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**CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN
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**Joint ECE/EUROSTAT Seminar
on Business Registers
(Geneva, 28-29 June 2001)**

REPORT

INTRODUCTION

1. The Joint ECE/Eurostat Seminar on Business Registers was held in Geneva from 28-29 June 2001. It was attended by Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belgium, Bulgaria, Croatia, Cyprus, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Ireland, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Luxembourg, Malta, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Romania, Russian Federation, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Turkey, Turkmenistan, Ukraine, United Kingdom and Uzbekistan. The seminar was attended by representatives of the European Commission (Eurostat). Mongolia was present under article 11 of the terms of reference of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe. Representatives of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) also attended the Seminar.
2. The provisional agenda was adopted.
3. Mr. John Perry (United Kingdom) was elected Chairman and Mr. Hugues Picard (France) was elected Vice-Chairman.

ORGANIZATION OF THE SEMINAR

4. The following substantive topics were discussed at the seminar on the basis of Invited and Supporting papers.

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- a) How to improve links between statistical business registers and administrative sources;
- b) Quality issues and methods to improve various aspects of the quality of business registers;
- c) Experiences in developing a single business register in member countries;
- d) Cooperation between various users of statistical business registers within the national statistical office;
- e) Problems with statistical units in business registers;
- f) Information about ongoing activities and projects by ECE and Eurostat.

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN CONCLUSIONS REACHED AT THE MEETING

5. Recommendations for future work are given below. Other conclusions that the participants reached at the Seminar on the above topics will be presented (in English only) in a separate report which will be prepared after the Seminar and distributed to participants and, on request, to other interested persons.

FUTURE WORK

6. The participants recommended that a further joint ECE/Eurostat meeting on business registers be held in 2003 to consider the following issues:
1. Development and harmonisation of a common glossary for business registers and of the Eurostat Manual:
 - standardisation of definitions and terminology used in business registers.
 2. Quality issues and coverage of business registers:
 - maintenance of registers;
 - births/cessation of units;
 - change of activity;
 - completeness of coverage;
 - small area statistics, etc;
 - thresholds for registration.
 3. Implications of globalisation for statistical business registers:
 - relationship between registers and other areas in Statistical Offices working on globalization;
 - coverage of foreign affiliate companies, etc.
 4. Links between administrative and statistical business registers:

- use of administrative sources and exchange of information between statistical business registers and administrative sources;
 - access to administrative sources including the legal environment.
5. Collection of information and further development of identity cards on business registers (in consultation with Eurostat).
6. Uses and dissemination of information from business registers within member countries:
- access to registers;
 - dissemination of information and their use in member countries.
7. The meeting agreed that exact titles of topics from the above list should be determined at a later date in collaboration with Eurostat and interested countries.
