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STATISTICAL COMMISSION and ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Forty-sixth plenary session
(Paris, 18-20 May 1998)

**PROGRAMMES OF INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL
WORK IN THE ECE REGION, 1998/99 AND 1999/2000:
AN INTEGRATED PRESENTATION**

**PROGRAMME ACTIVITY 2
TECHNICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND OTHER CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES**

The format of this integrated presentation

1. This is intended to be a fully integrated presentation of international work programmes in the ECE region. That is to say it includes not only the statistical work of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE), but also the relevant statistical work carried out in the ECE region by the Commission of the European Communities, OECD, the UN Statistical Division (UNSD), ILO, WHO, IMF, the World Trade Organization (ex GATT), the World Bank, The Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT) and many other agencies. The programmes are presented in six separate documents - one for each domain in the Conference's programme of work - as follows:

Programme Activity 1: Organization and Operation of statistical services
(CES/1998/10/Add.1)

Programme Activity 2: Technical infrastructure and other cross-cutting issues
(CES/1998/10/Add.2)

Programme Activity 3: Economic statistics (CES/1998/10/Add.3)

Programme Activity 4: Social and demographic statistics (CES/1998/10/Add.4)

Programme Activity 5: Environment statistics (CES/1998/10/Add.5)

Programme Activity 6: Dissemination and support for secretariat activities
(CES/1998/10/Add.6)

2. The integrated presentation is prepared annually, according to the following timetable:

i) December-January : The ECE secretariat obtains information from the other organizations on their programmes of work and prepares a first draft of the integrated presentation for review by the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians at its February meeting of each year.

ii) February-May : The integrated presentation is updated and amended to include the Bureau's recommended decisions to the Conference in each field of statistics, and it is presented in draft form for review by the Conference at its annual meeting in May.

iii) July-August : The integrated presentation is amended to reflect the decisions taken by the Conference at its May meeting concerning its own work programme, and it is issued in its final form for the forthcoming two-year period.

3. Thus, the material presented in the six documents referred to above contains updated text that organizations have supplied to the secretariat for inclusion in this updated version of the integrated presentation. It was reviewed by the Bureau of the Conference at its January 1998 meeting. In addition to supplying updated information on the planned future work programmes of the different international organizations in different fields of statistics, it lists numerous decisions that the Bureau recommends the Conference take in these fields of statistics, and identifies various issues that the Bureau thought should be brought to the attention of the plenary session.

4. Each programme activity is sub-divided into a number of programme elements, and each programme element is described within the following framework:

OBJECTIVES OVER THE NEXT SEVERAL YEARS: Broad aims of national statistical offices for international work in that field over the next several years.

EXPECTED COLLECTIVE OUTPUT IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS: Specific outputs expected by countries in the next two years.

ATTENTION OF THE CONFERENCE IS DRAWN TO THE FOLLOWING: List of issues in each field of statistics that the Bureau of the Conference considers should be brought to the attention of the Conference at its plenary session.

DECISIONS RECOMMENDED BY THE CES BUREAU TO THE 1998 PLENARY SESSION: List of decisions on its programme of work recommended to be taken by the Conference at the 1998 plenary session.

MEETINGS IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS: Sponsoring agency, title, date.

RAPPORTEUR: International organization that the Conference has recommended be assigned responsibility for preparing short issue- and strategic-oriented reports for the Bureau and for assessing on behalf of the Conference progress towards the objectives and outputs specified for a programme element.

ACTIVITIES AND MEANS IN THE NEXT TWO YEARS: Description of the major activities of agencies in that field from mid-May 1998 to June 2000. Information is also given in this section on ECE resource implications for the work to be carried out by the ECE secretariat. The resource implications are classified as follows: minimal (less than 3 work months); moderate (3-6 work months); and substantial (over 6 work months).

Priority menus

5. The "priority menu" summarizing the major types of activities the Conference plans to work on during the next two years in all projects in the programme activity is given at the end of this addendum.

List of programme elements in the programme of work of the Conference

6. The list of programme elements in the whole programme of work of the Conference is given in Table 1, together with an indication of the document in which information for that programme element can be found.

Other related information

7. As the integrated presentation is being presented in the same format in six separate documents, this explanatory note on the format of the presentation is being reproduced in each of the documents. A separate short document (CES/1998/10) describes the background to the development of the format used here and provides additional information including an explanation of acronyms used.

Table 1. List of programme elements in the programme of work of the Conference (together with an indication of the document in which information for that programme element can be found)

Programme Activity	Programme Element
<p><u>Programme Activity 1</u> : Organization and Operation of statistical services (See document CES/1998/10/Add.1)</p>	<p>1.1 Promotion and coordination of multilateral statistical work 1.2 Managerial and policy issues of direct concern to presidents of national statistical offices 1.3 Countries in transition in the ECE region 1.4 Relations with countries outside the ECE region (including countries in the Mediterranean region)</p>
<p><u>Programme Activity 2</u> : Technical infrastructure and other cross-cutting issues (See document CES/1998/10/Add.2)</p>	<p>2.1 Management of information technology infrastructure 2.2 Statistical data collection and processing 2.3 Dissemination and interchange of statistical information 2.4 Statistical classifications 2.5 Statistical research and development 2.6 Geographical and regional data 2.7 Human resource development</p>
<p><u>Programme Activity 3</u> : Economic statistics (See document CES/1998/10/Add.3)</p>	<p>3.1 Implementation of the system of national accounts 3.2 Money and banking, government finance, and balance of payments 3.3 International trade in goods 3.4 Transport 3.5 Distributive trades 3.6 International trade in services 3.7 Tourism 3.8 Other marketed services, and non-marketed services 3.9 Price statistics, including purchasing power parities 3.10 Agricultural statistics 3.11 Industrial statistics 3.12 Energy statistics 3.13 Science and technology statistics 3.14 Business registers and administrative records in support of economic statistics 3.XX Other work in the field of economic statistics</p>

