange (EDIFACT) and the setting-up of a telematic network to back up the European statistical system (DSIS).

Activities of other organizations:

UN Statistical Division (UNSD) : Published material: Statistical Yearbook; Monthly Bulletin of Statistics, World Statistics in Brief; Demographic Yearbook; Population and Vital Statistics Report; National Accounts Yearbook; Industrial Statistics Yearbook "Commodity Production Statistics"; Energy Statistics Yearbook; Energy Balances and Electricity Profiles; International Trade Statistics Yearbook; Commodity Trade Statistics; World Housing Statistics in Graphs; Statistical Chart on Ageing. Substantial part of these publications contains statistical data from European countries. Technical material: Ad hoc copies and extracts of databases in both machine-readable and printed formats are provided on a continuous basis to meet special requests in the fields of national accounts, ICP, external trade, general industrial statistics, commodity production statistics, index numbers of industrial production, energy, demographic statistics and general statistics. These requests cover a wide variety of Secretariat, United Nations system, Member State and general business and public applications. Databases are being prepared in diskette and CD-ROM for dissemination as sales publications in the fields of disability statistics, directory of international computerized statistical data bases, core economic and social indicators. The 1993 SNA will be issued on CD-ROM, the Statistical Yearbook and women's database will continue to be issued on CD-ROM and the Monthly Bulletin will be made available on line. New retrieval software is being developed for COMTRADE in cooperation with the World Bank and for the demographic and social statistics database, and is under consideration for UNESIS (comprising most of the other fields noted above).

International Monetary Fund (IMF) : All IMF statistical publications (International Financial Statistics (IFS), International Financial Statistics Yearbook (IFSY), Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook, Government Finance Statistics Yearbook, Direction of Trade Statistics Quarterly, Direction of Trade Statistics Yearbook) are now available to subscribers on magnetic tape. IFS is also available on CD-ROM, and progress is being made to make the Balance of Payments Statistics Yearbook and the Direction of Trade Statistics Publications also available on CD-ROM. Because the countries of the former Soviet Union (FSU) are not yet able to produce a full range of IFS data, the IMF published an IFS Supplement on the FSU countries in December 1993.

2.4

INDUSTRY, COMMODITY AND OCCUPATION CLASSIFICATIONS

Objectives over the next several years: To help ensure that by the end of the decade, member countries use either the same or a convertible classification of activities (latest vintages of ISIC, NACE or other classifications which can be well converted into either); that member countries use the same commodity classification (CPC services, HS or equivalent); and that they adopt ISCO or link their national classifications to it.

Expected collective output in the next two years: A schedule showing when member countries plan to implement the latest vintages of international classifications; an inventory of current deviations from international classifications annotated with measures of the relative importance of such deviations; and a list of deviations from the major classifications which are suggested for adoption by countries in transition.

Attention of the Conference was drawn to the following:

- It is important for countries to provide the OECD with information requested by its Working Party 9 on the extent to which their national classifications deviate from internationally recommended classifications.
- The revision of the Central Product Classification.

Decisions by the Conference at the 1995 plenary session: The Conference agreed that the compatibility between national classifications and ISIC Rev.3 and Rev.2 should be kept under close scrutiny, and that business accounting practices by countries in the region should be examined so as to ensure better harmonization.

Meetings in the next two years:

EUROSTAT: Customs code - Combined nomenclature section committee (25-28 September 1995)

EUROSTAT: Accounting and statistical coordination task force (27-28 September 1995)

EUROSTAT: SPC - NACE committee (13-14 November 1995)

EUROSTAT: Customs code - Combined nomenclature section committee (21-24. November 1995)

Rapporteur/focal point: (to be designated at the 1996 plenary session)

Activities and means in the next two years:

