5. Strategic and managerial issues of official statistics (UNECE STAT)

5.1 Institutional frameworks and principles, role of official statistics (UNECE STAT)
Activity 1.3: Monitoring the implementation of fundamental principles for official statistics

Description and objectives

Monitor the adherence to, and advocate for, the UN Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics in UNECE Member countries, with special focus on the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) and South-East Europe (SEE). Ensure adherence to the Principles Governing International Statistical Activities within UNECE Secretariat.

Activities and output

• Support the implementation of Fundamental Principles in EECCA and SEE countries, by providing advice for legal and organisational aspects of official statistics.

• Promote the full implementation of the Principles Governing International Statistical Activities in the UNECE Secretariat.

• (See also 9.1 Global assessments of national statistical systems).

5.4 Management and development of human resources (UNECE STAT)
Activity 8.8: Human resources development in statistical offices

Description and objectives

Facilitate exchange of experience and development of good practices in the area of human resources management and training (HRMT) in statistical offices.

Activities and output

• Provide secretariat support to the Organising Committee on human resources management and training in statistical offices.

• Follow-up on the outcome and recommendations of the workshop on HRMT in Geneva in September 2010 (subject to the approval of the Bureau).

Organizations and groups involved

CES Organising Committee on human resources management and training in statistical offices
Eurostat

5.5 Technological resources (including standards for electronic data exchange and data sharing) (UNECE STAT)
Activity 4.1: Infrastructure for processing and disseminating statistical data

Description and objectives

Maintain and develop the necessary database infrastructure to support the processing and dissemination of statistical data. Coordinate UNECE data production regarding the consistency of statistical data and terminology, and the use of data collection, storage and dissemination methods.

Activities and output

• Ensure a database system to meet the needs of users, allowing the collection, processing and dissemination of UNECE statistical data (Statistical Division, Transport Division, Trade and Timber Division).
• Implement the relevant parts of the UNECE data quality improvement plan.
• Improve data quality, consistency of time series and consistency across different databases.
• Provide an infrastructure for free of charge Internet dissemination of UNECE statistical data, in English and Russian, to all interested users.

Activity 8.1: Strategic Developments in Business Architecture in Statistics

Description and objectives

Contribute to the work of the High Level Group for Strategic Developments in Business Architecture in Statistics (HLG-BAS) to oversee and guide discussions on developments in the business architecture of the statistical production process, including methodological and information technology aspects. The HLG-BAS oversees the work of other UNECE groups like the SAB, METIS and MSIS and also the work of similar Eurostat and OECD groups. It reports to the CES Bureau on the progress and direction of the work of these groups.

Activities and output

• Provide secretariat support to the HLG-BAS;
• Assist in preparing the annual report of the HLG-BAS to the CES Bureau;
• Record the decisions of the HLG-BAS and ensure these are effectively communicated;
• Collaborate with other bodies involved in international work on statistical business architectures for example the European Statistics Directors of Methodology and the expert group on Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange.

Organizations and groups involved

CES High-level Group for Strategic Developments in Business Architecture in Statistics
Eurostat
OECD

Activity 8.2: Management of statistical information systems

Description and objectives

Coordinate the work on the Management of Statistical Information Systems (MSIS) and the Sharing Advisory Board (SAB) to: i) provide a forum for exchange of experiences; ii) make recommendations on the coordination of the activities of different international organizations in this area; iii) collect, discuss and make available good practices; iv) facilitate and encourage implementation of standards and recommendations in the field of statistical data processing in the UNECE region.

Activities and output

• Support the improvement of statistical information systems in national and international statistical organizations.
• Improve harmonisation of data models, concepts, etc. in the field of statistical information processing.
• Provide a platform for knowledge sharing among statistical organisations in this area.
• Provide technological and organizational frameworks to facilitate sharing of statistical software, modules and solutions.
• Prepare recommendations for the governance and practice of sharing statistical software.
• Standardize electronic data interchange, in particular, develop and promote the Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange (SDMX) content oriented guidelines and other SDMX standards in cooperation with other international organizations.
• Organise the Meeting on Management of Statistical Information Systems (MSIS May 2011).

