UNITED NATIONS STATISTICAL COMMISSION and ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS	EUROPEAN COMMISSION STATISTICAL OFFICE OF THE EUROPEAN COMMUNITIES (EUROSTAT)

ORGANISATION FOR ECONOMIC COOPERATION AND DEVELOPMENT (OECD) STATISTICS DIRECTORATE

Joint ECE/Eurostat/OECD Meeting on the Management of Statistical Information Systems (MSIS)
(Bratislava, Slovakia, 18-20 April 2005)

INFORMATION NOTICE No. 1

At the invitation of the Government of Slovakia, the meeting will be held at the Conference Centre of Hotel Devín in Bratislava, from 18 to 20 April 2005, starting on 18 April at 9.30 a.m.

I.   PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

1.   The main objectives of the regular meetings on management of statistical information systems are the following:

- To provide a forum for the exchange of experiences among informatics managers from National Statistical Offices and other government agencies and international organizations undertaking statistical activities;
- To make recommendations in order to coordinate the activities of different international organizations in the area of statistical information processing;
- To collect, discuss and make available practices in the management of statistical information processing, as well as to encourage the exchange of practices in all other particular areas included in Programme Activity 2 of the Integrated Presentation;
- To assess the activities undertaken within all programme elements included in Programme Activity 2 of the Integrated Presentation, and to make recommendations on future directions of work within these programme elements to the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians;
- To facilitate and encourage the implementation of standards and recommendations in the field of statistical computing among national statistical offices and other concerned agencies in the UNECE region.

2.   The Meeting is primarily intended for: informatics managers from national statistical offices and other concerned national and international agencies; and statisticians and informaticians responsible for the coordination, planning and management of complex projects in the field of statistical information processing.

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II.   AGENDA OF THE MEETING

3.   The work programme of the meeting will consist of the following substantive topics:
       (i)   IT governance in statistical offices;
       (ii)   Development strategies for statistical information systems;
       (iii)   XML and web services;
       (iv)   Review and follow-up to the activities of the Conference.

4.   Detailed explanatory notes on the nature and expected outcomes of topics (i) to (iv) are provided in Section V of the Information Notice.

III.   PARTICIPATION AND ACCREDITATION

5.   Representatives of all Member States of the United Nations and of interested intergovernmental organizations are welcome to participate in the meeting. Participants representing non-governmental organizations in a consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council may also attend. All participants must be accredited by the competent authorities of their country or international organization, have a valid passport and, if required, a visa. Applications for visas should be made as soon as possible to the Embassy of Slovakia in the country in which the participants reside, with a reference to the Joint UNECE/Eurostat/OECD Meeting on the Management of Statistical Information Systems.

6.   The statistical offices and international organizations are asked **to inform the UNECE secretariat before 17 December 2004** whether their organization intends to participate at the meeting and/or submit a contribution on the topics mentioned above. Please indicate the topic to which the paper will refer as well as *participant(s) name(s) and their contact data*.

7.   Participants should complete the registration form, which can be found on the last page, and return it to both the UNECE Secretariat and INFOSTAT **by 18 March 2005 (as indicated on the form).**

IV.   DOCUMENTATION, METHODS OF WORK AND OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

8.   The documents and their summaries may be submitted in any of the official languages of the UNECE (English, French, Russian). The following deadlines and requirements apply:
- Authors must submit a two-page summary of their paper in one of these languages to the UNECE secretariat by **11 January 2005 at the latest** for translation into the other two languages. The secretariat cannot guarantee that summaries submitted after this deadline will be translated into the other languages.
- The full versions of papers, not exceeding 10 pages, should be sent to the UNECE secretariat by **1 March 2005 at the latest.**
- Papers should be submitted in electronic format (e-mail, diskette or CD-ROM) to Mr. Juraj Riecan (juraj.riecan@unece.org).
- The UNECE secretariat is able to process documents submitted in **MS Word**. Templates in Word containing the header and format will be sent to authors or may be requested by e-mail (diane.serikoff@unece.org).

9.   The Steering Group preparing the meeting has asked selected countries to prepare invited papers and appointed discussants to lead the discussion on individual agenda items. The Discussants are indicated in the Explanatory Notes to the Agenda in Section V below. For each substantive item on the agenda, the discussants

will invite 2-3 speakers to write an **invited paper** and to present them at the Meeting. All other participants are welcome to submit a **supporting paper** to any topic of the agenda. The supporting papers will be distributed to the delegates.

10.   Authors of invited papers will have about 20 minutes per paper for the presentation. Authors of supporting papers may be given (time permitting) about 5 minutes to highlight the main issues raised in their papers. Presenters may use PowerPoint presentations, Adobe Acrobat full screen presentations or A4/letter transparences. UNECE secretariat cannot provide translation of the presentations. The UNECE secretariat will post the presentations on the website after the meeting.

- PowerPoint and Adobe presentation should be sent to the UNECE secretariat by **1 April 2005 at the latest**, so that these may be installed on the presentation computed prior to the meeting.

