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DRAFT

Co-operation in Population Analysis
in the ECE Region

Adopted by the Regional Population Meeting at its final session on 9 December 1999

I. Introduction

In the document entitled "Conclusions" (CES/PAU/1998/13/Add.1) the Regional Population Meeting has identified salient population developments in Europe and North America, herein referred to as "the region," along with priority population-related policies for the future. The Meeting has recalled the *Recommendations* adopted by the European Population Conference (EPC) (Geneva, 1993), in particular Recommendations 65-74 that pertain to the generation and utilisation of policy-relevant knowledge. It has reaffirmed the position taken by the EPC that the promotion and use of scientific knowledge on population processes and their determinants and consequences is a *sine qua non* for the successful formulation and evaluation of population-related policies. Those recommendations remain fully valid while their further implementation calls, inter alia, for strengthening co-operation in population analysis in the region.

In line with the EPC, the Regional Population Meeting selected for its deliberations the four substantive priority themes of the EPC. The themes concern:

- Fertility, family, and reproductive rights, including family planning;
- Mortality, disability and health, including reproductive health;

* The Regional Population Meeting is in the work programme of the Conference of European Statisticians.

- Population ageing, including the status of older persons; and
- International migration, including integration of migrants.

These broad areas, some more than others, remain at the centre of population-related analysis in many national academic and research organizations and national statistical offices. In a number of ECE countries, this analysis is supported, directly or indirectly, by the State and is undertaken in response to the needs of government institutions for information and knowledge on population processes and their determinants and consequences. Major statistical activities carried out by the national statistical offices, such as population and housing censuses provide a statistical basis for part of the analysis. Nevertheless, government support for population analysis and related statistical activities remains as important as ever, particularly in countries where these have been recently scaled back due to, for example, economic setbacks.

Some demographic developments, such as population ageing, influence all ECE countries. Others, like the recent mortality increases in eastern Europe, take place in smaller or larger groups of countries. In many instances, Governments, communities and civil society in different countries seek to accommodate or influence similar or identical population developments. In the process, they often generate and make use of policy-relevant knowledge that cuts across national borders. As a result, academic and research organizations and national statistical offices from different countries increasingly pursue policy-relevant information and knowledge through cross-country comparative research undertakings. These circumstances strongly argue in favour of generating knowledge needed at the national level by means of joint efforts of interested countries within a framework of broader regional co-operation.

International organizations have in recent years made tangible contributions to regional inter-country co-operation in population analysis. The co-operation has been more fruitful and productive in some of the priority areas identified above than in others. Irrespective of the progress made, the co-operation has demonstrated the major advantages to be gained from working together, such as international comparability of population research findings and sharing experiences with population-related policies and programmes. Also, it has significantly contributed to research capacity-building in countries with only moderate to small concentrations of population researchers and analysts.

The Regional Population Meeting adopted the framework for future co-operation in population analysis contained in this document, which can be used by all concerned international and national organizations in the region. It will be submitted to the Conference of European Statisticians for its consideration and adoption. The Meeting also requested the Executive Secretary of the ECE to simultaneously transmit this document to the Secretary-General of the United Nations, as well as to ECE Governments and relevant national academic and research organizations in the ECE countries. It also requested the chairperson of the Meeting to concurrently transmit the document to the Preparatory Committee of the Special Session of the United Nations General Assembly for the quinquennial review and appraisal of the implementation of the *Programme of Action*.

II. Priority Research Areas

Aware of the multitude of important policy-relevant research areas and in line with the “Conclusions”, the Meeting has identified the following priority research areas for future regional co-operation in population analysis:

II.1. Fertility and family planning

a. Fertility trends, patterns and differentials, with particular emphasis on sub-replacement fertility, including their causes, such as cultural, social and economic conditions, gender relations and family policies;

b. Trends and patterns in family and household formation and dissolution, with particular focus on new family and household forms, including their causes, such as postmodern values and norms; and

c. Family planning behaviour and access to family planning information, education and services, including their underpinnings, for example, government policy and civil society efforts at furthering family planning.

II.2. Mortality and health, including reproductive health

a. Trends, levels and differentials in disability, morbidity and mortality, especially in countries with economies in transition, including their determinants, such as lifestyles and public health-care provisions;

b. Disability, morbidity and mortality in old age, including their causes, for example, lifestyles and medical and pharmaceutical developments; and

c. Trends in reproductive health, particularly in countries with economies in transition, including access to reproductive health services and population and sexual education.

II.3 Population ageing

a. Trends in the age structure of the population, particularly in population ageing, and their economic and labour market implications, including consequences for the fiscal system, public expenditure patterns and the transition from work to retirement;

b. The status of older persons, particularly older women, including demographic, social and economic developments influencing it; for example, long-term developments in fertility and mortality, participation of women in the labour force and social security and health programmes; and

c. Trends in the care of older persons, such as formal and informal long-term care, including factors influencing them; for example, living arrangements among the aged, availability of offspring and kin, and work patterns of women, who are the main care providers.

II.4. International migration

a. Trends and patterns in different types of migration, such as asylum seekers and family reunification movements, including factors influencing them; for example, migration networks, demand for foreign labour, and entry and stay policies; and

b. Developments in migrant communities and their integration into host societies, such as cultural, social and economic integration, including factors facilitating or impeding integration; for example, labour market conditions and integration policies and programmes.