Programme Activity	Programme Element
<p><u>Programme Activity 4</u> : Social and demographic statistics (See document CES/1998/10/Add.4)</p>	<p>4.1 Social indicators and frameworks 4.2 Gender statistics 4.3 Multi-purpose social surveys 4.4 Registers and administrative records for social and demographic statistics 4.5 Population and housing censuses 4.6 Health statistics 4.7 Crime and criminal justice statistics 4.8 Education and training statistics 4.9 Culture statistics 4.10 Labour statistics 4.11 Demographic statistics (including projections, migration and fertility) 4.12 Human settlements and housing statistics 4.13 Statistics of household income and expenditures, of the welfare of the population, and of poverty and income inequality 4.14 Statistics on population groups of special interest</p>
<p><u>Programme Activity 5</u> : Environment statistics (See document CES/1998/10/Add.5)</p>	<p>5.1 Sectoral concepts, definitions and classifications 5.2 Environmental accounting 5.3 Environmental databases and reporting</p>
<p><u>Programme Activity 6</u> : Dissemination and support for secretariat activities (See document CES/1998/10/Add.6)</p>	<p>6.1 Coordination of international data collection 6.2 Other statistically-related activities of the ECE secretariat</p>

PROGRAMME ACTIVITY 2

TECHNICAL INFRASTRUCTURE AND OTHER CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

2.1 MANAGEMENT OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INFRASTRUCTURE

Objectives over the next several years: To assist in the development of an appropriate strategy in the implementation of information technology (IT) and to improve its management in statistical agencies, including the definition of suitable architectures for computing, communications and information holdings, the choice of appropriate interface standards, the impact of IT development on the organization of statistical services in statistical agencies, the cost-effective management of IT services, strategy in training and requalification of statistical staff caused by the proliferation of personal computers and networking in statistical agencies. This programme element also oversees the IT-related activities in other programme elements of the programme activity. For the coming period, emphasis should be placed on the following: the impact of IT to reduce costs of statistical production in statistical agencies; the requalification of statistical staff under the conditions of networking and distributed processing of statistical information; the utilization of available broadband and ATM communication technologies; and electronic data interchange to speed up and automate data collection, data exchange and dissemination process.

Expected collective output in the next two years: For the ECE: proposals for future work in programme elements 2.2 -- Statistical data collection and processing, and 2.3 -- Dissemination and interchange of statistical information; use of UN/EDIFACT standards for statistical EDI in transition countries and at the international level; improved computer architecture in national statistical offices with emphasis on client-servers and networking; improved organization of national statistical services under the conditions of networking and distributed processing; improved metadata management in national and international statistical agencies.

For Eurostat: agreement on common architectures for statistical information services (production, reference, dissemination); adoption and integration of open-EDI technologies such as common exchange standards for documents, statistical reports, statistical data, classifications and metadata; agreement on common EDI messages and APIs to couple distributed statistical information services (e.g. locating, extracting and downloading relevant statistical data for a specific domain).

For the OECD: implementation of a new architecture for statistical processes based on client-server technology and IT standards like SQL and relational databases; development of a general data and metadata model.

Attention of the Conference is drawn to the following:

- The concern NSOs have about problems associated with computer programs and the year 2000 date change, and the implications this will have for national and international statistical offices.

Decisions recommended by the CES Bureau to the 1998 plenary session:

- To approve the activities to be undertaken by the Conference in this programme element (See the "Activities and Means" section below)

Meetings from mid-May 1998 to June 2000:

ECE: Seminar ISIS 1998 (26-29 May 1998)
ECE: Meeting on the Management of Statistical Information Technology
(15-17 February 1999)
ECE-Eurostat: Work Session on Statistical Confidentiality (8-10 March 1999)
ECE: Seminar ISIS 2000 (May 2000)
EUROSTAT: Task Force on Metadata (June 1998)
EUROSTAT: Task Force on GESMES (July 1998)
EUROSTAT: Working Group on Telematic Networks & EDI (October 1998)
EUROSTAT: Task Force on Metadata (October 1998)
EUROSTAT: Task Force on Edicom (27-28 October 1998)
EUROSTAT: Task Force on EBES EEG6 (November 1998)
EUROSTAT: Task Force on GESMES (November 1998)

Rapporteur: ECE

Activities and means from mid May 1998 to June 2000:

Activities of ECE:

- a) Seminar on Integrated Statistical Information Systems and related matters (ISIS'98) in 1997/98 to consider: (i) Use of communication technologies for external and internal dissemination of statistical data (including the need for metadata and new ways of representing data); (ii) Security and confidentiality of statistical data; (iii) Management of development and operation of statistical IT projects, applications and infrastructure; (iv) Automation of data collection and its relation with the achievement of lower costs and greater efficiency.
- b) Meeting on the Management of Statistical Information Technology, 1999/2000 to consider: (i) The impact of Internet on the statistical production and dissemination process; (ii) Economic issues associated with implementation of modern information technology and management of human resources as driving forces to improve timeliness and quality of statistical data; (iii) Integration of statistical activation on the national and international level, including data modelling strategies and standards needed for statistical data integration; and (iv) Technologies and methods in the implementation of the 2000 round of Censuses.
- c) Seminar on Integrated Statistical Information Systems and related matters (ISIS'2000) in 1999/2000 to consider: pending recommendation of Seminar ISIS '98.
- d) Work Session (jointly with Eurostat) on Statistical Confidentiality 1998/99 to consider: (i) new applications of disclosure control

techniques; (ii) software and computing developments; (iii) administration and policy.

