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STATISTICAL COMMISSION and ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Forty-seventh plenary session
(Neuchâtel, 14-16 June 1999)

**PROGRAMMES OF INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL
WORK IN THE ECE REGION, 1999/2000 and 2000/2001:
AN INTEGRATED PRESENTATION**

(Post-plenary session version)

**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/1999/30/Add.1) |
| Programme Activity 2: | Technical infrastructure and other cross-cutting issues (CES/1999/30/Add.2) |
| Programme Activity 3: | Economic statistics (CES/1999/30/Add.3) |

- Programme Activity 4: Social and demographic statistics
(CES/1999/30/Add.4)
- Programme Activity 5: Environment statistics (CES/1999/30/Add.5)
- Programme Activity 6: Dissemination and support for secretariat
activities (CES/1999/30/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. This "pre-plenary session version" is presented in draft form for review by the Conference at its annual meeting in June.
- 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. This "post-plenary session version" 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 supplied to the secretariat for inclusion in this updated version of the integrated presentation which was considered by the Conference at its 1999 plenary session. In addition to providing updated information on the planned future work programmes of the different international organizations in different fields of statistics, it lists numerous decisions that the Conference took in these fields of statistics, and identifies various issues that the Bureau brought to the attention of the Conference at 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 WAS 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 TAKEN BY THE CONFERENCE AT THE 1999 PLENARY SESSION: List of decisions on its programme of work recommended to be taken by the Conference at the 1999 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-June 1999 to June 2001. 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" summarising 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/1999/30) 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/1999/30/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/1999/30/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/1999/30/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/1999/30/Add.4)</p>	<p>4.1 Social indicators and frameworks 4.2 Gender statistics 4.3 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, fertility and families and households) 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/1999/30/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/1999/30/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 of statistical data warehouses, 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: For the OECD: Consolidation of the open-system architecture 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 was drawn to the following:

- The implication that the EURO will have on national and international statistical services.
- The Y2K problem, and how it could affect national and international statistical services.

Decisions taken by the Conference at the 1999 plenary session:

- The Conference approved the activities to be undertaken by the Conference in this programme element (See "Activities and Means" below).
- The Conference agreed to publish the amended version of the paper "Information systems architecture for national and international statistical offices: guidelines and recommendations", that had been an input to the February 1999 Meeting on the Management of Statistical IT, in the Conference's Statistical Standard and Studies Series.

Meetings from July 1999 to June 2001:

ECE: Seminar ISIS 2000 (Riga, Latvia, May 2000)

ECE: Meeting on Management of Statistical Information Technology (February 2001)

ECE- Eurostat: Work Session on Statistical Data Confidentiality (March 2001)

Eurostat: Task Force: GESMES, 13 -14 September 1999

Eurostat: Working Group: STNE and SERT, 20-22 October 1999

Eurostat: Task Force: Management of Information Systems (End of 1999 / End of 2000)

Rapporteur: ECE

Activities and means from mid May 1999 to June 2001:

Activities of ECE:

a) Seminar on Integrated Statistical Information Systems and related matters (ISIS'2000) in 1999/2000 to consider: (i) Data warehousing and the development and use of statistical databases in a network environment; (ii) Planning and management of statistical projects; (iii) Innovations in data collection and exchange; (iv) Improving data dissemination strategies.

b) Publication (1999/2000) of the amended version of the paper "Information systems architecture for national and international statistical offices: Guidelines and recommendations" that had been an input to the February 1999 Meeting on the Management of Statistical IT in the Conference's Statistical Standard and Studies Series.

c) Meeting on the Management of Statistical Information Technology 2000/2001, to consider: (i) The impact of data warehousing on the management of statistical offices; (ii) Challenges and opportunities for statistical offices

working in a network environment; (iii) Resource management in statistical offices and the role of the IT departments; and (iv) Integration of statistical (survey) data with registers (administrative) data.

d) Work Session (jointly with Eurostat, 2000/2001) on Statistical Data Confidentiality to consider: (i) Applications of statistical data confidentiality (SDC) methodology and software in statistics; (ii) Impact of new technological developments in software, communications and computing on SDC; (iii) Progress in the implementation of SDC methods and techniques in transition countries; and (iv) Attitude of users and respondents towards SDC.

Secretariat resources: Substantial.