Organizations and groups involved

CES Steering Group/Organising Committee on Management of Statistical Information Systems
CES Sharing Advisory Board
CES High-level Group for Strategic Developments in Business Architecture in Statistics
Eurostat
OECD
SDMX Consortium

Activity 8.5: Statistical metadata

Description and objectives

Facilitate harmonisation of data models and structures for statistical metadata. Provide a forum for discussing metadata issues relevant to statistical offices. Complement other international initiatives dealing with data collection needs of international statistical organizations.

Activities and output

• Advocate for statistical metadata issues and the role of metadata in the management of statistical processes.
• Further develop and improve the Common Metadata Framework (CMF) as a guide for statistical organisations to existing metadata standards, in cooperation with the METIS Steering Group.
• Add more case studies on the implementation of metadata systems in statistical organizations (Part D "Implementation").
• Provide secretariat support to the CES Steering Group on Statistical Metadata.
• Organise a Workshop on Statistical Metadata in autumn 2011.
• Cooperate actively with other organizations on the standardisation of electronic data interchange, including the SDMX content oriented guidelines and other SDMX standards.
• Lead, together with UN Statistical Division, international work to develop a global inventory of statistical standards.

Organizations and groups involved

CES Steering Group on statistical metadata
Eurostat
OECD
SDMX Secretariat

Activity 8.7: Secondary and mixed data sources

Description and objectives

Facilitate exchange of knowledge and experience in the use of secondary and mixed data sources for the production of official statistics.

Activities and output

• Further develop the ASSIST Knowledge Base on the use of administrative and secondary sources.
• Develop a network and other resources as requested by the CES Bureau.

Organizations and groups involved

To be determined.

5.6 Co-ordination of international statistical work (UNECE STAT)

Activity 1.1: Database of International Statistical Activities (DISA)

Description and objectives

Maintain an online database providing information on statistical work of about 30 international organizations. The Database of International Statistical Activities (DISA) is an important tool to assist the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) in fulfilling its primary role - to coordinate the statistical work undertaken by the various international organizations in the UNECE region.

Activities and output

• Prepare and publish the 2011 issue of the database.

• Start the preparations for the 2012 issue of the database.

• Provide input to the in-depth reviews of the CES Bureau in specific statistical areas where significant developments have taken place, coordinated action is needed or there is a lack of activities at the international level.

• Monitor the use of the database and ask for feedback in order to improve presentation and functionality of the database.

• Promote DISA classification of statistical activities as a global statistical standard, assist the CES Bureau in maintaining the classification.

Activity 1.2: Secretariat support for the work of the CES and its Bureau

Description and objectives

Provide secretariat support for the work of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES), the Sectoral Committee of the UNECE Statistical Division and its Bureau that steers the work of the Conference. The CES coordinates the statistical activities of the three main international organizations working in the UNECE region, Eurostat, OECD and UNECE, as well as the statistical activities of other organizations, such as CIS-STAT, UNSD, IMF, ILO, WHO and the World Bank. The CES provides a forum for Heads of national and international statistical agencies to address issues of current interest, discuss the region's common statistical problems, exchange experience, and formulate common solutions and recommendations.

Activities and output

• Organize and service the CES Bureau meetings (February 2011 (a short meeting during the UNSC session), June 2011, and October/November 2011).

• Organize and service the annual plenary session of the CES (Geneva, the week of 13-17 June 2011), which includes three modules: a session on formal business and two seminar sessions.

• Provide secretariat support in the preparation of the CES seminars on "Organization of data collection and data sharing / implementation of the standard for Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX): management challenges from the national perspective" and "Measuring human capital" during the CES 2011 plenary session.