Secretariat resources: Substantial.

Activities of OECD:

- a) Implementation of an open-system architecture to enable integration of software tools and easy sharing of data.
- b) Establishment of a Corporate Data Environment.
- c) Enhancing methods and procedures for exchange of statistical information using worldwide networks and direct computer-to-computer links with statistical agencies in member countries.

Activities of Eurostat: (Themes 13: Electronic data processing; 14: Information technologies (part)):

Audit of the IT environment : This should identify principal strengths and weaknesses of our organisation and identify actions for improvement. The Audit will be done on a high level, detailed audits on specific problems or information systems will be postponed.

Other activities : progressive simplification of the electronic data processing infrastructure, and their management; increased levels of security and confidentiality; continuation and start the migration of some of the most important information systems from proprietary technology to an open one (UNIX).

Preparation of applications and information systems for the year 2000 and EURO.

Migration of the infrastructure to the Windows NT environment.

Implications of the move to the Bech building (especially on the network).

PC based Video conference: Problem statement, feasibility study and tests

Activities of other organizations:

The ILO:

- a) Continued maintenance of the ILO's databases hosted at the mainframe of the International Computer Center (ICC).
- b) Further improvement of the ILO Statistics Local Area Network (SLAN): (i) data transfers between the mainframe and SLAN; (ii) hardware and software upgrade and (iii) staff training.
- c) Use of the Software for Computer Assisted Translation (CAT) for the trilingual publications (e.g. "Sources & Methods" series, meeting reports, etc.).

International Monetary fund (IMF):

- a) Upgrade of the information technology architecture for data collection, management and dissemination, to increase the efficiency of its systems and to leverage proven technologies such as client/server computing, WNW technology, CD-ROM, and electronic data interchange (EDI).
- b) Initial study on the use of the GESMES/CB standard UN/EDIFACT message for electronic interchange of monetary, balance of payments, and other statistics from countries in the ECE region.

Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States:

The Internet is expected to serve as a basis for obtaining information from the CIS countries' statistical services and for data interchange with international organizations.

In February 1998 CIS-STAT plans to hold a meeting of representatives of the CIS countries' statistical services on aspects of the collection, processing and dissemination of statistical information, in particular to review experience with the introduction of the Internet into statistical practice, electronic data interchange between statistical services and international organizations, and the dissemination of statistical information on CD-ROMs.

In 1998 CIS-STAT also plans to set up a local information and computing network using Windows NT.

2.2 STATISTICAL DATA COLLECTION AND PROCESSING

Objectives over the next several years: To promote the use of efficient methodology and software in the common collection and processing operations carried out by statistical agencies (e.g. sampling, data entry, editing, coding, estimation); best practices and best software tools are to be identified and made available. For the coming period, emphasis should be on the following objectives: (i) to support the identification of innovative approaches to cost reduction through technology being undertaken in 2.1; (ii) to assess the current status of the useful work already accomplished in this area and to identify further work that would be of benefit; (iii) to promote the automation of the data collection/processing cycle using new digital communication technologies and structured data architectures; (iv) to diminish manual intervention in the production process; (v) to monitor the development of applicable standards and of IT technologies of the respondents.

Expected collective output in the next two years: For the ECE: established programme for further work in this programme element; assessment of statistics related to data editing assessment of new approaches to data editing; recommendations for techniques used to limit over editing.

For EUROSTAT: agreement on the use of EDI messages to specify the statistical requirements to the economic operators and their declarants; production of documentation on EDI projects for decision-makers, key partners in data collection, key technological players such as software houses, EDI providers, and standardization bodies, etc.

For the OECD: improved procedures and tools for improved data collection coordination; implemented UN/EDIFACT standards in data collection;.

Attention of the Conference is drawn to the following:

- The joint work being conducted by international organizations aimed at standardizing (to the extent possible) their data transfer methods.
- The fact that many NSOs are in the process of restructuring their data collection methods.

Decisions recommended by the CES Bureau to the 1998 plenary session:

- To approve the activities to be undertaken by the Conference in this programme element (See the "Activities and Means" section below)

Meetings from mid-May 1998 to June 2000:

ECE: Work session on Statistical Data Editing (2-4 June 1999)
EUROSTAT: Working Group on Statistical Confidentiality (1 June 1998)
EUROSTAT: Committee on Statistical Confidentiality (12 October 1998)

Rapporteur: ECE

Activities from mid-May 1998 to June 2000:

Activities of ECE:

- a) Work Session on Statistical Data Editing (1998/99) to consider: (i) measuring the impact of editing in various phases of statistical survey processing; (ii) generalised software packages for statistical data editing, their evaluation; (iii) new methodological and technological developments in statistical data editing.
- b) Preparation and publication of methodological materials on the evaluation of statistical data editing process.
- c) Finalization and publication of the methodological material "Common Terminology on Statistical Data Editing" (jointly with Eurostat).

Secretariat resources: Substantial

Activities of OECD:

- a) Further implementation of a common statistical information management environment integrating the functions of data collection, storage, manipulation, analysis and dissemination, as well as associated metadata and data catalogue.
- b) Further improvement of data collection methods and procedures through progressive replacement of paper- and fax-based media with electronic media.
- c) Implementation of automated capture of data from statistical agencies in order to increase timeliness of statistical information received, eliminate errors inherent in manual procedures, and reduce the reporting burden.