Activities of OECD: (i) Consolidation of the open-system architecture; (ii) Establishment of a Corporate Data Environment; (iii) Enhancing methods and procedures for exchanging statistical information using world-wide networks and direct computer-to-computer links with statistical agencies in member countries.

Activities of Eurostat: (Themes 13 - Electronic data processing, 14 - Information technologies (141, 142)):

Work in progress: Continued support and maintenance of mainstream statistical production and administrative systems; Migration to open systems; Correction of problems associated with the year 2000; Management of computer problems associated with the introduction of the Euro; Product management, particularly of systems for statistical analysis, dissemination and the sharing of meta-data; Identification, construction and integration of common building blocks; Construction of new statistical or administrative systems, in production, reference and dissemination environments, wherever possible using standard products, Commission-wide common information systems (SICs) or Eurostat common building blocks; Completion and consolidation of the migration to Windows NT.

New projects: Implementation of a new system for electronic mail and a new product "Shared agenda" to work in conjunction with the new e-mail. Transfer of technology.

Activities of other organizations:

The ILO: (i) Maintenance of the ILO databases hosted at the UN/ICC mainframe; (ii) upgrade of the ILO Statistics LAN hardware and software configuration and necessary retraining of staff; (iii) Use of Computer Assisted Translation (CAT) the trilingual publications in the Sources & Methods: Labour Statistics series as well as for the reports prepared for meetings; (iv) Particular attention will be given to the possible problems of transition from 1999 to 2001.

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, inter-and Intranet technology, CD-ROM, and electronic data interchange (EDI).
- b) Encourage correspondents to use 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 CIS countries' statistical services and for data interchange with international organizations. In January 2000 CIS-STAT plans to hold a meeting of representatives of CIS countries' statistical services on aspects of the collection, processing and dissemination of statistical information. In 2000 CIS-STAT 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 and sharing 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: Implementation of UN/EDIFACT standards in data collection;.

Attention of the Conference was drawn to the following:

- The Seminar on the Exchange of Technology and Knowledge (ETK '99) used for the statistical processing and transfer of know-how that Eurostat will organise in Prague from 13-15 October 1999.
- The collection and processing of data from the forthcoming round of censuses that will be launched in the near future in many ECE member countries.

Decisions taken by the Conference at the 1999 plenary session:

- The Conference approved the activities to be undertaken by the Conference in this programme element (See "Activities and Means" below).
- The Conference authorised the secretariat to reproduce the final version of the document "Strategies for improving statistical quality" that was discussed at the June 1999 work session on statistical data editing, and to distribute it to interested statistical offices as methodological material.

Meetings from July 1999 to June 2001:

ECE: Work Session on Statistical Data Editing (October 2000)
Eurostat: Working Group: EDICOM, 11-12 October 1999
Eurostat: Committee: Statistical Confidentiality, 15 October 1999
Eurostat: Task Force: Metadata, November 1999

Rapporteur: ECE

Activities from July 1999 to June 2001:

Activities of ECE:

- a) Finalization and reproduction (1999/2000) of the methodological material "Evaluation of Efficiency of Statistical data Editing: General Framework", and distribution of it to interested statistical offices.
- b) Work Session on Statistical Data Editing (2000/2001) to consider: (i) Management and evaluation of the editing/imputation procedures; (ii) Propagation of knowledge of statistical data editing methods and techniques to users; and (iii) New techniques and tools for editing/imputation.
- c) Finalization and reproduction (2000/2001) of the methodological material "Common terminology on statistical data editing", and distribution of it to interested statistical offices.

Secretariat resources: Substantial

Activities of OECD: (i) Consolidation of the new client-server based statistical tools. (ii) Rationalisation of data collection methods and procedures.

Activities of Eurostat: (Themes 14 - Information technologies (144), 15 - Reference databases, 25 - Data security and statistical confidentiality):

Automation of primary (or raw) data collections by telecommunication. Development of solutions to derive statistical information from information available within the enterprises. EDICOM: Development and maintenance of a software for the collection of Intrastat data from the initial data providers. Development and maintenance of standardised messages for the exchange of Intrastat and Extrastat data.

Reference Databases: The main feature of the annual programme will be the revision of the overall structure of the reference environment. Studies on the standardisation of data and meta-data and the harmonisation of coding will allow the implementation of a computer architecture incorporating to a greater extent all of Eurostat's data and meta-data. The objective is to extend the services offered to our clients (more comprehensive coverage of data, addition of classifications to the subjects covered and optimisation of research methods using meta-data).

