I. INTRODUCTION

1. The UNECE and Eurostat are organising a Joint Work Session on Migration Statistics, under the auspices of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES). The meeting will be held at the United Nations, Palais des Nations, Avenue de la Paix 8, Geneva (Switzerland), from 14 to 16 April 2010. The present note provides information on the meeting.

II. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

2. The main purpose of the Work Session is to allow countries exchange experiences on the methods and techniques used for the collection, processing and dissemination of data related to international migration statistics, and to facilitate progress by countries towards improved production and comparability of international migration statistics.

III. AGENDA OF THE MEETING

3. The work programme of the meeting will consist of the substantive topics presented below. The final agenda will be prepared before the meeting taking into account the papers contributed by the meeting participants. The agenda will be posted, as soon as it is available, on the meeting’s web page at: http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2010.04.migration.htm

   (i) Exchange of migration data among countries: experiences, issues and challenges

4. In order to improve availability, quality and comparability of statistics on international migration, one of the approaches to be followed consists in facilitating the exchange of data and information among countries. Between 2006 and 2008, a Task Force working under the CES work programme looked in particular at how data on international emigration could be improved by using aggregate data on stocks and flows from receiving countries, where emigrants can be more easily counted than in sending countries. The final output of the Task Force (the “Guidelines on the use and dissemination of data on international immigration to facilitate their use to improve emigration data of sending countries”) was endorsed by the Conference of European Statisticians in June 2009.

5. In the Guidelines it is suggested that a mechanism be set up to facilitate the exchange of aggregate data (including also metadata on definitions and data sources) among countries, through the establishment of a
“clearing house” possibly maintained by an international organisation. The UNECE will present at the meeting a first draft proposal on the establishment of such clearing-house.

6. Another approach consists of exchanging microdata among countries. An example of this type is foreseen under the Nordic agreement on population registration. A report on this initiative, and in particular on the coherence between the inter-Nordic migration figures, will be presented. Other countries may report in this session on other experiences of exchange of international migration data.

(ii) Migration statistics mainstreaming

7. Migration statistics mainstreaming can be defined as ensuring that the need for reliable and policy-relevant statistical information on migrants is taken into account across all areas of social and economic statistics. The statistical mainstreaming of migration therefore has implications for the future development of many statistical domains that have not previously been considered as related to migration. Many policy makers have noted the importance of a policy mainstreaming of migration issues, and the breaking down of barriers between departments responsible for immigration policy and those with responsibility for other relevant areas such as education, training, culture, employment and social policy. Migration statistics mainstreaming can be seen as a direct parallel to this policy mainstreaming of migration.

8. In October 2009, the Directors General of the EU National Statistical Institutes agreed the Malta Declaration on the Mainstreaming of Migration in official statistics. This Declaration noted that, in addition to reliable statistics on the scale and patterns of migration flows and migrant stocks, further information was needed on the social and economic situation of migrants with a focus on issues such as the drivers of migration and on the integration of migrant populations. An integrated approach was proposed, maximizing the use of available administrative and survey data sources. It was important to further develop the statistical use of administrative data, and to investigate approaches to the international exchange of migration data.

9. These developments present significant methodological, organisational and legislative challenges. The presentation and discussion of relevant national activities is therefore strongly encouraged in order to promote the sharing of ideas, research findings and good practice. This will provide a fuller understanding of specific national constraints and opportunities.

(iii) Producing migration data using household surveys and other sources

10. Statistics on migration and migrants can be produced using various sources, including many surveys or registers that are not designed exclusively or primarily for collecting migration data. The UNECE will present the main results of a survey that was conducted in 2008 to collect information on sources and definitions of stocks and flows of migrants used by the different countries.

11. Household surveys are potentially a very important source to produce data on migration and the migrants. A Task Force has been created to work in this field, and a number of studies have been launched with the participation of experts from countries and international organizations. The preliminary results of this work will be presented at the meeting, including a study on the measurement of difficult-to-count migrants. This session will provide an opportunity to the meeting participants to join the project and contribute to some of the studies being conducted.

(iv) Collecting data on migration in the 2010 round of population censuses

12. The population census is traditionally an important source of data on migration, with regard in particular to migrants’ stocks. It is expected that the 2010 census round will produce more and better data on migration, also thanks to the increased number of “core topics” on migration included in the CES Recommendations for the 2010 round of censuses. The countries will have the chance to report in this session about their plans for collecting data on migration in the census of the 2010 round, and in particular on the difficulties that they may be facing in implementing the CES Census Recommendations.
(v) Measurement of migration by duration and by reason: definitional and methodological issues

13. One of the main factors that affect the international comparability of migration statistics is the adoption by different countries of different practices and definitions. Particularly important are the length of stay definitions adopted to distinguish short-term and long-term migrants. A Task Force was created in 2008 precisely to explore the impact of different length-of-stay definitions on actual data on migration flows, and consider available data on short-term migration from a number of countries to provide an evidence base for discussing these issues. A progress report on the work of this Task Force will be presented.