Activities of Eurostat: (Themes 14: Information technologies (part); 15: Reference databases; 25: Data security and statistical confidentiality):

Data collection Intrastat : Migration from DOS to WINDOWS environment. Production of a new version of the software, maintenance and help desk. Maintenance of the corresponding telecommunication facilities.

Data collection from enterprises : Continuation of pilot exercises from enterprises of various sizes, different sectors, in different countries. Introduction of electronic mail and advanced office automation techniques for committees, working parties and task forces in collaboration with the Member States (if resources from other services of the Commission can be made available).

For reference databases, the programme will focus on consolidating existing studies and products; more specifically, development will centre on providing DBA tools and integration of the various systems managing the data and metadata. The introduction of tools of guaranteed quality will allow an initial systematic measurement of the information of the reference environment in compliance with total quality requirements. There will be systematic efforts to harmonise the data and metadata so as to meet quality standards in our product searches and documentation. Concerning the content of reference bases, efforts will be made towards completeness of statistical data as well as freshness by optimising processing time. Additional promotion, training and information exercises will be undertaken in connection with the reference bases so as to reach all potential clients on modern information media.

New projects include : Introduction of quality indicators: completeness and timeliness of the reference database; Standardisation of statistical information, as a research project on data and metadata; Tools provided by the Internet (http server, Intranet-style solutions) for dissemination both free and for a fee; Improvement of data and metadata presentation for the clients; Completion of thesaurus revision work and start-up of the semi-automatic indexation process; Data and metadata update, creation of new domains.

A working group will be launched to exchange information on the level of protection of statistical data in the NSIs and to define common rules or recommendations.

Work will continue on statistical protection techniques, mainly via research activities and scientific seminars. The implementation of provisions on confidentiality in statistical law will also form an important component of this project in 1998-2002.

Risk analysis : This should determine the sensitivity of information in Eurostat, compare it with the level of protection, and propose actions for improvement

Simplified disaster recovery plan, which allows to recover the most critical user services (office automation, mail etc.) in 3 days, in case of a major disaster

Full implementation of the security features for the Windows NT environment, including workstation protection level, server security, virus protection, back-up, audit)

Verification of security aspects related with the new Bech building
General use of the secure data communication between Eurostat and the NSIs.

Electronic data transfer : The electronic transfer of data from national administrations will be widely extended.

EDI : The use of standardised messages will be promoted. The EDIFACT versions of GESMES, RDRMES and CLASET will be supported. The parallel use of syntaxes HTML, XML and OO (object oriented) is envisaged

Activities of other organizations:

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO):

- a) Dissemination of the 1997 and 1998 editions of the UNIDO annual questionnaire to non-OECD countries (January 1999 and 2000).
- b) Further work on implementation of electronic data transmission from national data suppliers.

c) Maintenance of Industrial Statistics Databases: (i) 3-digit level of ISIC Rev.2; (ii) 4-digit level of ISIC Rev.2; and (iii) 3- and 4-digit levels of ISIC Rev.3.

d) Compilation of key industrial statistics by employment size of establishment (for internal use).

The ILO: Accelerated shift to electronic means of data collection from countries and territories using the Internet technology; examination of similar developments in other international and regional organizations; and implementation of pilot projects. Two approaches are considered: (i) direct feeding into ILO's databases by NSOs, or (ii) entry by ILO of data received by e-mail or on diskette.

The FAO: (i) Development of a software package for the design, operation and processing of fishery catch and effort data through sample surveys; and (ii) training workshops and trail implementations.

UNESCO: Use of electronic questionnaires for the joint UNESCO/OECD/Eurostat data collection (See also programme element 6.1).

Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States: Work will continue on standardizing the electronic interchange of statistical information with the national statistical services of CIS countries and with international organizations.

Information technology now permits the collection and exchange of statistical data at monthly and quarterly intervals between the statistical services of CIS countries and CIS-STAT using standardized tables (questionnaires) in EXCEL format (about 70 tables).

Information is exchanged via the Internet with the statistical services of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan and Russia. With the other statistical services of the CIS countries data are collected and exchanged over switched links by e-mail.

A great deal of work is being done jointly with ECE on EDI standardization and on avoiding duplication in data collection by international organizations.

2.3 DISSEMINATION AND INTERCHANGE OF STATISTICAL INFORMATION

Objectives over the next several years: To build up an information and a technological infrastructure for dissemination of statistical data corresponding to the needs of different users groups; to disseminate statistical information through various electronic media that meet the clients' requirements; to promote the full use of electronic information highways, e-mail facilities and point-to-point connections to disseminate statistical products to end-users and to exchange structured statistical data between the producers of statistics; to build up a reference environment on the availability of statistical information at national and international levels (this requires emphasis on metadata architecture and designing and

developing of methodologies for a standard description of statistical data and metadata). Over the next two years, emphasis should be given in this programme element to the marketing and pricing of statistical information. However, policy issues related to marketing and pricing will be considered under programme element 1.2.

Expected collective output in the next two years: For the ECE: publication of the methodological materials "Minimum Standards for Putting Metadata on Internet" and "Common Terminology of Statistical Metainformation System"; assessment of the use of metadata in the statistical life-cycle with special emphasis on dissemination of statistical information and marketing; widening of EDI based on the standards developed by the Group EEG6 of the European Board for EDI Standardization with transition countries.

For EUROSTAT: agreement on concentrated efforts, investments and resources on DSIS 6 priorities (metadata, reference environment, raw data collection, design and integration of EDI technologies, multimedia and information highways, integration with networking technologies); agreement on use of standardized EDI messages as a corner to exchange data and metadata between reference environments; implementation of reference and dissemination environments conforming to common recommendations, requirements and memorandum of understanding (including access rights, copyrights, accounting practices); feasibility studies on how statistical information services can benefit from EDI and multimedia technologies.

