

**UN STATISTICAL COMMISSION and
UN ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**STATISTICAL OFFICE OF THE
EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (EUROSTAT)**

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Joint ECE-EUROSTAT Work Session on Population and Housing Censuses
(Ohrid, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, 21-23 May 2003)

**NOTE ON POSSIBLE FUTURE JOINT WORK
BY EUROSTAT AND ECE ON CENSUSES**

Note by the ECE secretariat

1. This note is intended to facilitate the discussion that will take place at the meeting on Friday 23 May, in the meeting's discussion of possible future work (agenda items 6 and 7). The note has been prepared to inform the meeting of decisions that the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians took at its October 2002 meeting, and to facilitate the meeting's discussion of possible future joint work by ECE and Eurostat on population and housing censuses. At the October 2002 meeting of the CES Bureau the Bureau agreed that the list of meetings in the CES work program should be reviewed in future, to ensure that each meeting has a specific purpose and/or output or product in mind that the proposed future meeting is expected to contribute to or help to achieve.

2. The Bureau of the Conference concluded that all future meetings in the CES work programme, including future ECE-EUROSTAT joint meetings on population and housing censuses, should be more than a mere exchange of information on national practices. The Bureau prefers, instead, to see meetings that are planned for the future that are part of an ongoing process that is aimed at the production of some outputs or at the achievement of other types of concrete goals. Examples of some possible outputs include the following (the list is illustrative and not exhaustive):

- Standards and norms;
- Recommendations and guidelines;
- Methodological materials;
- Manuals;
- Statistical publications;
- Statistical databases;
- Statistical websites, etc.

3. The Bureau also recommended that any joint meetings in future convened in the CES work programme be prepared by a Steering Group composed primarily of national experts. The Steering Group would be responsible for defining the activities and the expected outputs in the specific subject-matter area. In particular, the Steering Group should prepare and submit to the Bureau for its review a note containing the proposed terms of reference of the meeting and the foreseen or

expected outputs. The note should also include a description of the process to be followed for achieving the outputs, the time framework, the target audience and the possible partnerships.

4. The work that the ECE and Eurostat have planned for the coming few years in the field of population and housing censuses is outlined in the Annex of this note. As will be seen, it is heavily oriented primarily towards the following two outputs, each of which is concrete: (i) the production and distribution of collections of census questionnaires and related types of material used by ECE and EU countries in the 2000 round of population and housing censuses, and (ii) the preparation of a new set of ECE-Eurostat Recommendations for the 2010 round of population and housing censuses for use as a guide for countries in the region. In addition to that planned future work, if the participants at the Ohrid meeting wished to propose additional possible future work by ECE and Eurostat in the field of censuses, in formulating their proposals they are invited to take into account the above request and recommendations of the CES Bureau. For example, if the participants were to recommend a future joint meeting of the type of the Ohrid meeting, they should elaborate comments and suggestions that the ECE secretariat and Eurostat could transmit to the Steering Group composed primarily of national officials who would be charged with the responsibility of developing concrete terms of reference for a future joint meeting of that type. In this regard, the participants are particularly encouraged to suggest possible expected outputs and to describe some suggested manner of proceeding to help achieve them.

5. The proposals should be submitted to the Secretary of the meeting (Mr. Paolo Valente) not later than Thursday 22 May at 12:30. A small drafting group composed of the Session Organizers, Eurostat and the ECE secretariat will discuss the various proposals and endeavour to prepare a common proposal that could be discussed and agreed by the meeting on Friday 23 May.

6. Countries that are interested in serving on the Steering Group are also invited to notify the Secretary of the meeting before the noon on 22 May, so the meeting can be informed of the composition of the Steering Group before the end of business on 22 May.

7. Finally, the participants are invited under this agenda item to formulate suggestions concerning other possible concrete outputs and goals for future joint work by Eurostat and ECE in the field of population and housing censuses, for the consideration of the meeting and the proposed Steering Group.