• Coordinate the implementation of follow-up activities of the CES 2010 and 2011 plenary sessions.

• Prepare the UNECE Statistical Programme 2012.

• Report on the work of the CES to the EXCOM.

• Coordinate the Teams of Specialists that work under the auspices of the CES in various statistical areas and report on their activities to the Conference and its Bureau.

5.7 Technical cooperation and capacity building programmes (UNECE STAT)

Activity 9.1: Global assessments of national statistical systems

Description and objectives

• The purpose of a global assessment of the national statistical system (GA) is to provide a clear picture of the state of development of official statistics in the country. It helps the national authorities to better programme the long-term development of statistics, and also international donors to have a deep knowledge of their institutional and administrative work frame for the programming of statistical cooperation. More specifically, the objectives of a global assessment are:
- To assess the administrative capacity of the country in the field of statistics
- To assess the technical aspects of the statistical system in the country
- To assess the compliance of national statistics with international standards

GAs in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia will be performed jointly by the UNECE, Eurostat and EFTA. GAs aim at adding transparency and accountability to the implementation process of the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and the European Statistics Code of Practice.

Activities and output

Most of the countries in the region have requested a GA. Kazakhstan, Armenia and Azerbaijan have recently undergone a global assessment of their national statistical systems. Statistical systems of Kyrgyzstan and Ukraine could be assessed in 2011.

Organizations and groups involved

Eurostat
European Free Trade Association (EFTA)

Activity 9.2: UN Development Account capacity building projects in SEE and EECCA countries

Description and objectives

Assess and improve the statistical capacity in countries of South-East Europe (SEE) and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) by enhancing their ability to meet the needs for major national and international cross-cutting policies. Increase the production and dissemination of gender relevant statistical information, sustainable development indicators as well as indicators for the monitoring of the achievements towards the Millennium Declaration. All projects mentioned under activity 9.2 are financed through successive tranches of the UN Development Account.

Activities and output

• Technical assistance on developing Millennium Development Goals indicators, in support of statistical capacity building (see activity 3.2 and 6.7).

MDGs technical assistance activities are financed through:
- UN Development Account Project of the 6th tranche (2009-2011), Supporting MDG-based development strategies through integrated regional action
- UN Development Account Project of the 7th tranche (2010-2012), Strengthening national statistical and inter-institutional capacities for monitoring the MDGs through interregional cooperation and knowledge-sharing.
- UN Development Account Project of the 7th tranche (2010-2012) Enhancing key statistics and indicators to monitor progress towards the MDGs and other internationally agreed development goals.
- ECE Statistical division submitted a project in the framework of the 8th tranche of the UN Development Account (2012-2013). The objective of the project is to strengthen the capacity of countries with economies in transition for sustainable measurement of progress towards the MDGs, with emphasis on poverty and vulnerable population groups.

• Technical assistance on developing measures for environmental sustainability, in support of statistical capacity in Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. Financed through the UN Development Account Project of the 7th tranche (2010-2012) Strengthening statistical capacity of countries with economies in transition to assess progress in achieving the Millennium Development Goal on Environmental Sustainability and provide data on environmental vulnerabilities.

• Technical assistance on developing migration statistics, in support of statistical capacity building in Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Russian Federation and Tajikistan. Other countries that may also be involved include: Armenia, Georgia, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan (see activity 6.2).

Technical assistance on migration statistics are financed through the UN Development Account project of the 6th tranche (2009-2011), Strengthening national capacities to deal with international migration.

• Technical assistance on engendering statistical information and providing statistical information on violence against women in support of statistical capacity building in selected countries in the EECCA and SEE countries.

The project is financed through the UN Development Account Project of the 6th tranche (2009-2011), Enhancing capacities to eradicate violence against women through networking of local knowledge communities.

Activity 9.3: UNECE statistical capacity building projects in SEE and EECCA countries

Description and objectives

The main priority is to strengthen the statistical capacity of EECCA and SEE countries to meet international standards and guidelines in areas such as national accounts, short-term economic statistics, demographic and social statistics, and gender statistics.