For the OECD: revised electronic presentation of the main statistical publications, including on-line services, with the view of expanding the metadata content. Keep up-to-date with the development of on-line services through the World Wide Web.

Attention of the Conference is drawn to the following:

- IMF's General Data Dissemination standard for all member countries for economic, financial and socio-demographic statistics, as well as their Special Data Dissemination Standard which is intended to guide member countries that have, or may seek, access to international capital markets.

Decisions recommended by the CES Bureau to the 1998 plenary session:

- To approve the activities to be undertaken by the Conference in this programme element (See the "Activities and Means" section below)

Meetings from mid-May 1998 to June 2000:

ECE: Work session on statistical output for dissemination to Information Media (Cork, Ireland, 22-25 June 1998)

ECE: Work session on statistical metadata (29 September - 1 October 1999)

ECE: Work session on statistical output for dissemination to Information Media (1999/2000)

EUROSTAT: Working Group on Data Shop meeting (1 June 1998)

EUROSTAT: Task Force on EUROPROMS (1 June 1998)

EUROSTAT: Task Force on Education (1 September 1998)

EUROSTAT: Task Force on EUROPROMS (1 September 1998)

EUROSTAT: Task Force on SIRE (1 October 1998)

EUROSTAT: Working Group on Dissemination of Statistical Information (1-2
October 1998)

EUROSTAT: Task Force on Internet (5 November 1998)

Rapporteur: ECE

Activities and means from mid-May 1998 to June 2000:

Activities of ECE:

- a) Work session on Dissemination of Statistical Output to Information Media (1997/98) to consider: (i) Measurement of the usage of Internet sites, including user surveys; (ii) Dealing with negative press coverage; (iii) Best practices in training in media relations; (iv) Making an effective Web site for information media, including metadata adapted to the needs of media and the public; (v) Shifting from print to electronic products -- how and when?; and (vi) New developments in the use of Internet dissemination of statistical information.
- b) Finalization and publication of the methodological material "Minimum Standards for Putting Metadata on Internet".
- c) Finalization and publication of the methodological material "Common Terminology for Statistical Metainformation Systems".
- d) (See **CES/1998/10/Add.7** for future work recommended by the February 1998 work session on statistical metadata)
- e) Participation in the development of international standards for statistical EDI (Group EEG6 of the European Board for EDI Standardization).
- f) Work session on Dissemination of Statistical Output to Information Media (1999/2000) to consider: pending recommendations of the June 1998 Work Session.

Secretariat resources: Substantial

Activities of OECD:

- a) Improvement of the existing information systems in order to increase the speed, quality and flexibility of production of publications.
- b) Expanding the metadata content and functionality and improving the presentation of electronic products.
- c) Establishment of a database publishing facility, integrated with the statistical information management environment, to enable the automated production of statistical publications.
- d) Standards are being defined to facilitate the production of publications in a variety of paper-based and electronic media.
- e) Broadening use of electronic media for dissemination of statistical information, including CD-Roms and the World Wide Web.

Activities of Eurostat: (Themes 14: Information technologies (part); 16: Information; 17: Dissemination):

Automated production of publication : Development of a new version of STRINGS.

Dissemination of information : Quality assurance, elaboration of standards for paper and electronic publications. Assistance to Eurostat producers.

Communication/Press : Strengthening relations with the media. Improving the quality and dissemination of press releases. Participating systematically in visits by journalists to the Commission. Reinforcing the special treatment for journalists seeking data (Eurostat Media Support) and relations with Press Departments in NSIs.

Summary publications : Continuing the revision of dissemination media and the efforts to achieve their optimum use. Reinforcing the partnership with private publishers. Improving product quality by recasting production methods.

Publications programme : greater use of the tools offered by the Internet for disseminating the programme both free of charge and against payment; reduction of the supply of information on paper; cost-effectiveness analysis for products and ex post evaluation; gradual recasting of the programme to improve its effectiveness and legibility.

Dissemination policy : Continue the efforts made in recent years: strengthening of the partnership with the European statistical system (development of joint products and services under the logo "Statistics Europe"); synergy between data producers and computer companies; implementation of fair pricing principles; changeover to a philosophy of service and electronic medium first, paper products second; regular analysis of our users' profiles and opinion surveys among specific groups.

Dissemination networks : In 1998 the development of the Data Shop network will enter a phase of normal operation. The operation and growth of the activity will be the main objectives. The Brussels Data Shop will continue to train users in Commission DGs and other EU institutions in the use of Eurostat tools, to provide information on the products and tools available and to carry out work on request for the other services of the Commission and the other EU institutions.

Activities of other organizations:

UN Statistics Division:

a) UN Economic and Social Information System (UNESIS) : (i) design and implementation of systems to collect and disseminate the national accounts data electronically, including use of Internet. (ii) implementation of standard data and metadata formats in the Common Database (CDB); (iii) review of estimation procedures for National Accounts; (iv) extension to the demographic database.

b) Further development of the electronic publications programme : (i) text CD-ROM of the population census recommendations and related materials; (ii) expansion of the WWW site to include newsletters, working papers and official documents; (iii) Monthly Bulletin of Statistics subscription service on Internet; (iv) license agreements for use of databases with the non-profit and private sector users; (v) maintenance of the quarterly Population and Vital Statistics Report on Internet.

The FAO: (i) implementation of standardized formats for the exchange of fishery statistics by electronic means; and (ii) promotion of EDI in reporting in of the fishery statistics.