III. Statistical activities in support of research

There is a long tradition of fruitful collaboration between population researchers and population statisticians. This collaboration takes many forms, which vary depending on the research areas in question and the specificities of institutional arrangements prevailing in different countries. Future co-operation in population analysis will draw on this tradition and will seek to promote the collaboration between the two professions to the benefit of both the advancement of knowledge in the population field and population statistics.

National statistical services, in particular national statistical offices, have for years been generating statistical information that is indispensable in population analysis. These efforts have been successfully co-ordinated at the global and regional levels by the United Nations Statistical Commission and the Conference of European Statisticians. Population and related data, at both aggregate and individual levels, generated by the national statistical offices through regular programmes, such as population census programmes, will be extensively used in the course of future regional co-operation in population analysis.

Population research increasingly involves the collection of specialised data sets. Participants in the future co-operation in population analysis carried out under the auspices of international organizations will increasingly pursue such data sets. Wherever possible, in view of their expertise and infrastructure, national statistical offices, alone or in collaboration with national population institutes and academic institutions will be collecting these specialised data sets. Where this is not possible, the collection of such data will be carried out by research and academic organizations. Where appropriate, the Conference of European Statisticians will be invited to consider including these specialised statistical activities in its work programme.

There are major synergies between population analysis and data collection, and the future co-operation in population analysis will seek to strengthen and make use of these synergies. The intended result will be improvements in policy-relevant knowledge and the betterment of population statistics.

IV. Furthering co-operation

In some of the priority research areas identified above, co-ordinated multi-

country population analysis has been under way for some time, resulting in regionally comparable research findings. In most instances, these research efforts have been co-ordinated by intergovernmental organizations operating on a regional level. In rare cases, major national population institutes have promoted and co-ordinated those efforts. Examples of recent broader efforts at co-operation in population analysis include:

- a) The monitoring and analysis of migration developments and policies under the auspices of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development;
- b) Studies of the causes of international migration from developing countries to member countries of the European Union sponsored by Eurostat and the Netherlands Interdisciplinary Demographic Institute;
- c) Studies of fertility and family behaviour and their determinants carried out under the auspices of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund.
- d) Studies on internal migration and regional population dynamics in Europe prepared as part of the programme of work of the European Population Committee of the Council of Europe; and
- e) Monitoring and analysis of reproductive health in countries in transition by the World Health Organization, in collaboration with the United Nations Population Fund.

Contributions to policy-relevant knowledge have been considerable in the priority research areas: II.1.a, II.1.b, II.2.a, II.3.a and II.3.b and II.4.a. Limited progress has been achieved or no research has been carried out in other areas identified above. The fact that the progress has been uneven does not mean that under-researched areas should be promoted in the future at the expense of those in which notable progress has been made. On the contrary, regionally co-ordinated research projects carried out through the future regional co-operation, especially those to be promoted by international organizations must aim to consolidate and enable progress in the areas where advances have been noticeable. At the same time, underdeveloped or neglected areas should be pursued or opened up.

Recent co-operation in population analysis has resulted, among other things, in work arrangements at the national and regional levels that made the co-operation develop and grow. Some of these arrangements are formal, while others remain informal. These arrangements need to be solidified and further developed. In view of this, and in order to sustain and further promote co-operation, a regional group for co-operation in population analysis will be formed by interested national and international organizations. The group will consist of population experts from regional intergovernmental organizations active in population analysis and statistics, as well as population researchers from selected national population institutes, national statistical offices, and academic institutions, all of whom will participate in the group's work in their personal capacity. The group, an informal consultative body with no decision-making powers, will provide advice to interested organizations in the area of co-

operation in population analysis. Among other things, it will seek to promote co-operation, particularly in the substantive research areas where progress in the past has been lagging or altogether lacking. The cost of periodic meetings of the group will be borne by the organizations represented in it. There will be no fixed secretariat and only limited secretarial support required by the group will be provided by participating intergovernmental organizations.

National and international organizations participating in the regional co-operation will strive to make it efficient and cost-effective by co-ordinating, as appropriate, their relevant decisions and activities. International organizations will take part in the regional co-operation in line with their respective mandates and at no additional cost to themselves.

Co-operating closely with national institutions and population scholars, several intergovernmental organizations have, over the years, made significant contributions to the advancement of knowledge in the population field in the ECE region. Among these are the Economic Commission for Europe and the United Nations Population Fund, which have jointly promoted and co-ordinated analysis in the following two groups of priority research areas: a) II.1.a through II.1.c and II.2.c; and b) II.3.a and II.3.b. Also, among these organizations is the Council of Europe, which has made contributions in the following areas: II.1.a, II.1.b, II.2.a, II.3.a., II.4.a and II.4.b.

These and other organizations are invited to continue their co-operation activities in the field of population analysis and to participate, if they so wish, in the work of the co-operation group, with a view to facilitating the complementarity of their efforts. This will help avoid duplication of efforts and ensure that limited resources available to the organizations involved in these activities are used efficiently. In consultation with their national partners, these organizations should seek to open up new areas of research and promote new research efforts and, where appropriate, new data collection activities. At the same time, they should strive to ensure that existing data, including specialised data sets that have been created in recent years are utilised to their fullest in analysis. The ultimate aim of these future co-operation efforts should be to create new insights and knowledge of immediate relevance to Governments, civil society and the public at large.