Intersecretariat Task Force : An Intersecretariat Task Force called the Task Force on Industrial and construction Statistics has been established in this field by the UN Statistical Commission's Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Coordination. Its two main

objectives concerned the improvement of international comparability of industry statistics and the reduction of duplication of work by international organisations. Given the difficulties associated with a rapid implementation of ISIC Rev.3 in a number of countries, the Task Force has made recommendations to the UN Statistical Commission to improve or at least maintain international comparability in industrial statistics in the transition period. It has also presented options aiming at facilitating the general implementation of ISIC Rev.3. Regarding the reduction of duplication, the Task Force has fostered the cooperation between the OECD and UNIDO which have already started a joint programme of cooperation. The Task Force has been asked by the Commission to continue its work on the users and uses of industrial statistics and monitoring the implementation of ISIC Rev.3.

Activities of ECE: (CES Priority C)

Activities of OECD: (See work of the Task Force on Industrial and Constructions Statistics above)

Activities of Eurostat: (Themes 26, 28, 42: Classifications, Statistical and accounting co-ordination and Management of external trade classifications)

For NACE Rev. 1, 1995 is the year in which it is brought into general use in several countries. Eurostat's main task is to assist users, build up a body of case law and analyse the requests for revisions made by statisticians and businesses. The CPA will also be implemented, with user assistance, accompanied by the establishment of case law and publication in all the languages. Work on the classification servers will be completed and they can start to be set up in the Member States. Another aim for 1995 is to continue examining COFOG (Classification of the Functions of Government) (See programme element 3.1) and COICOP (Classification of Individual Consumption by Purpose) and to establish harmonised groupings of NACE Rev. 1 and CPA headings for purposes of economic analysis - particularly national accounts (the aggregation for economic analysis).

Following a seminar in September 1994 on Statistical and Accounting Coordination, a Task Force is being established to examine the possibilities for improving the consistency of the statistical system. In particular, the new Task Force will work on the coordination of general statistical concepts and towards the better integrating micro- and macro-economic concepts over the wider scope of both economic and social statistics, including, inter alia, the concepts of classifications and statistical units of observation.

Activities of other organizations:

UN Statistical Division (UNSD) : Emphasis will be given on consolidating the important work of recent years on international activity, functional and

product classifications, especially the preparation of concordances in machine readable form. Activities will be focused on revision of the directory of the international classifications used in statistics; updating of correspondence tables and indices between specific system classifications.

The ILO: The ILO will continue to provide direct short-term assistance to countries wishing to prepare a national classification of occupations on the basis of ISCO 88 or similar basis, and the following of national developments with a view to updating the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO 88). A manual on the development of national classifications of occupations and their use in statistical surveys or for other uses will be issued in 1995.

2.5 STATISTICAL METHODOLOGY

Objectives over the next several years: To identify and promote methodological innovation with broad application across statistical programs. Generally methodological issues will be considered under the subject matter areas to which they apply. The methodological dimension of survey processing software is covered under programme element 2.2. This element exists to accommodate cross-cutting methodological issues. No activities in the Conference's work programme are proposed for the coming planning period.

Expected collective output in the next two years: For Eurostat, case studies, methodological recommendations, prototypes and software will be developed in the area of information technology and statistics, telematics for statistics and environment and transport statistics. The precise form of these actions will be determined once the necessary legal framework has been approved by the EU Council.

Attention of the Conference was drawn to the following:

Decisions by the Conference at the 1995 plenary session: (None)

Meetings in the next two years:

Rapporteur/focal point: (to be designated at the 1996 plenary session)

Activities and means in the next two years:

Activities of ECE: (CES Priority C)

Activities of OECD:

Activities of Eurostat: (Theme 66: Research and development in the field of statistics (part of))

Activities primarily consist of launching of statistical research projects under the Fourth R&D Framework Programme of the European Union. The DOSIS programme will be opened to the scientific community, the NSIs, economic operators and other users.