The ILO:

- a) Further dissemination of statistics from the ILO databases through Internet (paid access to cover costs).
- b) Publishing of the meta-information on the ILO Web site (part of the information traditionally published in the "Sources & Methods" series).
- c) Trial internal data dissemination through Intranet.

International Monetary Fund (IMF):

- a) Initial study on the use of the GESMES/CB standard UN/EDIFACT message for electronic interchange of monetary, balance of payments, and other statistics from countries in the ECE region.
- b) Increased use of CD-ROM and other electronic data dissemination media for the IMF's statistical publications.

Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States:

Work will continue on broadening the electronic dissemination of statistical information, including on CD-ROMs, and access to CIS-STAT databases. The CIS-STAT home page (<http://www.unece.org/stats/cisstat>) will be updated monthly.

2.4 STATISTICAL CLASSIFICATIONS

Objectives over the next several years: Promote: the implementation of international classifications throughout the ECE region; continued co-operation of Europe with the USA and Canada; and the ongoing improvement of CPC and particularly the CPC services. Support: the work of the United Nations Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications.

Expected collective output in the next two years: A schedule showing when member countries plan to implement the latest vintages of international classifications; an inventory of current deviations from international classifications annotated with measures of the relative importance of such deviations; a list of deviations from the major classifications which are suggested for adoption by countries in transition; consideration of a mechanism for updating ISCO-88 on the basis of the experiences of countries developing new revised national occupational classifications based on the ISCO-88 model; conclusions of a review of the conceptual basis for and experience with the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-93).

Attention of the Conference is drawn to the following: Nothing

Decisions recommended by the CES Bureau to the 1998 plenary session:

- To change the title of this programme element from what it was previously called (Industry, commodity and occupation classifications) to "Statistical classifications" (**Note:** The Bureau has asked the Rapporteur to propose new text for the objectives and outputs so as to make clear that for at least the time being the outputs and/or objectives refer to industry, commodity and occupation classifications).

Meetings from mid-May 1998 to June 2000:

EUROSTAT: Task Force on Methodology (16-17 June 1998)
EUROSTAT: Task Force on NACE-CPA (17-19 June 1998)
EUROSTAT: Working Group on Methodological Coordination (28-29 September 1998)
EUROSTAT: Committee on Customs Codes (6-8 October 1998)
EUROSTAT: Committee on NACE-CPA (8-9 October 1998)
EUROSTAT: Task Force on NACE-CPA (25-27 November 1998)
EUROSTAT: Committee on Customs Codes (1-3 December 1998)
ILO: 16th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (Geneva, 6-15 October 1998)

Rapporteur: Eurostat

Activities and means from mid-May 1998 to June 2000:

Intersecretariat Task Force:

- a) To finalize a small scale survey designed to ascertain the variation in definition of statistical "units" to be classified to ISIC, and report the result to the UN Statistical Commission.
- b) The UN Statistical Commission endorsed, at its 1997 meeting, the work carried out by the Task Force, and agreed that the Task Force had largely accomplished its goals and should therefore be discontinued.

Activities of ECE:

Activities of OECD: (See work of the Task Force on Industrial and Constructions Statistics above)

Activities of Eurostat: (Themes 11: Classifications; 18: Statistical coordination):

Activities will include the following : updating of the PRODCOM list, implementation, interpretation and training measures in connection with NACE Rev. 1 and the CPA, further revision of the Central Product Classification, revision of the list of trade products, preparations for the revision of the service section of the NACE and the CPA, co-operation with the United States and Canada to achieve a better convergence between NAICS and NACE Rev.1, the installation of updated classifications in a reference data base and active participation in seminars organised in the framework of PHARE and TACIS. Owing to lack of resources, there will be a considerable cutback in the number of international meetings for drawing up classifications, and this will result in delays in the discussions on the HS.

Continuation of the methodological work and preparation of guidelines for the pilot surveys laid down in the regulations on enterprises.

Preparation of the second version of the glossary of enterprises centred on the systematic comparison of all available sources (SNA, ESA, LFS, company accounts) and consideration of comments made following the first publication. Publication of the manual "Guidelines for services surveys".

Regular formatting of the METODOLOGICA Hypertext database.

Co-ordination of Community business surveys will continue to be carried out to ensure minimisation of the burden on respondents, and that costs are justifiable in relation to benefits.

Activities of other organizations:

UN Statistics Division:

- a) Implementation (in cooperation with Eurostat, FAO and ECE) of a list of industrial products and materials based on the Harmonised System (HS) for use in international industrial commodity statistics.
- b) Maintenance of the Classifications Hotline (CHL) to respond request in the field of economic and social classifications and to promote common approaches, principles and conventions on their use. VHL accesibility: mail, fax, telephone, e-mail (CHL@un.org) and the World Wide Web.
- c) Monitoring national implementation of the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC, Rev. 3) and the Central Product Classification; consultations with national and international statistical agencies (through CHL).
- e) Publication of the revised Central Product Classification, Version 1.0 (CPC, Version 1.0), with the understanding that users would be alerted to plans for its further improvement; while encouraging Member States to start implementing the CPC Version 1.0 and make suggestions to the Secretariat regarding the CPC's further improvement.
- f) Review and revision of the goods part of the CPC (in cooperation with the Voorburg Group on Service Statistics); harmonization of the goods part of the CPC, Version 1.0 with future revisions of the HS.

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO):

Transition from ISIC Rev.2 to Revision 3 in most of UNIDO member countries.

The FAO: Refining and extension of the species classification maintained by FAO (to encourage more detailed reporting by species).