Data security and statistical confidentiality: The Statistical Law demands that technical and organisational measures are taken to protect confidential statistical data. In this context, a working group has been launched to exchange information on the level of protection of statistical data in the NSIs and to define common rules or recommendations. Within Eurostat, the emphasis will be on increasing security by implementing the recommendations of the risk analysis. Within the Community Statistical System, new technologies will be examined to improve security during telecommunication.

Activities of other organizations:

The ILO: The ILO will continue its gradual shift to electronic means of data collection for its dissemination programme. With the expected expansion of Internet in the years to come, ILO will increasingly rely on this technology when collecting data from countries and territories. Two approaches are considered: direct feeding into ILO's databases by the national statistical offices, or entry by ILO of data received in electronic form through e-mail or on diskette. A gradual approach in this area is foreseen, starting with an examination of similar developments in other international and regional organizations, followed by a pilot collaborating experience with a selected number of both statistically advanced countries and developing ones.

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 (106 tables). Information is exchanged via the Internet with the statistical services of Azerbaijan, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Moldova, Tajikistan and Ukraine. 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 following: implementation of metainformation systems at national level and harmonization of metadata systems of international organizations; further spreading of use of Internet for dissemination of statistical data; implementation of EDIFACT standards for statistical data dissemination; dissemination of market-sensitive economic data to mass media.

Expected collective output in the next two years: For the ECE: publication of the methodological materials "Common terminology of statistical metainformation system"; better awareness of NSOs regarding possibilities of dissemination of market-sensitive economic data to mass media; improved knowledge of NSOs in the development of output databases; assessment of metadata needs in relation to building up statistical data warehouses; widening of EDI based on EDIFACT standards 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 was drawn to the following:

- The effort being made to coordinate in this field.
- Eurostat has set up a new web site, Euroindicators, which contains key indicators for economic and monetary union (euro-zone) and the European Union (EU-15), Its address is <http://europa.eu.int/en/comm/eurostat/serven/part3/euroind/eur11.htm>
- The software used in the implementation and maintenance of statistical output databases and possibilities of sharing such software tools.
- The investigation of possibilities of developing a joint web site on Internet that would facilitate the integration of information flow and assist the further improvement of dissemination of statistical data via Internet.
- The integration of metadata used for dissemination of statistical data via the Internet into the national statistical metainformation systems.
- The initiative that has been taken by OECD and Eurostat to provide each other with desk-top access to their databases. The Conference encouraged other international organizations to follow this approach wherever applicable.

Decisions taken by the Conference at the 1999 plenary session:

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

Meetings from July 1999 to June 2001:

ECE: Work Session on Statistical Metadata (September 1999)

ECE: Work Session on Statistical Metadata (November 2000)

ECE: Work Session on Statistical Output and Dissemination to Information Media (2000/2001)

Eurostat: Task Force: Education, 10 September 1999

Eurostat: Task Force: EUROPROMS, 20 September 1999

Eurostat: Working Group: Dissemination of statistical information,
11- 12 October 1999

Eurostat: Task Force: Internet, November 1999

Eurostat: Task Force: SIRE, October 1999

Rapporteur: ECE

Activities and means from July 1999 to June 2001:

Activities of ECE:

- a) Work Session on Statistical Metadata (1999/2000) to consider: (i) The role of metadata in supporting the broader use and better understanding of the content of statistical information; (ii) Responsibility for the management, control and nurturing of statistical metadata; (iii) The adaptation, evaluation and implementation of statistical metadata standards (terminology, taxonomy) ; (iv) The integration of the IMF's Special Data Dissemination Standards into statistical practice; (v) Review of experiences with implementing the "Guidelines for statistical metadata on the Internet".
- b) Participation in the development of international standards for statistical EDI (Group EEG6 of the European Board for EDI Standardization). (1999/2000 and 2000/2001)
- c) Work Session on Statistical Output for Dissemination to Information Media (2000/2001) to consider: (i) Media crises management; (ii) Making use of new technological developments to better meet the needs of the media and get their feedback; (iii) How to build a corporate design as a modern information provider; (iv) Costs and benefits to consider when planning to outsource public and media relations work; and (v) Improving data sets and information released through the Internet to the media.
- d) Finalization and reproduction (2000/2001) of the methodological material "Common terminology on statistical metainformation Systems", and distribution of it to interested statistical offices.

