

## Editorial

The Statistical Journal of the UN-ECE was founded for two major reasons. Firstly, it was established to bring the results of the work undertaken by the Conference of European Statisticians to the attention of a wide audience. Secondly, it is hoped that contributions received for publication in the Journal will help the Conference in its ongoing efforts in different fields of statistics.

The Conference of European Statisticians is a Principal Subsidiary Body of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) (composed of countries of Europe and North America), and co-sponsored by the UN Statistical Commission. As a result, the contributions of the Conference to international statistical development are significant, not just for ECE member countries, but also in a world-wide context.

The Conference is composed of the executive heads of national statistical offices of ECE member countries. Members of the Conference meet regularly once a year in plenary sessions, for the purpose of directing their work in all aspects of international statistical co-operation. The thirtieth plenary session is being held this year and it is a particular pleasure for me to introduce the first issue of the Journal on the occasion of this anniversary session.

The Conference has been instrumental in furthering international co-operation, especially among countries of the region with different economic and social systems. The excellent reputation of the Conference in the statistical world today is unquestioned. Two factors should be noted in this connection.

The first factor is that the Conference has concentrated on applied statistics, since the provision of actual data is the ultimate purpose of statistical services. The Conference was always conscious of the close connection between the organization of statistical services and data production, as well as the need for the development of sound methodological bases for such production.

The second factor which has contributed to the reputation of the Conference is the breadth of perspective which has been demonstrated consistently. The Conference always attached considerable importance to contacts between statisticians and experts in specific sectors of economic activity. The Conference has continually strived for the adoption of compromise solutions, which are essential for international co-operation.

The Statistical Journal of the UN-ECE is reserved for the publication of studies that bear a relationship to the work programme of the Conference, either direct contributions to the work in progress or conceptual, empirical, analytical, methodological investigations into the validity of the results achieved.

The first issue of the Journal is devoted to a review of the work of the Conference. The first article on past activities and future directions of the

Conference's thirtieth plenary session by Petter Jakob Bjerve, who was one of the founders of the Conference. The text of the lecture is followed by two statements delivered by Edmond Malinvaud and Dano Balevski, who are two of the many active members of the Conference.

The remainder of the first issue consists of contributions which cover the scope of the Conference's work programme in some detail. It is hoped that this first issue will stimulate or strengthen wide public interest in the work of the Conference. Subsequent issues of the Journal will contain articles of a more specific nature on selected aspects of the work of the Conference. The second issue of the Journal will be published towards the end of 1982, and four issues per year will be published as of 1983.

The Editor