Activities of other organizations:

2.6 GEOGRAPHY

Objectives over the next several years: To improve the efficiency, quality and comparability of the geographic dimension of official statistics. This includes concepts and standards, new tools and technology (GIS), dissemination of geography products, and spatial analysis. For the coming year, emphasis should be placed on identifying and making plans for addressing those areas where international work could yield benefits. This should build on the conclusions of the recent work session on GIS at which some such areas were identified (e.g. definitions of urban, rural and metropolitan; relationships with cartographic and postal agencies; strengthening the awareness of geography in statistical agencies; licensing and pricing of geographic products; evaluation of GIS and mapping software.

Expected collective output in the next two years: For ECE, reports from the work session on GIS to the 1996 plenary sessions.

For ECE, two GIS work sessions (Ottawa 1993 and Voorburg 1994) have identified areas for future international cooperation. The following results have been achieved so far: (i) the setting-up of the mechanisms for cooperation with ISO on the development of international standards in geomatics: and (ii) the establishment of a pool for the exchange of information on GIS software).

Attention of the Conference was drawn to the following:

- The increasing contribution GIS technology is making to increasing the quality and comparability of geographic dimensions of official statistics.

Decisions by the Conference at the 1995 plenary session: The Conference agreed

- To include the work session on GIS in the Conference's 1995/96 meeting programme.

Meetings in the next two years:

ECE: Work session on GIS (Washington, March 1996).

EUROSTAT: Seminar: Statistics in Eastern and Central European Countries

Rapporteur/focal point: (to be designated at the 1996 plenary session)

Activities and means in the next two years:

Activities of ECE: (CES Priority A)

a) Setting up of a special group of experts, the aim of which will be to further increase knowledge on Geographical Information Systems (GIS) software tools and concepts suitable for statistics.

b) Work session on GIS (1995/96) to consider: (i) national reports on progress in the implementation and use of GIS; (ii) standardization related to statistical GIS; (iii) methodological aspects of GIS applications in statistics; (iv) marketing issues related to GIS and typology of the GIS users.

Secretariat resources: Moderate

Activities of OECD:

Activities of Eurostat: (Themes 19, 85: Management of existing products (part of) and Crop production (part of))

The GISCO activity continues to demand increasing attention from services both inside and outside the Commission. The next steps involve securing the supplies of the various geographic data layers and bringing Commission services progressively up to production status with GIS systems.

Remote sensing: The work on determining the appropriate place of remote sensing as a data source for official statisticians will be continued. Administratively this involves: contributing (with the Directorate-General for Agriculture) to the user service management component of the large development programme MARS (Monitoring Agriculture by remote Sensing) of the Joint Research Centre's Institute for Remote Sensing applications; and directly managing part of the research budget relating to earth observation.

These activities are chosen and executed in collaboration with the relevant operational units of Eurostat and involve wherever possible NSIs. The 1994 work on delimitation of urban areas has been extended in 1995 with a new focus on trans-frontier regions. Projects on regional planning and the environment are being started. A study on training needs and how to meet them is being mounted.

Activities of other organizations:

2.7 **REGIONAL STATISTICS**

Objectives over the next several years: To promote the development and integration of statistics for sub-national and supra-national regions. The emphasis is on pulling together statistics from a variety of topics into profiles for regions below the major political divisions for which detailed statistics are regularly produced. Issues of data reconciliation, data organization and access, geographic bases, and methods for compiling profiles are included. No immediate activities are proposed in the Conference's programme of work in this field.

Expected collective output in the next two years: For Eurostat, statistical yearbook "REGIONS", complete classification of regions for the new member states, publication of methodology for regional household accounts, and first results of the screening exercise. For OECD, report on rural employment indicators.

Attention of the Conference was drawn to the following:

- Although Eurostat has been the only organization working actively in this field, the Territorial Development Service of the OECD recently began work on rural and urban statistics.