Secretariat resources: Substantial

Activities of OECD: (i) Streamlining publication processes; (ii) Expanding the metadata content and functionality of statistical electronic products; (iii) Developing on-line dissemination on the world wide web.

Activities of Eurostat: (Themes 14 - Information technologies (143), 16 - Information, 17 - Dissemination)

Co-ordination of Eurostat participation in Community network programmes. Conception, implementation and adoption of a general framework for the development of distributed statistical information services (DSIS). DSIS comprises the standardised electronic exchange of data and meta-data, the exchange and sharing of documents as well as various technologies of group communication within the Community Statistical System (CIRCA).

STATEL: development and integration of application to application telecommunication primitives.

STADIUM: Statistical data Interchange Universal Monitor, a service to control the reception and dissemination of data flows.

Communication / Press: Development and continuation of relations with the press (press releases, "Eurostat media service", meetings of groups of journalists, etc.). Training of Eurostat staff in press relations. Exchanges of experience and co-operation with Member States. Introduction of activity indicators (quality, performance).

Summary publications: Rationalisation of summary publications. Diversification of dissemination media. Partnerships to promote the development of products with value added.

Publications programme: Use of various media for the production of a rationalised programme designed to respond to well-defined user needs. Introduction of activity indicators. Development of the range of products co-produced by the European Statistical System under the marketing name of "Statistics Europe". Construction of a new version of the Eurostat site which permits the electronic management of orders. Identification of solutions involving desktop publishing to simplify and automate the production of manuscripts.

Dissemination policy: Partnership with the European Statistical System (joint development of products and services under the "Statistics Europe" logo). Co-operation between data producers and businesses in the information market in particular in conjunction with the INFO 2000 programme. Management and development of a range of products/services based on the "electronic first, paper second" principle. Monitoring of users.

Dissemination networks: Development and management of the Data Shop network. Introduction of activity indicators. Partnership between the Data Shop network, Eurostat and the MIDAS network of the INFO 2000 programme. Finalisation of the quality charter for Data Shops. Optimum use of DSIS facilities. Adaptation of the Data Shop network to the use of the European reference environment. (All the data bases used to prepare publications).

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: Development of software packages for the design, operation and processing of capture fishery catch and effort data through sample surveys and trial implementations. This generic approach aimed at international harmonisation is also applicable to those countries expanding their data collection systems to include small-scale fisheries that may currently not be monitored.

The ILO: The meta-information traditionally published in the Sources & Methods series will gradually be made available on the ILO Web site and thus become directly accessible through Internet. The information published in this way will be selective, and the printed publication will continue to be issued. LABORSTA will be made available to the public through Internet.

International Monetary Fund (IMF):

- a) Encourage correspondents to use 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 for electronic dissemination of the IMF's statistical publications.

United Nations Industrial development Organization (UNIDO): With respect to data dissemination media, in addition to hard-copy publication and diskette/tape versions, UNIDO will present increasingly selected industrial statistics and indicators through Internet (<http://www.unido.or.at/doc.cfm?did=50215>).

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, as well as on updating the CIS-STAT home page (<http://www.unece.org/stats/cisstat>), which will be done on a monthly basis.

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; 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.

Support: the work of the United Nations Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications.

Expected collective output in the next two years: 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 was drawn to the following:

- To the outcome of the discussion that took place at the March 1999 session of the Statistical Commission concerning the non-existence of a unique "international" classification of products that major industrial countries such as Canada, the USA, Japan and EU countries view as being adequate to meet their needs.
- The formation of an inter-secretary working group, to be chaired by the United Nations Statistics Division, to prepare the strategy for orchestration and timing of revisions for a core group of international and multinational classifications, including, but not limited to, activity and product classifications.

Decisions taken by the Conference at the 1999 plenary session: None

Meetings from July 1999 to June 2001:

Eurostat: Task Force: Methodological Co-ordination - enterprise statistics,
14-15 June 1999
Eurostat: Task Force: Nomenclatures CPS NACE/CPA, 15-17 September 1999
Eurostat: Task Force: Methodological Co-ordination, 20-21 September 1999
Eurostat: Committee: Nomenclatures NACE/CPA, 27 - 29 October 1999
Eurostat: Committee: Customs codes, 9 - 11 November 1999
Eurostat: Task Force: Nomenclatures NACE/CPA, December 1999

Rapporteur: Eurostat

Activities and means from July 1999 to June 2001:

Activities of ECE: None

Activities of OECD: The final draft versions of the functional classifications COICOP, COPNI and COFOG have been circulated and will be submitted to the Statistical Commission in March 1999. The correspondence between COICOP (Divisions 01 to 12) and the CPC has still to be finalised.

