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**STATISTICAL COMMISSION and
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN
COMMUNITIES (EUROSTAT)**

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Joint ECE/Eurostat Meeting on the Management of Statistical Information Technology
(Geneva, Switzerland, 14-16 February 2000)

INFORMATION NOTICE

The meeting will be held in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland from 14 to 16 February 2001,
starting on 14 February at 9:30 a.m.

I. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

1. The Meeting is convened under the auspices of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) and is organised jointly with Eurostat. Its purpose is to study managerial issues connected with computerization of statistical information, to exchange national experiences and to promote international cooperation in this field. An important aim of the Meeting is to assist the National Statistical Offices of countries in transition in solving problems raised in statistical information technology. The Meeting is primarily intended for managerial staff in national statistical offices, but also for IT experts, statisticians and subject-matter specialists concerned.

II. PARTICIPATION AND ACCREDITATION

2. Representatives of all member countries of the ECE and of interested international organizations are welcome to participate in the Meeting. Participants from other State Members of the United Nations may also attend. All participants must be accredited by the competent authorities of their country or international organization.

III. AGENDA OF THE MEETING

- (i) Adoption of the agenda.
- (ii) Election of officers.
- (iii) **The impact of data warehousing on the management of statistical offices.**
Invited papers by the Netherlands and Eurostat, supporting papers by Armenia, Italy and Poland.
- (iv) **Challenges and opportunities for statistical offices working in a network environment.**
Invited papers by France, United States and Eurostat, supporting papers by Armenia, Czech Republic, Hungary, Israel, Italy and Poland.
- (v) **Resource management in statistical offices and the role of the IT departments.**
Invited papers by Canada and Finland, supporting papers by Albania and United States.
- (vi) **Integration of statistical (survey) data with registers (administrative) data.**
Invited papers by Denmark, France and United States, supporting paper by Italy.
- (vii) Future work.
- (viii) Other business.
- (ix) Adoption of the conclusions reached at the Meeting.

The provisional agenda with the tentative timetable will be made available on the ECE Statistical Division's WWW-site in the middle of January 2001.

IV. METHOD OF WORK

3. The agenda items will be considered based on two main categories of papers, invited papers and supporting papers. The organizers of the meeting have contacted a small number of countries asking them to prepare invited papers for specific agenda items. The invited papers will provide the main basis for discussion and will be presented by their authors. Supporting papers will not be presented by their authors but by the Session Organizer or the Discussant, and the issues raised in them will also be discussed.

4. The sessions of substantive agenda items ((iii)-(vi)) will start with the presentation of the invited papers by their authors, followed by a brief question period. Supporting papers will then be introduced by the Discussants. Authors of the supporting papers will have a brief opportunity to answer questions concerning their papers. The authors of both invited and supporting papers are encouraged to contact the Discussants well in advance of the meeting in order to prepare for the discussion and to take into account their requirements. The list of Discussants of the individual sessions and their relevant contact information are provided below.

V. EXPLANATORY NOTES TO THE AGENDA

5. The meeting will focus on the substantial topics listed in the Programme of Work of the Conference of European Statisticians under Programme activity 2: Technical infrastructure and other cross-cutting issues, Programme element 2.1: Management of information technology infrastructure (see CES/2000/26/Add.2).

6. **Agenda item (iii): The impact of data warehousing on the management of statistical offices.**

Discussant: Lars Rauch

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7. A number of national statistical offices (NSOs) have started to implement data warehouse technologies to improve methods of provision of statistics. The implementation of data warehouses is not only a technical question but has a strong impact on the organisation of the statistical production process. It is a real challenge for the management in a NSO.

8. Discussion under this agenda item will consider how NSOs are meeting this challenge. It is necessary to define and specify the new facilities and functions that should be provided to customers. This requires close cooperation between both statisticians and IT experts.

9. The meeting will also discuss how the data warehouse approach will influence the design and use of statistical websites. Linking data warehouses and Internet dissemination can be considered a new quality in the dissemination of statistics and user-friendly tools for customers. The implementation of data warehouse technologies in an Internet environment to provide efficient interactive operability for users is expected to be considered during the meeting.

10. **Agenda item (iv): Challenges and opportunities for statistical offices working in a network environment**

Discussant: Wolfgang Knueppel

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11. The discussion in this section will focus on the influence that working in a network environment has on the work of national and international statistical offices. An immediate effect will be in the domain of data dissemination and feedback to data providers. The meeting will also deal with how data collection will make use of the new facilities offered.

12. Beyond these classic statistical tasks, the work in extranet networks will permit statistical partners to create distributed information systems including harmonised metadata repositories, to share knowledge and tools. The introduction of network technologies will require the solution of various technological

problems. The most important challenge will certainly be to ensure the requirements of data security within the various layers of communication as expressed by the individual partners.

