

Recent work of the Conference of European Statisticians

Joint UN/ECE - Eurostat work session on business registers (Luxembourg, 7–9 September 1994)

The work session discussed the following substantive topics: (i) use of business registers in the organization and coordination of surveys; (ii) study of links between registers and social and demographic statistics; (iii) use of panel techniques in obtaining information on newly created enterprises; (iv) international guidelines on handling changes in business registers (Report: CES/95/R.1).

Joint UN/ECE-Eurostat work session on methods of environment statistics (Helsinki, 19–22 September 1994)

The participants discussed: (i) the development of sampling for environmental statistics; (ii) waste and recycling statistical problems; (iii) methods for the development of statistics in the marine environment, and (iv) related issues of environmental accounting (Report: CES/95/R.3).

Work session on Geographical Information Systems (GIS) (Voorburg, The Netherlands, 27–30 September 1994)

The meeting considered the following issues: (i) definition of statistical requirements for standard settings in geomatics; (ii) integration of statistical and geographical functionality; (iii) examination of geographic concepts used by various countries for rural, urban, metropolitan and non-metropolitan; (iv) software usage and evaluation; and (v) whether and how to market geo-referenced information (Report: CES/1995/R.2).

Work session on statistical data editing (Cork, Ireland, 17–20 October 1994)

The meeting discussed the following substantive subjects: (i) data editing methods, techniques and software; (ii) impact of data editing on the quality of data; and

(iii) imputation of missing values. The most important task of the work session, however, was the preparation of the UN/ECE publication *Statistical Data Editing Methods and Techniques*, volume 2. Volume 1 was published in October 1994 (Report: CES/1995/R.5).

Joint UN/ECE-Eurostat-FAO-OECD work session on environment related agricultural statistics (Geneva, 24–26 October 1994)

The work session considered the following substantive topics: (i) environmental concerns related to agriculture; (ii) use of existing agricultural data for the description of environmental concerns related to agriculture; (iii) use of GIS and other systems as tools for generating new information on pressures due to agriculture; (iv) the scope for adding an environmental component to existing surveys; (v) conditions to be met for obtaining information on environmental concerns of agriculture through linkage of data sets from different statistical systems (nomenclatures, concepts, etc.) (Report: CES/95/R.6).

Forty-fifth session of the working party on transport statistics (Geneva, 21–23 November 1994)

The working party discussed the following items: (i) results of the first UN/ECE and Eurostat workshop on transport statistics and plans for the next workshop; (ii) harmonization of terminology used in international transport statistics; (iii) impending changes in format of the *Annual Bulletin of Transport Statistics for Europe*; (iv) statistics on the transport of dangerous goods and perishable foodstuffs; (v) recent research and experience in the collection of transport statistics; and, (vi) transport database and information systems development.

Work session on statistical metadata (Geneva, 22–25 November 1994)

The meeting considered the following issues: (i) reports on progress and experiences in the development and implementation of statistical metainformation systems (SMSs); (ii) report on metadata projects in Eurostat; (iii) common terminology for SMSs; (iv) inventory of standards applicable in statistics; (v) design of metadata and information holdings; (vi) management aspects of SMSs; (vii) evaluation criteria for SMSs; and (viii) formal methods for the description of metadata. Furthermore the work session finished the work on the preparation of two methodological materials, that is “Guidelines on the Design and Implementation of Statistical Metainformation Systems” and “Standardization of Statistical Indicators and Metadata”. It was recommended to publish these documents in 1995 (Report: CES/1995/R.7).

UN/ECE work session on physical environmental accounting (Geneva, 24–25 November 1994)

The session was convened in order to discuss a final draft of the final report from the CES Task Force on Physical Environmental Accounting. The report will contain a series of case studies on accounting of land use/land cover information, and of nutrients and the environmental accounts. It will be tabled at the 1995 plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians, who will decide on whether or not to launch a comprehensive project leading to the development of a conceptual framework for physical environmental accounting.

Joint UN/ECE-Eurostat meeting of the working group on migration statistics (Luxembourg, 28–30 November 1994)

The participants conducted a detailed review of the extent to which countries in the UN/ECE region can be expected to be able to comply with the current set of UN recommendations on international migration statistics, which the UN Statistical Commission had approved in 1976. This information will be taken into account by the UN Statistical Division, Eurostat and the UN/ECE Statistical Division, who are collaborating in reviewing the existing set of recommendations and assessing how they could be improved. Depending on the outcome of this review, a new draft set of recommendations could be prepared and submitted to the UN Statistical Commission for review at its 1997 session.