

**STATISTICAL COMMISSION and
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Joint ECE/ILO Meeting on consumer price indices
(Geneva, 20-24 November 1995)

PROVISIONAL AGENDA

The meeting will be held at the Palais des Nations, starting on
20 November at 10 a.m.

1. Adoption of the agenda
2. Election of officers
3. New developments in CPI methodologies in the countries
4. Owner-occupied housing in the computation of CPI
5. Problems related to the choice of index formulae
6. Problems of sampling and accuracy in constructing CPI
7. Data sources and reweighting problems in the computation of CPI
8. CPI and underlying (core) inflation (including questions of seasonal adjustments and trend analysis)
9. Improvement of CPI methodology in transition countries
10. CPI and issues of international comparisons
11. Issues arising from harmonization, such as measures of accuracy and multi-country index
12. Future work
13. Other business
14. Adoption of the report of the meeting

Note: The morning and afternoon sessions on Thursday, 23 November will be reserved for a Eurostat CPI Task Force meeting.

Notes on substantive items of the agenda

The Meeting on Consumer Price Indices is convened jointly by ECE and ILO pursuant to the decision of the Conference of European Statisticians taken at its forty-third plenary session in June 1995 (see the report of the session, ECE/CES/48, para. 56 and Annex III, programme element 3.9, and document CES/1995/R.25/Add.3, programme element 3.9).

Item 3: New developments in CPI methodologies in the countries

For the consideration of this item the meeting will have a paper by the ECE secretariat summarising replies from countries to the secretariat's enquiry on new national developments in CPI methodologies (document CES/AC.49/66).

Item 4: Owner-occupied housing in the computation of CPI

National experiences in the treatment of owner-occupied housing in CPI in the ECE member countries will be summarised by the ECE secretariat in document CES/AC.49/68. The ILO secretariat will present a paper summarising the treatment of owner-occupied housing in national CPIs in ILO member countries (CES/AC.49/62). The changes recently made in the treatment of owner-occupiers' housing costs in the UK retail prices index will be described in document CES/AC.49/52.

Item 5: Problems related to the choice of index formulae

A paper from the Netherlands reviewing the properties of the unit value index and discussing the question of when unit value indices can be used as subindices of a consumer price index (document CES/AC.49/57) will be presented for the consideration of this item.

Item 6: Problems of sampling and accuracy in constructing CPI

Two papers will be submitted by the United Kingdom under this item. The first will report on recent work on estimating the sampling errors in the UK retail prices index (CES/AC.49/54); the second will describe a new sampling scheme for locations and outlets in the UK retail prices index (CES/AC.49/55).

Item 7: Data sources and reweighting problems in the computation of CPI

Reweighting problems in updating the CPI in Israel will be discussed in document CES/AC.49/58. A paper from the Netherlands will present two alternative ways of estimating the weights for small reference populations: combining sample means of expenditure shares from successive expenditure surveys and estimating means by using regression models (CES/AC.49/63). A paper from Poland on data sources and reweighting problems in the computation of CPI will also be submitted under this item (CES/AC.49/67).

Item 8: CPI and underlying (core) inflation (including questions of seasonal adjustments and trend analysis)

The project aimed at constructing the "Whole Economy Price Index" as a wider inflation measure based on the expenditure approach will be explained in the UK paper CES/AC.49/53. The UK experience in constructing net price indices will be presented in document CES/AC.49/56. Seasonal adjustment procedures (low pass filter versus Census-X-11) will be discussed in the paper by Switzerland CES/AC.49/61.

Item 9: Improvement of CPI methodology in transition countries

Improvements in CPI methodology will be discussed in the papers by the Czech Republic (CES/AC.49/69) and the Russian Federation (CES/AC.49/59). A paper on the improvement of CPIs in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries will be presented by the CIS Statistical Committee (CES/AC.49/65). A note on the revision of the methodology of retail price and consumer price indices in the Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (Serbia and Montenegro) will be made available as conference room paper No. 1.

Item 10: CPI and issues of international comparisons

A paper by Eurostat (CES/AC.49/70) will discuss CPI in relation to international comparisons. A paper on quality adjustments within the European Comparison Programme will be presented by Austria (CES/AC.49/64). A paper by the Russian Federation (CES/AC.49/60) will also be submitted under this item.

Item 11: Issues arising from harmonization, such as measures of accuracy and multi-country index

A progress report on the CPI harmonisation activities within the European Union countries will be prepared by Eurostat (CES/AC.49/71).

Item 12: Future work

Under this item, participants will be asked to consider the Conference of European Statisticians' future work in consumer price statistics. As a background document, an extract from the integrated presentation of programmes of international statistical work related to programme element 3.9 - Price statistics, including purchasing power parities - will be made available in the meeting room (conference room paper No. 2).