The ILO:

- a) Direct short-term advisory services to countries developing or revising a national classification of occupations on the basis of the International Standard Classification of Occupation (ISCO-88) or on a similar basis, through direct contacts with the custodians and users of such classifications as well as through the relevant Web-site.
- b) Possible modifications to the Resolution concerning the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-93) (pending decisions by the October 1998 International Conference of Labour Statisticians).

Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States:

Attention will be focused mainly on developing model classifications harmonized with international analogues and on formulating recommendations

for their application. Between 1998 and 2000 the Commonwealth countries as a whole will be introducing activity classifications based on ISIC Rev.3 and NACE Rev.1. A statistical classification of products will be developed and brought into use on an experimental basis by 2000. The model classification has an eight-digit code and is built on the methodological principles of the CPA, using 7-8 digits to represent product groupings common to the Commonwealth countries.

Recommendations will be drawn up in 1998 for introducing the international classification of household expenditures by purpose into SNA accounting practice.

2.5 STATISTICAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Objectives over the next several years: To promote an active program of research and development within the region on statistical and methodological issues that cut across other P.E.s in the Work programme (e.g. seasonal adjustment; data quality measurement; non-sampling error; sampling and estimating; questionnaire design; confidentiality protection; longitudinal surveys); to ensure that the results of this work are accessible to statistical offices throughout the region; to develop guidelines for statistical agencies on policies and practices for managing data quality in statistical programs, including the definition, control, measurement, and description of data quality, and its implications for data release.

Expected collective output in the next two years: An active network of information exchange between interested member countries.

Attention of the Conference is drawn to the following:

- The Seminar on New Techniques and Technologies for Statistics (to be held from 25-27 November 1998 in Sorrento, Italy. It is aimed at exploring the possibilities offered by new tools and their impact on statistical theory, on data collection procedures, on the processing of information and on data quality.

Decisions recommended by the CES Bureau to the 1998 plenary session: None

Meetings from mid-May 1998 to June 2000:

EUROSTAT: Working Group on Seasonal Adjustment (15 June 1998)
EUROSTAT: Working Group on DOSIS (14-16 September 1998)
EUROSTAT: Working Group on Quality of Business Statistics (19 October 1998)
EUROSTAT: Seminar NTTS-98 (New Technologies and Techniques for Statistics),
(Sorrento, Italy, 25-27 November 1998)
EUROSTAT: Working Group on Seasonal Adjustment (7 December 1998)

Rapporteur: Statistics Canada.

Activities and means from mid-May 1998 to June 2000:

Activities of ECE:

Activities of OECD:

Activities of Eurostat: (Theme 22: Statistical research):

The 1998-2002 programme will continue the activities undertaken in previous years: monitoring and evaluation of DOSIS research projects; launch of scientific and technological support measures for Eurostat departments and monitoring of measures introduced in previous years; preparation, launch and monitoring of possible statistical activities in the Fifth Framework Programme; work on quality, the treatment of chronological series, and the protection of micro-data; methodological work on data analysis; publication of the scientific journal ROS (Research in Official Statistics).

Activities of other organizations:

The FAO: Development of a new integrated database for all major FAO fishery statistics to accommodate some additional elements such as catch value data and trade flows for fishery commodities.

2.6 GEOGRAPHICAL AND REGIONAL DATA

Objectives over the next several years: To promote the development and integration of statistics for sub-national and supra-national regions. To improve the efficiency, quality and comparability of the geographic dimension of official statistics. To facilitate the measurement and reinforcement of economic and social cohesion of the European Union using high-quality statistical information on the European regions. To put at the disposal of users the necessary regional data for the definition, follow-up and evaluation of regional policies (both national and European Union) and the evaluation of the socio-economic situation and evolution of the region of Europe. To design and develop concepts and standards, new tools and technology (GIS), dissemination of geographical products and spatial analysis.

Expected collective output in the next two years: For ECE, work sessions on GIS focused on integration between statistics and geography and the use of cartography for statistical purposes; presentation of the survey on the use of GIS in NSOs.

For Eurostat, statistical yearbook "REGIONS", complete classification of regions for the new member states, publication of methodology for regional household accounts, and first results of the screening exercise.

For OECD, the initial study on territorial indicators of employment, which was recently published, will be extended with some work on income, social, and environment indicators.

Attention of the Conference is drawn to the following: Nothing

Decisions recommended by the CES Bureau to the 1998 plenary session:

- To approve the activities to be undertaken by the Conference in this programme element (See the "Activities and Means" section below).

Meetings from mid-May 1998 to June 2000:

ECE: Work session on GIS (Ottawa, Canada, 5-7 October 1998).
EUROSTAT: Working Group on Geographic Information Systems for Statistics
(annually, dates to be decided later)
EUROSTAT: Working Group on Urban Statistics (April 1999)
EUROSTAT: Working Group on Regional Accounts (9-10 June 1998; May 1999)
OECD: Steering Group on Rural Indicators (April 1999, biannual meetings)

Rapporteur: Eurostat.

Activities and means from mid-May 1998 to June 2000:

Activities of ECE:

- a) Work Session on Geographical Information Systems (GIS) in 1998/99 to consider: (i) integration of statistics and geography; (ii) progress in GISCO and SIRE projects conducted by Eurostat; (iii) common aspects of GIS applications in different subject-matter areas; (iv) policy issues dealing with the implementation of GIS.
- (b) Preparation of guidelines on cartography for statistical purposes.
- (c) Preparation of a study on register based statistics in relation to GIS and geography.