ANNEX

**OUTLINE OF PLANNED FUTURE WORK BY THE UNECE AND EUROSTAT
IN THE FIELD OF POPULATION AND HOUSING CENSUSES****I. Inventory of Census Questionnaires and related material used by countries in the ECE Region in the 2000 round of censuses (expected output for 2003)**

In 2002 the ECE secretariat contacted all countries in the region and asked them to send it 80 copies of the questionnaires, instruction booklets and related types of material that they used in their 2000 and 2001 population and housing censuses. This material has now been received, and the secretariat is currently engaged in organizing it into sets so that one complete set of questionnaires covering all the countries that responded will be able to be sent to all NSIs in the region and to interested international statistical offices working in the region as well.

This inventory of census questionnaires is expected to be ready for distribution to countries within the next 4 to 6 weeks (i.e., around the middle or end of June).

II. Preparation of the new set of ECE-Eurostat Recommendations for the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses in the ECE Region (several expected outputs to be produced during the period June 2003 through June 2007)

It is anticipated that a new set of recommendations will have to be drawn up and prepared by the ECE secretariat and Eurostat in time to have them submitted to the June 2007 plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians in draft form for approval. It is also anticipated that the same general procedure and steps that were used in drawing up the set of recommendations for the 2000 round of censuses would be followed for purposes of drawing up and preparing the new set of recommendations for the 2010 round of censuses. If that were done, it would consist of the following concrete steps and outputs:

1. Questionnaire sent to all ECE countries to obtain information from them on the extent to which they complied with the ECE-Eurostat Recommendations for the 2000 round of censuses (questionnaire to be sent to countries in the autumn of 2003)

In addition to collecting information from countries on the extent to which they complied with the recommendations for the 2000 round of censuses, this questionnaire should also be used to obtain feedback from countries on which parts of the recommendations countries feel are in need of revision, and which parts of the recommendations should be revised, because of their complexity, only with the help of Task Forces composed of a small number of interested countries working on specific parts of the recommendations.

For purposes of preparing the recommendations for the 2000 round of censuses, three task Forces were set up to conduct in-depth reviews of the following parts of the recommendations for the 1990 round of censuses that were judged as being in need of special expert attention: the parts on geographic characteristics; the parts on economic characteristics; and the parts on families and households.

Based on experience with the 2000 and earlier rounds of censuses, the ECE secretariat has identified two topics that it feels needs to be covered in more specific terms in the next set of recommendations for the 2010 round of censuses.

- the relative advantages and disadvantages of de jure and de facto types of censuses; and
- the importance of countries avoiding trying to enumerate in their censuses nationals who are living abroad.

Similarly, based on experience countries have had with the 2000 round of censuses, it would appear that the parts of the recommendations dealing with households and families could benefit from being subjected to a further in-depth review because some countries have encountered difficulties in applying the definitions and classifications in the 2000 recommendations to the emerging new types of households and families that are being found increasingly these days in ECE countries. Moreover, there may also be other parts of the recommendations that are also in need of special attention from subject-matter specialists in countries.

2. Preparation of synoptic papers that provide an overview of the extent to which countries in the region complied with the ECE-Eurostat Recommendations for the 2000 round of population and housing censuses (joint work to be conducted by ECE and Eurostat in 2004 and 2005)

The ECE secretariat and Eurostat should prepare two separate synoptic papers summarizing the material countries submitted specifying the extent to which they complied with the set of recommendations for the 2000 round of censuses, one focussing on the part of the recommendations for the 2000 round of censuses relating to population censuses, and the other focussing on the part of the recommendations for the 2000 round of censuses relating to housing censuses.