14. With regard to short-term migration, the change of status of migrants from short-term to long-term and how such status switchers are treated in official national migration statistics will be discussed in this session. Concerning the reasons for migration (employment, study, family reunification etc.), the discussion will cover how flow and stock data are produced and especially what happens if the reason of stay changes over the years. Countries are invited to submit contributions on any of these topics presenting current practices, issues or methodological developments.

IV. PARTICIPATION, ACCREDITATION AND REGISTRATION

15. Representatives of all Member States of the United Nations and of interested intergovernmental organizations are welcome to participate in the meeting. Participants representing non-governmental organizations in a consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council may also attend. All participants must be accredited by the competent authorities of their country or international organization.

16. All participants attending the meeting 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, with a reference to the Joint UNECE/Eurostat Work Session on Migration Statistics. If a formal invitation letter is required by the embassy, this can be requested from the UNECE secretariat (fax: +41 22 917 0040 or e-mail: mijidgombo.oyunjargal@unece.org).

17. Participants are requested to fill in the attached Conference registration form and send it to the UNECE secretariat by fax (+41 22 917 0040) by 25 March 2010 at the latest so that it may be processed well in advance of the meeting. The information will be used to register participants with the UN Security Section and for the list of participants.

18. In order to enter the Palais des Nations where the Work Session is being held, all participants need to obtain a security pass (ID badge). For this purpose, please present yourself with your passport at the UN Security Identification Office at Pregny Gate of the Palais des Nations (Avenue de la Paix 14, Buses 8 and 18, Stop Appia), by 8:30 a.m. at the latest on Wednesday, 14 April 2010. The Security Identification Office is open Monday to Friday from 8.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. (non-stop). For identification and security reasons, delegates are requested to wear their security badges at all times while inside the Palais des Nations.

19. Practical information for meeting participants, including links to maps of Geneva and the Tourist Office where hotel reservations can be made, is available at: http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.htm. A map of the Palais des Nations where you can find the Security Identification Office located at the Pregny Gate is available at: http://www.unece.org/meetings/UN_Map.pdf

V. DOCUMENTATION, METHODS OF WORK AND OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

20. The working languages of the work session are English and Russian, and English/Russian interpretation will be available at the work session. Documents for the meeting will not be translated officially. However, the UNECE is planning to provide an unofficial translation of selected papers. Participants may
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submit papers in English or in Russian. Authors of papers submitted in Russian are encouraged to provide a short abstract in English (maximum one page), if possible.

21. For each substantive item on the agenda, the organizers will invite a limited number of speakers to write and present an invited paper. All participants are welcome to submit a supporting paper for any topic on the agenda. Supporting papers will be disseminated on the meeting’s web page but in principle will not be presented at the meeting by the authors.

22. The following deadlines and requirements apply:
   • Interested national statistical offices and other government bodies should inform the UNECE secretariat of their intention to attend the meeting and to contribute a paper (in this case, please indicate the topic of the paper and attach a short abstract) by 5 February 2010.
   • The full final versions of papers, not exceeding 8 pages including charts, annexes and references, should be sent to the UNECE secretariat in Word format by 5 March 2010.
   • Presenters are encouraged to use power point presentations, and to send them to the UNECE Secretariat by 9 April 2010.
   • Papers and presentations should be submitted electronically to Mr. Paolo Valente (paolo.valente@unece.org).

23. Invited and supporting papers will be made available on the UNECE website at the following location: http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2010.04.migration.htm

24. Delegates are encouraged to download the papers from the website and bring their own copies to the meeting. Documents posted on the website before the meeting will not be distributed in the conference room.

VI. ACCOMMODATION IN GENEVA

25. Participants are requested to make their own hotel reservations. The ECE secretariat in Geneva is not in a position to provide such services to delegates. Participants are advised to book hotel accommodation well in advance of the meeting, because hotels in Geneva are often fully booked because of the many conferences and other events taking place in the city. If difficulties are encountered, participants may contact the Permanent Mission in Geneva of their respective country for assistance.

VII. INFORMATION AND CORRESPONDANCE

26. All queries concerning the meeting should be addressed to:

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