13. Agenda item (v): Resource management in statistical offices and the role of the IT departments

Discussant: Nancy Potok

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14. This section will focus on the different roles that the information technology (IT) departments fulfill in statistical agencies. Some examples of these include: (1) project gatekeeper or approver; (2) centralized services provider, e.g. for security, Local Area Networks, telecommunications, hardware replacement, site licenses, etc.; (3) technical advisor on complex projects; (4) standards setter for both equipment and computer specialist qualifications; (5) training provider; (6) applications developer; and (7) research and development leader.

15. The meeting will consider how the role of the IT department varies depending on whether the IT functions of the agency are centralized or decentralized. This also influences the extent to which the IT department controls the IT resources of the agency. In a highly centralized agency, the IT department may exert considerable control over both dollars and resources applied to IT. Where the IT department is mainly a service provider, IT resources may be allocated initially to program areas but then transferred to the IT department in exchange for specific services and equipment. When IT is highly decentralized, resources tend to be decentralized as well. These differences lead to various organizational approaches to empowering the IT organization, so that it can influence the way in which IT resources are used.

16. Agenda item (vi): Integration of statistical (survey) data with registers (administrative) data

Discussant: Christophe Alviset

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17. The reduction of the response burden through the use of register and administrative data is an accepted goal for most statistical agencies. However, this use poses new and significant challenges: the concepts underlying the administrative variables, the coverage of the administrative source, the

identification of administrative units are all difficult topics in themselves and may not readily correspond to statistical needs, but can potentially change overnight due to a change in legislation or in the management of government agencies. The discussion will deal with the different ways in which statistical offices try to resolve these problems.

18. The use of administrative data may also challenge the view of the statistical agency as an independent body operating under a strict non-disclosure statistics act. Practical uses of administrative data include prefilling questionnaires with administrative data or sampling from an administrative source or register: the use of new technologies may be hindered by real or imagined threats of using non-secure electronic transactions, or by the difficulty of properly identifying respondents and managing the changes in their identification.

VI. DOCUMENTATION

19. National and international statistical offices have been encouraged to prepare invited and/or supporting papers for the individual substantive agenda items. The full text of the supporting papers will only be circulated in the ECE working language(s) in which they are received. If the summary of the paper is submitted 3 months before the meeting, it will be translated and circulated in all three of the ECE's official working languages (English, French and Russian).

20. All documentation for the meeting will be made available on the ECE Statistical Division's WWW site:

<http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2001.02.msit.htm>

Hard copies of documents will be sent out to participants only if requested (please send an e-mail to josephine.rauss@unece.org). The UN/ECE Secretariat will inform participants by e-mail when documents become available on the Internet.

21. Supporting papers which are not submitted at least 3 months before the meeting, by 14 November 2000, cannot be accepted as official papers for the meeting. They will be processed as Conference Room papers, i.e. the summaries will not be translated into the official languages and the papers will be distributed in the conference room only. Participants with such papers to be reproduced and distributed are requested to submit the text in hard copies or via e-mail (to the address jana.meliskova@unece.org), in one of the official languages (English, French, Russian), to the ECE secretariat. Such material must be submitted at least two months before the meeting to allow time for processing before the session at which it is supposed to be considered.

VII. OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

22. English, French and Russian are the official working languages of the Meeting. Full simultaneous interpretation from and into these languages will be provided. Conference room documents prepared during the Meeting, such as draft conclusions, will be issued in the three official languages.

VIII. ACCOMMODATION, PASSPORT AND VISA REGULATIONS

23. Participants are requested to make their own hotel reservations. In order to assist participants in organizing their accommodation, the ECE secretariat provides a list of hotels on its WWW site (www.unece.org/stats). Follow the link "Geneva" on the home page.

24. All participants attending the Meeting and persons accompanying them 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 Switzerland in the country in which the participants reside.

IX. REGISTRATION, SECURITY MEASURES

25. Please fill in the attached Conference Registration Form and send it to the secretariat by fax (+4122 917 0040) by **15 January 2001** so that it may be processed well in advance of the meeting.

21. In order to enter the Palais des Nations where the meeting is being held, all participants need to obtain a security pass (ID card). For this purpose, please present yourself with your passport at the Villa Les Feuillantines (shown on the attached map) by 9:00 at the latest on Wednesday, 14 February 2001. Delegates are requested to keep this ID card with them at all times for the duration of the meeting.

22. Two gates can be used for entering the UN premises: the pedestrian passage at Place des Nations (buses 5, 8 and 18, stop Nations) and the Pregny Gate (Avenue de la Paix 14, buses 8 and 18, stop Appia). For security reasons the Police can at any time temporarily close the Place de Nations gate. The participants may contact the Security Operations and Control Center at number 917 2902 to obtain the latest information relating to the security situation at the gates.