Activities of Eurostat: (Themes 11 - Classifications, 18 Statistical co-ordination):

International trade: The preparatory work for the revision of the Harmonised System due to enter into force in 2002 will be carried out in close co-operation with DG XXI. Following the action taken under the SLIM (INTRASTAT and CN) initiatives, the first concrete measures to reduce the burden of statistical returns on businesses will be gradually implemented. These will include simplifying the classifications themselves, introducing facilitation tools and developing classifications of goods on the basis of comparisons of commercial terminology and legal texts on the Combined Nomenclature.

Industry: Activities will include the following: updating of the PRODCOM list, implementation, interpretation and training measures concerning NACE Rev.1, the CPA, COFOG, COICOP, the Classification of Buildings, the list of trade products, the revision of the service section of NACE and the CPA, the initial preparatory work for a possible detailed classification of service products, co-operation with the United States and Canada for better convergence between NAICS and NACE Rev.1, the installation of updated classifications in a reference database and active participation in seminars organised in connection with PHARE and TACIS.

Social statistics: The main classifications in social statistics are: ISCED (education), ISCO 88 (COM), (occupation) and ICD (health). It is proposed that Eurostat should start work on a European Socio-Economic Classification, E-SEC. The harmonisation project deals with harmonised implementation of these classifications.

Co-ordination work will focus on applying better practices to access administrative sources for statistical and on the introduction of the FEBINET network. 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 (e.g. SNA, ESA, LFS, company accounts) and consideration of comments made following the first publication. Integration of the sectoral methodological manuals and glossaries and preparation of these for sectors, where they are not yet available. Regular formatting of the METODOLOGICA Hypertext database.

Activities of other organizations:

UN Statistics Division:

(a) The Central Product Classification (CPC), Version 1.0 is now published in English (Series M, No. 77, Ver. 1.0), and its translation and publication in all United Nations languages is under way. CPC provides a framework for international comparison of statistics dealing with all products, that is goods and services. Particular attention was paid in the new publication to further elaboration of the services part of the classification, including a newly

prepared alphabetical index to assist in the classification of service products and detailed explanatory notes describing the content of services. CPC, Version 1.0 is also available electronically, upon request to UNSD through the Classifications Hotline (chl@un.org).

(b) At the request of the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on National Accounts (ISWGNA), a complete set of all classifications of expenditure according to purpose including COFOG, COICOP, COPNI and COPP is being presented to the Statistical Commission at its thirtieth session for approval and subsequent publication (ST/ESASTAT/SER.M/84). The draft classifications of COICOP, COPNI and COFOG were prepared by the OECD Statistics Directorate and COPP by UNSD. COFOG, COICOP, COPNI and COPP are primarily designed to classify transactions undertaken by government, households, non-profit institutions serving households (NPISHs) and producers. There are close links between COFOG, COICOP and COPNI. Once the consumption expenditures of NPISHs and general government have been classified according to COPNI and COFOG, the individual consumption expenditures in these two classifications can be transferred directly into Divisions 13 and 14 of COICOP. The revision included restructuring and defining the classifications based on previous classifications - namely, the Classification of the Functions of Government (ST/ESA/STAT/Ser.M/70); the Classification of Household Goods and Services of the 1968 SNA; the Classification of the Purposes of Private Non-Profit Bodies Serving Households of the 1968 SNA; and the Draft Classification of Outlays of Industries by Purpose (ST/ESA/STAT/83). Throughout the revision process, the OECD consulted regularly with Eurostat and UNSD and the national statistical agencies of its Member countries.

(c) Work has begun between UNSD and ECE to reconcile their commodity nomenclatures for the collection of industrial production statistics. [See the Report of the meeting to reconcile commodity nomenclatures used by: the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UN/ECE), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Statistical Office of the European Communities (EUROSTAT) and the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD), (Meeting of ECE and UNSD, Geneva, 16-17 April 1998)] Preliminary discussions have also been held with FAO and EUROSTAT on this same subject.

