

Third Meeting of the 2011/2012 Bureau
Luxembourg, 7-8 February 2012

**For discussion and
recommendations**

Item 5 of the Provisional
Agenda

**IMPLEMENTATION OF THE 2008 SYSTEM OF NATIONAL ACCOUNTS
IN COUNTRIES OF EASTERN EUROPE, CAUCASUS AND CENTRAL ASIA**

Prepared by the UNECE secretariat

I. BACKGROUND

1. At its 40th session in February 2009, the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) adopted the 2008 System of National Accounts (2008 SNA) and supported the Implementation Strategy for the 2008 SNA proposed by the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts. It also recognized the importance of the role of the Regional Commissions in facilitating coordination and regional cooperation on the implementation programme.
2. Following the decision of the UNSC, the United Nations Statistical Division (UNSD) requested the regional commissions to develop regional implementation plans in cooperation with regional advisory boards. UNECE was asked to prepare a regional implementation plan for the 2008 SNA for the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA).

II. ACTIVITIES CARRIED OUT

3. Following a request of the UNSD to set up regional advisory bodies, UNECE established the Steering Group on National Accounts in 2009. The main role of the Steering Group is to provide guidance for the activities towards implementation of the 2008 SNA in the region, focusing on the EECCA countries. The Steering Group consists of the following countries and organizations: Armenia, Canada, Netherlands, Norway, Russian Federation, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, CIS-STAT, Eurostat, IMF, OECD and UNSD.
4. UNECE considers it important that the regional implementation plan is demand driven and reflects the priorities and needs of the countries in the region. Therefore, the secretariat in 2008 and 2010 conducted two surveys on the problems and challenges in implementation of the 2008 SNA in the national statistical offices of the EECCA countries and Mongolia. The questionnaires were developed in consultation with the Steering Group. The results of the surveys identified the main challenges within the SNA implementation in the EECCA countries and helped the secretariat to formulate an implementation plan and the respective activities.

5. The UNECE, jointly with UNSD and EFTA, organized a Workshop on Implementation of the 2008 SNA for the EECCA countries on 29 November-2 December 2011 in Kiev, Ukraine. CIS-STAT also contributed to the workshop. The workshop aimed to initiate the formulation of national implementation plans for the 2008 SNA and support economic statistics as the basis for the compilation of national accounts. During the workshop, UNECE and UNSD presented structures, main components and practical tools for setting up plans for the implementation of the 2008 SNA¹. A number of issues where there is a need for technical assistance and support were identified. It was also recognised that the efficient implementation of the 2008 SNA requires close cooperation between the relevant regional and international organizations.² It is planned to organize a special session for EECCA and SEE countries, back-to-back with the May 2012 National Accounts Meeting, to further discuss the related topics.

6. A Joint IMF/EFTA/UNECE workshop on Links between Government Finance and National Accounts Statistics took place in May 2011. It brought together experts from the ministries of finance and national statistical offices of the EECCA and SEE countries. The purpose of the workshop was to improve the quality and cross country comparability of data for the public and government sectors by training the compilers of both sets of statistics on the recommendations of the *Government Finance Statistics Manual 2001* and the 2008 SNA, their relationships and possible implications stemming from the 2008 SNA update. The course was highly appreciated by the participants and there were many requests that it be repeated. Another such workshop is therefore planned to be organized in spring 2013.

7. In order to improve the basic data for National Accounts compilation, a workshop on classifications is planned to be organized jointly with UNSD, to be held in late 2012. The workshop will target specialists in the statistical offices of EECCA countries with the purpose to present and discuss in more detail criteria for adapting national classifications; addressing specific changes; implementation tools and processes (including business register recoding etc.); and back casting issues. The main focus will be on the economic classifications such as NACE, ISIC, CPC and COICOP.

8. In summary, the planned future work related to SNA 2008 implementation includes the following activities:

February 2012	Countries to submit draft 2008 SNA implementation plans to UNECE
May 2012	Presentation and discussion of national and regional implementation plans at a special session for transition economies, in conjunction with the meeting of the Group of Experts on National Accounts
End-2012 (tbc)	Workshop on classifications jointly organized with UNSD targeted at the EECCA countries

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http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/ece/ces/ge.20/2011/Item_5_Implementation_paper_UNECE.pdf

² The detailed conclusions and recommendations of the workshop are available on:

http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/documents/ece/ces/ge.20/2011/Conclusions_of_the_workshop.pdf

Spring 2013 (tbc)	Seminar on Government Finance Statistics and the 2008 SNA, jointly organised with EFTA and IMF targeted at the EECCA countries
Spring 2014	Special session for transition economies in conjunction with the meeting of the Group of Experts on National Accounts, to follow-up on progress on the implementation of 2008 SNA and decide on further possible activities

9. Between the meetings of the Group of Experts on National Accounts, the monitoring of progress will take place in connection with the UNSD/UNECE national accounts annual survey questionnaire to the countries in the region and through bilateral contacts with countries.

III. PROPOSAL FOR THE BUREAU

10. The Bureau is invited to comment on the proposed activities.

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