Activities and output

• In close cooperation with partner organisations, provide technical assistance to the SEE and EECCA countries in the implementation of 2008 SNA, including the organisation of a seminar on 2008 SNA and related economic statistics for EECCA countries (see activity 5.1)

• Provide methodological and technical assistance on price statistics to SEE and EECCA countries to support implementation of internationally recommended practices (see activity 5.3).

• Support SEE and EECCA countries in the development and implementation of statistical business registers following international standards and best practices (see activity 5.4)

• Technical assistance on short-term economic statistics and seasonal adjustment for SEE and EECCA countries (see activity 5.5). This activity is financed by the WB project (2010-2011) New Challenges in Economic Statistics in Central Asia and Eastern European countries.

• Provide training and technical assistance to EECCA and SEE countries in the field of population and housing censuses, based on their expressed needs and in compliance with the CES Census Recommendations (see activity 6.1).
In the framework of population and housing census capacity building activities, UNFPA is funding a project (2010-2011) on supporting effective use of information and communication technology in population census operations.

• Technical assistance in support of the preparations for the first Population and Housing Census in Bosnia-Herzegovina and in the internationally administered territory of Kosovo, planned to take place in 2011, in cooperation with UNFPA, Eurostat and other involved international organizations. This includes participation in the International Monitoring and Observation missions in Kosovo and in Bosnia and Herzegovina, aimed at ensuring that the population and housing censuses are planned and conducted in accordance with the internationally agreed standards (in particular the CES Census Recommendations and the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics) and that the enumeration is fair and impartial(see activity 6.1).

• Support for selected SEE and EECCA countries to build up dissemination databases, making use of the expertise and know-how accumulated in UNECE on dissemination systems of aggregated statistical information (see activity 6.1).

• Identify country priorities and practices in the area of measurement of quality of employment in the South-East European and EECCA regions (see activity 6.6).

Activity 9.4: Short-term advisory missions and training

Description and objectives

Provide specific advisory services in statistics to South-East European (SEE) and Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia (EECCA) countries in areas where the Statistical Division of UNECE has a recognised expertise.

Activities and output

• Provide short-term assistance to UNECE countries, upon request by national authorities or international organizations, with special emphasis on SEE and EECCA countries. Technical assistance is provided in a wide range of areas as required, such as: general organization of the national statistical system, national strategy for the development of statistics, statistical legislation, dissemination and marketing of statistical information, population census, migration, gender statistics, short-term economic indicators, national accounts, MDGs, etc.

• Participate as facilitators, lecturers and discussants in seminars, training workshops, conferences and meetings on topics mentioned above.

• Upon request, short term mission to countries in the region (with or without partner organizations) could be organized in order to assess the relevance of applications for technical assistance projects.

• Active participation in other international for a discussing and coordinating technical assistance in the UNECE region

Activity 9.5: Technical cooperation in Central Asia

Description and objectives

Collect and share information on technical cooperation activities in statistics in Central Asian countries. Contribute to the Partner Reporting System on Statistical Development (PRESS), maintained by PARIS21 (Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century). Promote the statistical cooperation between the countries of Central Asia, Azerbaijan and Afghanistan (under the UN Special Programme for Economies of Central Asia (SPECA)).

Activities and output

• Launching of a technical assistance coordination group gathering SPECA countries and main donor organisations in the region. The objective of this group, under the UNECE umbrella, is to better coordinate among donors and beneficiaries technical cooperation programmes and activities in the region. Organize the Annual SPECA Project Working Group Meeting on Statistics.

• Provide timely and comprehensive information on all UNECE technical cooperation projects in statistics as a contribution to the global Report on donor activities in the field of statistics produced annually by PARIS21 (PRESS).

Organizations and groups involved

CIS-STAT
Eurostat
PARIS21
Progressively other major donor organisations and countries