(d) The Classifications Newsletter is now published by UNSD on the web three times per year, beginning in 1998 (www.un.org/Depts/unsd/class/class1.htm). The newsletter provides access to information on international economic and social classifications, meetings and announcements of classifications updates and revisions and newly published material on this subject (CHL Newsletter 1,2 and 3), announcements of interpretations and rulings of ISIC and CPC. As a way of broadening the forum, this newsletter also provides a link to internet sites of other international custodians of classifications.

United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO):

The FAO: Refining and extending the species and species group classification of aquatic organisms including plants to encourage more detailed reporting of species.

The ILO: The ILO will continue to provide 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. It will follow national developments in this area and start work to update ISCO-88 in accordance with the advice provided by the 16th ICLS. Based on the 1997 review of national experiences with the use of classifications of status in employment work, National statistical offices will be invited to carry out small-scale in-depth studies according to a design provided by the ILO. The ILO databases and the corresponding questionnaires are being redesigned to accommodate national statistics provided according to the revised classifications of industry, occupation, status in employment and education.

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 a nine-digit code and is built on the methodological principles of NACE/CPA, using 7-9 digits to represent product groupings common to the Commonwealth countries. The international classification of household expenditures by purpose will be applied in SNA accounting practice as from 1999 in accordance with the recommendations drawn up by CIS-STAT.

2.5 STATISTICAL RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

Objectives over the next several years: To promote an active program of research, technology development and transfer 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 was drawn to the following:

- The initiative that have been taken by the CES Bureau during the past year in collecting information from NSOs on their involvement in statistical analysis and forecasting, and on the promotion of closer collaboration between the Conference and NGOs and academic community. Attention should also be drawn to the programme of research and development in the EU's 5th framework programme and in the OECD.

Decisions taken by the Conference at the 1999 plenary session: None

Meetings from July 1999 to June 2001:

Eurostat: Working Group: Seasonal adjustment, 15 June 1999

Eurostat: Working Group: DOSIS, 8 - 10 September 1999

Eurostat: Working Group: DOSIS Fifth RTD Framework programme, October 1999

Eurostat: Working Group: Assessment quality in statistics, 5 November 1999

Rapporteur: Eurostat

Activities and means from July 1999 to June 2001:

Activities of ECE: None

Activities of OECD:

Research activities are described under the programme activities 3, 4, and 5.

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

New measures: Start of new work on imputation.

Ongoing work: The 1999 programme will include, as regards methodology, the continuation of work on seasonal adjustment and quality. The scientific journal "Research in Official Statistics" will continue to be published. The current DOSIS projects will come to an end and be evaluated. Five new DOSIS projects will start and will need to be monitored.

EPROS (European Plan for Research in Official Statistics) is the statistical part of the EU's Fifth Framework Research Programme. This programme has a much wider scope for statistical activities than has been the case in previous research programmes. A large number of new initiatives (calls for proposals , consortia building, monitoring, etc) are being launched.

Activities of other organizations:

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 Methodological Issues Involving the Integration of Statistics and Geography; preparation of guidelines on 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 was drawn to the following:

- In the 1998/99 progress report on joint data collection (see CES/1999/19), it was noted that problems to be resolved in this field are largely in the area of harmonization and standardization of definitions and classifications at the city level. UNSD has been asked to suggest a possible course of action and timetable.
- The Conference noted that the growing demand for data on cities calls for the urgent development of internationally agreed definitions and classifications of urban and rural areas.

Decisions taken by the Conference at the 1999 plenary session:

- The Conference approved the activities to be undertaken by the Conference in this programme element (See "Activities and Means" below).
- The Conference requested the Bureau to follow developments underway in UNSD on the development of harmonised and standardised definitions and classifications of cities, and it asked the Bureau to look into possible ways in which this problem could be addressed if it should emerge that progress appears difficult to achieve.

Meetings from July 1999 to June 2001:

ECE: Work Session on Methodological Issues Involving the Integration of Statistics and Geography (Switzerland, Neuchâtel, April 2000)

Eurostat: Working Group: Geographic Information Systems for Statistics, 20- 21 October 1999

Eurostat: Working Group: Geographic Information Systems for Statistics, October 2000

Eurostat: Working Group: Regional accounts, May 2000, May 2001

Eurostat: Working Group: Local data and urban statistics, April 2000, April 2001

Rapporteur: Eurostat.