X. INFORMATION, MAIL, CORRESPONDENCE

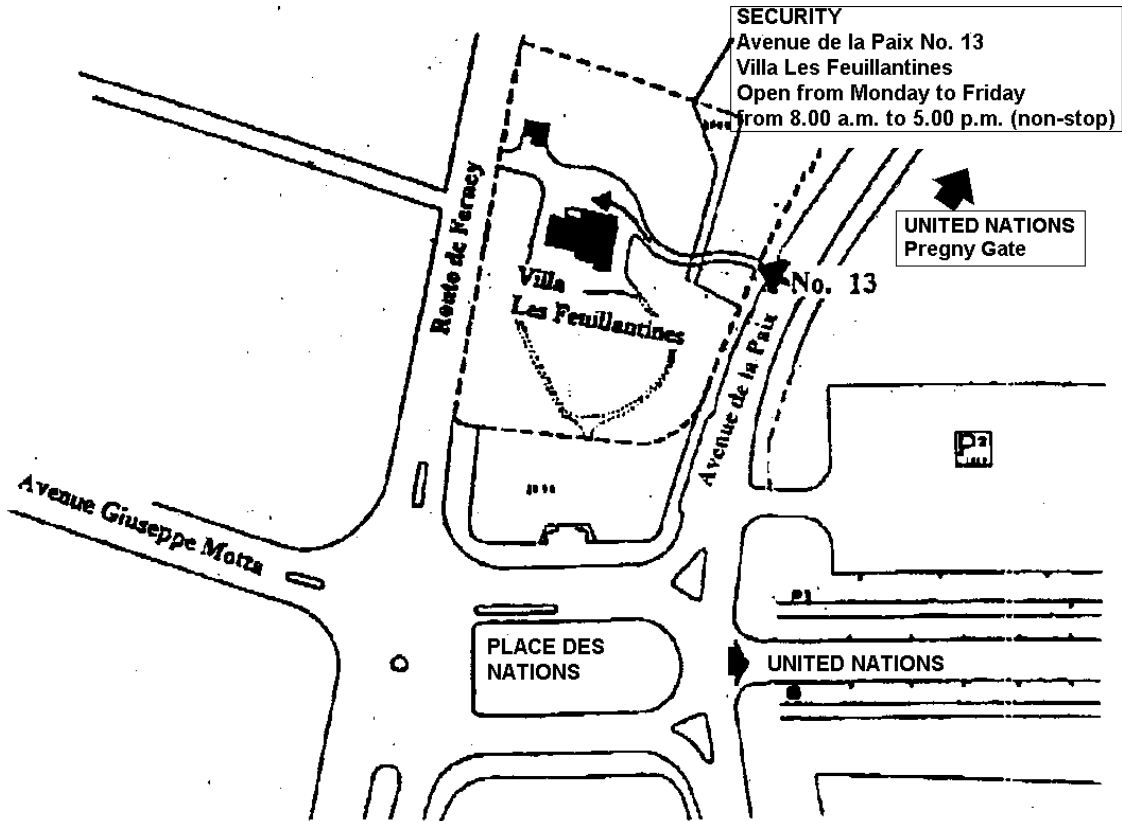
23. Unless otherwise specified, all correspondence regarding the Meeting should be addressed to:

Economic Commission for Europe

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 Economic Commission for Europe
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 SWITZERLAND

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Map of the UN Security Unit (Villa Les Feuillantines) where participants can obtain a security pass





UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA

Conference Registration Form
Please print

Title of the Conference

Delegation/Participant of Country, Organization or Agency

Participant

Mr. Family Name First Name
 Mrs.
 Ms.

Participation Category

Head of Delegation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Observer Organization	<input type="checkbox"/>
Delegation Member	<input type="checkbox"/>	NGO	<input type="checkbox"/>
Observer Country	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Please Specify Below)	<input type="checkbox"/>
...			

Participating From / Until			
From	<input type="text"/>	Until	<input type="text"/>

Official Occupation (in own country)	Passport or ID Number	Valid Until
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Official Telephone N°.	Fax N°.	E-mail Address
<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>	<input type="text"/>

Permanent Official Address

Address in Geneva

Accompanied by Spouse Yes No

Family Name (Spouse) First Name (Spouse)

<p>On Issue of ID Card</p> <p>Participant Signature</p> <input type="text"/> Spouse Signature <input type="text"/> Date <input type="text"/>		<p>Security Use Only</p> <p>Card N°. Issued</p> <input type="text"/> Initials, UN Official <input type="text"/>
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