Decisions by the Conference at the 1995 plenary session: (None)

Meetings in the next two years:

EUROSTAT: Regional indicators and economic accounts working group:- infra-regional data (6 November 1995)

EUROSTAT: Regional indicators and economic accounts working group:- two-day meetings in 1996

OECD: Steering Group on Rural Indicators (Nov. 95)

Rapporteur/focal point: (to be designated at the 1996 plenary session)

Activities and means in the next two years:**Activities of ECE:** (CES Priority C)

Activities of OECD: An activity on rural indicators is carried out; a territorial scheme was developed to collect data for comparable sub-national geographical units. The scheme covers the entire territory of the 24 Member countries and uses two hierarchical levels: regions (about 2 000 units) and local communities (about 50 000 units). A common definition of rural/urban areas uses population density as a classification criterion. Based on this scheme, a database that contains variables on demographic, economic, social and environmental issues is maintained.

Activities of Eurostat: (Themes 77, 78: Regional statistics and accounts, and Infra-regional data)

The methodology for the compilation of economic accounts by industry and household accounts will be finalised and published. Preliminary proposals relating to the accounts of central government will be made.

Theoretical and practical work will be done on the regional exploitation of the Labour Force Survey, the development of social indicators (pro rata with the progress of work nationally), the implementation of an information system on conurbations, consolidation of the "quantification" exercise for Objective 1 regions, definition of information needs on infrastructure and finalisation of methodology for regional-level R&D indicators.

A new NUTS to take account of new Member States will be published and there will be a full revision of codification.

Concerning sub-regional statistics, after the inclusion of data originating in the last round of censuses, it will be necessary to discuss in depth with data users and suppliers the content and exploitation (including publication) of the database.

A fourth volume of the Regional Portrait of Europe on the EEA, will be produced and work will start on a revised edition of volumes 1 to 3 to permit publication in 1996. The form and medium of this publication will also be reviewed.

Activities of other organizations:

2.8 TRAINING

Objectives over the next several years: To increase participation in training. In order to promote this, to make available systematically to countries the information relating to training policies and programmes in both Member countries and in Eurostat; to help coordinate international training seminars and workshops and ensure that subjects addressed are in line with statistical priorities as defined by CES and Eurostat; to assist member countries in developing staff exchange policies where comparative advantages make such exchanges effective, to facilitate countries making wise choices for training.

Expected collective output in the next two years: Consolidated catalogue of training courses in statistics offered by EU and EFTA Member countries and in the framework of Training for European Statisticians (TES); bulletin with notices of openings for training in statistical agencies abroad; and an annual review of training gaps and suggestions on how to address them.

Attention of the Conference was drawn to the following:

Decisions by the Conference at the 1995 plenary session: (None)

Meetings in the next two years:

Rapporteur/focal point: (to be designated at the 1996 plenary session)

Activities and means in the next two years:

Activities of ECE: (CES Priority C)

Activities of OECD:

Activities of Eurostat: (Theme 03: Training of European Statisticians)

Organisation of the 1995/6 Training of European Statisticians (TES) programme, comprising 25 modules in 15 countries of the European Economic Area, lasting between 3 and 15 days.

Activities of other organizations:

UN Statistical Division (UNSD) : Group training, seminars, workshops and fellowships: training activities in cooperation with UNDP and UNFPA for Member States in the areas of economic statistics, population censuses, civil registration and other demographic and social statistics programmes, household surveys, and computer data processing and informatics.

The ILO : A regular activity of training programmes on labour statistics has been established by the ILO over the past few years and this will continue. Training courses in labour statistics in English and French will be conducted regularly with the Bureau of Statistics' staff providing the training and designing course material. A compendium of training material prepared for these courses will be published.

A training seminar on wages statistics for the countries of the Caribbean area is planned for 1995.