An ECE-Eurostat work session on population censuses should be organized in the spring of 2005 to conduct an in-depth review of the synoptic paper on countries' experiences in complying with the part of the 2000 recommendations relating to population censuses, in conjunction with conducting a detailed review of all the parts of the 2000 recommendations that relate to population censuses. There should be two main outputs from that meeting:

- specific and concrete guidance for the ECE secretariat and Eurostat, summarizing the more routine types of changes countries would like ECE and Eurostat to make to the text in the recommendations in order to enable them to prepare an improved draft set of recommendations for countries to review as the possible text on population censuses in the recommendations for the 2010 round of censuses.
- the participants at this spring 2005 meeting on population censuses should also decide what parts of the population census recommendations are in need of special attention from subject-matter specialists in order to obtain an improved set of recommendations on population censuses for the 2010 round of censuses, and for the parts of the recommendations that are so designated, appoint a Task Force for each of them composed of a small number of interested countries, whose task would be to come up with improved text for inclusion in the recommendations for the 2010 censuses covering these work areas.

Similarly, **an ECE-Eurostat work session on housing censuses, organized in collaboration with the ECE Committee on Human Settlements, should be organized in the autumn of 2005** to conduct an in-depth review of the synoptic paper on countries' experiences in complying with the part of the 2000 recommendations relating to housing censuses, in conjunction with conducting a detailed review of all the parts of the 2000 recommendations that relate to housing censuses. There should also be two main outputs from that meeting:

- specific and concrete guidance for the ECE secretariat and Eurostat, summarizing the more routine types of changes countries would like ECE and Eurostat to make to the text in the

recommendations in order to enable them to prepare an improved draft set of recommendations for countries to review as the possible text on housing censuses in the recommendations for the 2010 round of censuses.

- If necessary, the participants at the autumn 2005 meeting on housing censuses should also decide what parts of the 2000 housing census recommendations are in need of special attention from subject-matter specialists in order to obtain an improved set of recommendations on housing censuses for the 2010 round of censuses, and for the parts of the recommendations that are so designated, appoint a Task Force for each of them composed of a small number of interested countries, whose task would be to come up with improved text for inclusion in the recommendations for the 2010 censuses covering these work areas.

3. Preparation of the draft new set of ECE-Eurostat recommendations for the 2010 round of population and housing censuses in the ECE Region

Based on the outputs of the spring 2005 work session on population censuses, the autumn 2005 work session on housing censuses and the outputs of the Task Forces in specialized work areas in different subject-matter areas of the parts of the population and housing census recommendations that were deemed to require special attention from subject-matter specialists, the ECE secretariat and Eurostat should draw up a draft new set of recommendations for the 2010 round of population censuses. The draft would be the sole (or primary) topic of discussion at **an ECE-Eurostat Meeting on Population and Housing Censuses (organized in collaboration with the ECE Committee for Human Settlements) that would take place in Geneva around January or February of 2007**. The main purpose of that meeting would be to review the draft new set of recommendations in detail and to recommend what (hopefully minor) improvements to the draft should be made to it, prior to **having the draft submitted to the June 2007 plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians and to the September 2007 meeting of the Committee on Human settlements for adoption**.

4. Preparation of a special variant of the new set of ECE-Eurostat recommendations for the 2010 round of population and housing censuses for use by EU countries to meet special EU requirements

In accordance with past practise, it is quite possible that Eurostat and the European Commission may also require some additional and more detailed requirements incorporated into parts of the recommendations to accommodate their special and more detailed data requirements. Therefore, in late 2007 or 2008 these special refinements to the ECE-Eurostat recommendations will be made by Eurostat in order to meet these special purpose needs, while at the same time preserving the possibility of data series being produced that would still be consistent with data from the 2010 round of censuses that would be produced by other countries in the ECE Region. This special Eurostat variant will supplement and complement the more general one that is to be drawn up in the ECE-Eurostat joint meetings and approved by the CES in June of 2007.

In addition, it is also anticipated that during the 2003-2007 period when work on the preparation of the new set of recommendations for the 2010 round of censuses will be progressing, related work will be undertaken by Eurostat in its regular meetings of its Working party on Censuses, and the output from those Working party meetings will also feed into the ECE-Eurostat joint work.