Secretariat resources: Substantial

Activities of OECD:

- a) Continued activities on territorial data and indicators and implementation of a territorial scheme to collect data for comparable sub-national geographical units (29 Member countries, 2 300 regions and 70 000 communities).
- b) Further maintenance of a territorial database on demographic, economic, social and environmental issues, and production of analytical reports.

Activities of Eurostat: (Theme 72: Regional and geographical information):

- a) Regional statistics : (i) screening of Gross Value Added and Gross Fixed Capital Formation methods in the Member States; (ii) implementation of ESA 95 in regional accounts; (iii) test of the methodology on the regionalisation of general government accounts; (iv) development of the information system on urban agglomerations; (v) integration of the Central European Countries in EU regional statistical information system and publication of the "Portraits of the Regions".
- b) Geographical information system : (i) revision of the topographic and thematic layers and architecture of the reference environment; (ii) feasibility study of a European network of GIS for statistics.

Activities of other organizations:

Council of Europe: Further work on the project "Internal Migration and Regional Population Dynamics"; preparation of reports 28 European Countries.

2.7 HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT

Objectives over the next several years: To increase participation in training. In order to promote this, to make available systematically to countries the information relating to training policies and programmes in both Member countries and in Eurostat; to help coordinate international training seminars and workshops and ensure that subjects addressed are in line with statistical priorities as defined by CES and Eurostat; to assist member countries in developing staff exchange policies where comparative advantages make such exchanges effective, to facilitate countries making wise choices for training.

Expected collective output in the next two years: Consolidated catalogue of training courses in statistics offered by EU and EFTA Member countries and in the framework of Training for European Statisticians (TES); bulletin with notices of openings for training in statistical agencies abroad; and an annual review of training gaps and suggestions on how to address them.

Attention of the Conference is drawn to the following: Nothing

Decisions recommended by the CES Bureau to the 1998 plenary session: None

Meetings from mid-May 1998 to June 2000:

Rapporteur: Eurostat.

Activities and means from mid-May 1998 to June 2000:

Activities of ECE:

Activities of OECD:

Activities of Eurostat: (Theme 12: Statistical training):

Six years after introducing the vocational training programme "Training of European Statisticians" (TES), Eurostat continues to subsidise the TES Institute. The TES Institute's activities covered by this subsidy are planned on the basis of a three-year programme for the period 1996 to 1999. The 1998 training programme subsidised by Eurostat encompasses 35 courses of which 12 are new courses. The participants come mainly from the countries of the European Union and the EFTA countries. However, limited participation is permitted for the countries of central and eastern Europe and of the Mediterranean Basin.

CESD Network: CESD Communautaire implements technical assistance and/or training activities in the statistical field within the framework of European Union co-operation projects with developing ACP countries and countries in transition.

Activities of other organizations:

The ILO:

- a) Preparation of a multi-part modular training tool based on the "ILO Training Compendium on Labour Statistics" for training purposes of the International Training Centre in Turin and in-house training by the NSOs.
- b) Bureau staff will serve as resource persons for training seminars and training components of other organisations, technical cooperation projects in the regions and support other related training activities carried out by the Training Centre.

The International Monetary Fund (IMF):

- a) Annual six weeks training courses (in English, French or Spanish) at the IMF Institute in Washington on: (i) balance of payments; (ii) government finance; (iii) money and banking; and (iv) national accounts (English only) statistics are offered.
- b) Three-week courses (in English and Russian) at the Joint Vienna Institute.
- c) Regional training courses in the above subjects on an ad hoc basis.

ANNEX
Priority menu of the CES for 1998/99 and 1999/2000
in programme activity 2 (Technical infrastructure and other
cross-cutting issues)

a) Mid-May 1998 - June 1999

WORK PROGRAMME OF THE CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS PRIORITY MENU FOR 1998/99			
Programme element	Substantive action required of the ECE secretariat	Major coordination required	Output for the plenary session 1999
2.1 Management of information technology infrastructure	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Organization of ISIS'98 - Organization of the Meeting on the Management of Statistical Information Technology - Organization of the ECE/Eurostat work session on statistical confidentiality 	- EUROSTAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report - Report - Conclusions of the work session
2.2 Statistical data collection and processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparation of methodological materials and publication on statistical data editing - Organization of the work session on statistical data editing 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Methodological materials and publication - Conclusions of the work session
2.3 Dissemination and interchange of statistical information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work session on dissemination to inf. Media - Preparation of methodological materials on statistical metadata - Participation in the development of EDISTAT (European Board for EDI Standardization - group EEG6) 	- EUROSTAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report - Methodological materials - Progress report
2.6 Geographical and regional data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organization of the work session on GIS - Preparation of methodological materials on implementation of GIS 	- EUROSTAT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Conclusions of the work session - Methodological materials

b) July 1999 - June 2000

WORK PROGRAMME OF THE CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS PRIORITY MENU FOR 1999/2000			
Programme element	Substantive action required of the ECE secretariat	Major coordination required	Output for the plenary session 2000
2.1 Management of statistical information technology	- Organization of ISIS 2000		- Report
2.2 Statistical data collection and processing	- Preparation of methodological materials and publication on statistical data editing		- Methodological materials and publication
	- Organization of the work session on statistical metadata		- Conclusions of the work session
2.3 Dissemination and interchange of statistical information	- Organization of the work session on statistical output for dissemination to information media		- Conclusion of the work session
	- Participation in the development of EDISTAT (European Board for EDI Standardization - group EEG6)	- EUROSTAT	- Progress report
2.6 Geographical and regional data	- Organization of the work session on GIS	- EUROSTAT	- Conclusions of the work session
	- Preparation of methodological materials on implementation of GIS		- Methodological materials