International Monetary Fund (IMF) : Annual training courses of six weeks in either English, French or Spanish in balance of payments, government finance, and money and banking statistics are offered at the IMF Institute in Washington. Three-week courses are provided annually in English and in Russian at the Joint Vienna Institute. Beginning in November/December 1995, the Fund will also offer a course in National Accounts at the IMF Institute (in English). Regional training courses in these subjects are also conducted on an ad hoc basis.

UNESCO :

**Annex I. Priority menu of the CES for 1995/96 and 1996/97
 in subprogramme 2 (Technical infrastructure and other cross-cutting issues)**

a) 1995/96

WORK PROGRAMME OF THE CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS PRIORITY MENU FOR 1995/96			
Programme element	Substantive action required of the ECE secretariat	Major coordination required	Output for the plenary session 1996
2.1 Management of statistical information technology	- Organization of ISIS'96		- Report
2.2 Statistical data collection and processing	- Preparation of methodological materials on statistical data editing - Preparation of the work session on statistical data editing		- Methodological materials on statistical data editing - Conclusions of the work session on statistical data editing
2.3 Dissemination of statistical information	- Preparation of methodological materials on statistical metadata - Preparation of the work session on statistical output and dissemination to information media - Participation in the development of EDISTAT (Western European EDIFACT Board - group MD6) - Coordination of EDISTAT implementation with transition countries	- EUROSTAT	- methodological materials - Conclusions of the work session - Progress report - Trial EDI applications
2.6 Geography	- Preparation of the work session on GIS	- EUROSTAT	- Conclusions of the work session

b) 1996/97

WORK PROGRAMME OF THE CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS PRIORITY MENU FOR 1996/97			
Programme element	Substantive action required of the ECE secretariat	Major coordination required	Output for the plenary session 1997
2.1 Management of statistical information technology	- Organization of 25th session of the Working Party on EDP		- Report
2.2 Statistical data collection and processing	- Preparation of methodological materials and publication on statistical data editing - Preparation of the work session on statistical data editing		- Methodological materials and publication - Conclusions of the work session
2.3 Dissemination of statistical information	- Preparation of the work session on statistical metadata - Participation in the development of EDISTAT (Western European EDIFACT Board - group MD6) - Coordination of EDISTAT implementation with transition countries	- EUROSTAT	- Conclusions of the work session - Progress report - Trial EDI applications
2.6 Geography	- Preparation of the work session on GIS	- EUROSTAT	- Conclusions of the work session

**Annex II. Consolidated list of international meetings
in subprogramme 2 (Technical infrastructure and other cross-cutting issues)**

	Principal Sponsoring Organization			
	ECE	Eurostat	OECD	Other organizations
2.1 Management of statistical information technology	- ISIS'96 (May 96) - 25th session of Working Party on EDP (Feb. 97)			- UNSD: Expert Group on user access and output systems to UNSD databases (19..)
2.2 Statistical data collection and processing	- Work Session on data editing (Nov. 95)			
2.3 Dissemination and interchange of statistical information	- Work session on dissemination of statistical data to information media (Feb. 96) - Work session on statistical metadata (Oct. 96)	- Telematic networks and EDI working group (Oct. 95) - SERT Working Party (Dec. 95)		
2.4 Industry, commodity and occupation classifications		- Customs code -- Combined nomenclature section committee (Sept. 95) - Accounting and statistical coordination task force (Sept. 95) - SPC - NACE committee (Nov. 95) - Customs code -- Combined nomenclature section committee (Nov. 95)		
2.5 Statistical methodology				
2.6 Geography	- Work Session on GIS (March 96, April 97)	- Seminar on statistics in eastern and central European countries		
2.7 Regional statistics		- Regional indicators and economic accounts working:- infra-regional data (Nov. 95) - Regional indicators and economic accounts working group:- (2 day meetings in 96)	- Steering Group on Rural Indicators (Nov. 95)	

Principal Sponsoring Organization				
	ECE	Eurostat	OECD	Other organizations
2.8 Training				- UNSD: Misc. group training, seminars, workshops and fellowships