11.   Invited and supporting papers along with their summaries will be made available on the website of the UNECE secretariat at the following location:

http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2005.04.msis.htm

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

12.   The official language of the meeting is English. However, in order to encourage the broader participation of experts from the National Statistical Offices of the CIS countries, the organizers will provide simultaneous interpretation from and into Russian.

V.   EXPLANATORY NOTES TO THE AGENDA

Topic (i): IT governance in statistical offices
(Discussant: Cathy Wright (IMF), Tel: +1-202 623-7516, cwright@imf.org)

13.   Governance refers to the processes and accountabilities surrounding decisions in the information technology domain and how these are balanced among different perspectives. Increasingly, our agencies are looking closely at the value delivered by IT activity and demanding lower costs and greater productivity. The following perspectives affect the management of statistical information systems:

- **Application investment:** how are decisions made regarding strategic investment priorities and what returns are expected from these investments?
- **Services:** how are decisions regarding the sourcing, quality and availability of IT services made in your organization? Are development and infrastructure services managed differently?
- **Architecture:** how do you make decisions regarding reusable or common components, standard methods and interfaces? Is your organization prescriptive with respect to standards and toolsets?
- **Organization:** Is IT under central management or dispersed among the programme areas? How are these organizations funded to encourage productivity?

14.   This topic encompasses experience and practice in developing informatics strategies within statistical agencies. Contributions are requested that reflect current strategies in governance, enterprise architecture, infrastructure consolidation, project scrutiny, and organizational issues. The focus of this session is on getting the maximum value from IT investments through better decision-making processes or more effective organizational approaches.

Topic (ii): Development strategies for statistical information systems
(Discussant: Lars Thygesen (OECD), Tel: +331 4524 8402; lars.thygesen@oecd.org)

15.   The main point of interest for this agenda item is the way National Statistical Offices (NSOs) are designing and building statistical information systems and their future plans in this area. In the past, many NSOs have been involved in generalizing their statistical processes and thus became involved in the building of large and complex systems. Papers could cover architectural issues such as: the degree of generalization, the use of a corporate business architecture, the role of metadata in these systems and the way standards are being used in this area.

16.   Another area of interest for this topic is the use of formal methods for project management, testing and building of complex information systems. NSOs are also encouraged to report on the strategies they used for implementing these formal methods.

Topic (iii): XML and web services
(Discussant: Marton Vucsan (Statistics Netherlands), Tel: +31-70 337-5071; mvcn@cbs.nl)

17.   This topic will deal with employing XML and web services in the exchange of statistical data and metadata between organizations to make the processes more efficient. The topic will include a discussion of progress made in the SDMX project (Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange, an international standard sponsored by major international organizations, see www.sdmx.org) and its implications for member organizations.

18.   Contributions should highlight the use of these techniques for the exchange that takes place: (a) between countries' NSOs and international organizations, (b) between international organizations, as well as (c) between NSOs and other national partners, such as local government authorities. It would be important to see if synergies can be obtained between these types of exchange.

19.   Papers should focus on experiences in data sharing, or the "pull" type of data collection, and on gains and problems related to this.

Topic (iv): Review and follow-up to the activities of the Conference of European Statisticians
(Discussant: Juraj Riecan, Tel: +41-22 917-3328; juraj.riecan@unece.org)

20.   Following the tradition established by the former UNECE Working Party on Electronic Data Processing, the Meeting is invited to review the activities in the field of statistical information processing in which the Conference is active and to make suggestions for its future work. Presently, the activities of the Conference in this field are focused on the following areas:
  - Management of statistical information systems (jointly with OECD and Eurostat);
  - Survey on use of information technology in national statistical offices (e-Statistics);
  - Website on leading IT practices in national statistical offices;
  - Statistical data confidentiality (jointly with Eurostat);
  - Statistical data editing;
  - Electronic data reporting (jointly with Eurostat);
  - Statistical Metadata (jointly with Eurostat and OECD).

VI.   FURTHER INFORMATION

21.   For further information, please contact the following organizers:

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REGISTRATION FORM

for the Joint ECE/Eurostat/OECD Meeting on the Management of Statistical Information Systems (MSIS)
(Bratislava, Slovakia, 18-20 April 2005)

This form should be completed in duplicate by each participant and returned **by 18 March 2005**

1 copy to: Ms. Diane Serikoff   **1 copy to:** Mr. Dušan Prazenka
Tel: +4122 917 2241   Tel: +4212 59379 314
Fax: +4122 917 0040   Fax: +4212 5477 2620
E-mail: diane.serikoff@unece.org   E-mail: prazenka@infostat.sk

1. Surname (Family name):	Mr. ☐ Ms. ☐	2. First name:
3. Representing (country or organization):		
4. Official function (in home country):		
5. Mailing address:		
6. Tel. No.:	7. Fax No.:	
8. E-mail address:		
9. Please indicate topic ((a)-(d)) and title, if you intend to present a paper:		
10. Date and time of arrival in Bratislava:	11. Date and time of departure from Bratislava:	
12. Special requirements:		

Date_____   Signature_____