Activities and means from July 1999 to June 2001:

Activities of ECE:

a) Work Session on Methodological Issues Involving the Integration of Statistics and Geography in 1999/2000 to consider: (i) Spatial database management and (geo-) data warehousing; (ii) Internet and Intranet solutions; (iii) Policy and organizational aspects of GIS and statistics; (iv) Spatial analysis in a statistical context and disclosure control procedures; (v) Survey on GIS use in statistical offices; (vi) Progress report by the UK and Finland on the preparation of Draft Guidelines on Cartography for Statistical Purposes.

Secretariat resources: Substantial

Activities of OECD: none

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

Regional statistics: implementation of the project on quality of the regional indicators used for regional community policy; incorporation of applicant countries in the Community system of regional statistical information; development of regional statistics, in particular as regards infrastructure and human resources and the fields of tourism, industry, services and environment; regional exploitation of the Labour Force Survey; continuation of the implementation of a statistical information system on conurbation; production of the statistical indicators necessary for the implementation of the Regulations on the Structural Funds for the period 2000-2006; follow-up implementation of the "Regional" chapter of the ESA95.

Geographical information: continuation of the revision of the content of the database; gradual introduction of the new reference base structure as defined in 1998; performance of two spatial analyses on subjects to be defined

with users; intensification of contacts with the various partners; Commission departments, the Environment Agency, JRCs, NSIs, mapping agencies, UN/EC, etc.

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 co-ordinate international training seminars and workshops and ensure that subjects addressed are in line with statistical priorities as defined by SCEs 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 AEU 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 was drawn to the following:

- The outcome of the "Summer School on Social Statistics" that took place in Sienna in July 1998.
- Eurostat's Computer Training System (CATS), and the fact that countries interested in serving as pilot users of CATS should be asked to notify Eurostat of their preparedness of doing this .
- The help many NSIS need to improve the analytical capabilities and skill of their staff .
- The possibilities and potential that Internet provides to national and international statistical services for using the Internet as a vehicle for exchanging information among themselves.

Decisions taken by the Conference at the 1999 plenary session: None

Meetings from July 1999 to June 2001: None

Rapporteur: Eurostat.

Activities and means from July 1999 to June 2001:

Activities of ECE: None

Activities of OECD: None

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

The aim is to draw up a general programme based on foreseeable training requirements taking account of the development and needs of the ESS. The analysis of the training requirements of the ESS will continue.

Eurostat continues to subsidise the "Training of European Statisticians" (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 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: An ILO Training Compendium on Labour Statistics will be produced as a multi-part modular training tool in a joint project by the Bureau of Statistics and ILO International Training Centre in Turin, Italy, and be available in 2000. This tool will be useful for international training courses in labour statistics undertaken by the Bureau at the Training Centre in Turin or workshops organized, upon request, on behalf of other international or regional agencies. It will also be made available to National Statistical Offices for in house training. 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 1999/2000 and 2000/2001 in Programme Activity 2 (Technical infrastructure and other cross-cutting issues)

a) 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 information technology infrastructure	- Seminar ISIS 2000		- Report
2.2 Statistical data collection and processing	- Preparation of methodological materials on statistical data editing		- Methodological materials
2.3 Dissemination and interchange of statistical information	- Work session on dissemination to inf. Media - Work session on statistical metadata - Preparation of methodological materials on statistical metadata - Participation in the development of EDISTAT (European Board for EDI Standardisation – group EEG6)	- EUROSTAT	- Report - Report - Methodological materials - Progress report
2.6 Geographical and regional data	- Work session on methodological Issues involving the integration of Statistics and Geography	- EUROSTAT	- Report

b) July 2000 - June 2001

WORK PROGRAMME OF THE CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS PRIORITY MENU FOR 2000/2001			
Programme element	Substantive action required of the ECE secretariat	Major coordination required	Output for the plenary session 2001
2.1 Management of statistical information technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Meeting on management of statistical Information technology - ECE/Eurostat work session on statistical confidentiality 	- Eurostat	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report - Report
2.2 Statistical data collection and processing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work session on statistical data editing - Preparation of methodological materials and publication on statistical data editing 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report - Methodological materials
2.3 Dissemination and interchange of statistical information	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Work session on statistical metadata - Work session on statistical output for dissemination to information media - Participation in the development of EDISTAT (European Board for EDI Standardisation – group EEG6) 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Report - Report - Progress report
2.6 Geographical and regional data	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Preparation of methodological materials on implementation of GIS 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Methodological materials
