

## Recent work of the Conference of European Statisticians

### **Meeting on frameworks for environment statistics (Geneva, 4–6 October 1982)**

The meeting was convened for a comprehensive review of the recent work done by the Conference of European Statisticians on this project (comparative survey of national compilations of environment statistics; comparative analysis of natural resource accounting schemes; links between environment statistics and national accounts and balances; links between socio-demographic and environment statistics; relationship between frameworks for environment statistics and the state of the environment reporting; activity classification for purposes of environment statistics). The work done by the United Nations Statistical Office in this area was reviewed. The meeting recommended giving priority to the development of environmental indicators in future work and to include a project on the development of internationally comparable solid waste statistics in the Conference's work programme.

### **Meeting on general energy statistics (Geneva, 13–14 December 1982)**

The meeting considered concepts and classifications for the collection of internationally comparable types of energy price indices; the development of a comprehensive draft standard international classification of energy; and concepts and classifications needed for energy statistics in terms of energy requirements by use. The importance of developing a comprehensive international energy classification was stressed, and recommendations were made as to the organization and direction of the future work by the Conference of European Statisticians on this project.

### **Publication of standardized input-output tables of ECE countries for years around 1970 and 1975**

Conference of European Statisticians, Statistical Standards and Studies – No. 33 and 34, United Nations, New York 1982

The Conference of European Statisticians in the past monitored the publication of standardized input-output tables for years around 1959 and around 1965. Such

standardized tables for ECE member countries have now become available for years around 1970 and 1975.

The sector classification used in the tables is basically a 26 sector ISIC classification. Whenever possible, total intermediate transactions and final as well as total uses are subdivided into their domestic and imported components. Total uses and total resources are shown both in approximate basic values and in market values.

The rules applied in the compilation of the tables are described in detail in the publications. In brief, the procedure adopted for ensuring comparability was to adjust the tables of the SNA countries to the MPS concept for non-material services. Hence, a sub-total is given in the first quadrant for sectors of the material sphere. Reconciliation items were subsequently introduced in the second and third quadrants so as to improve the level of comparability.

The tables are also available on magnetic tapes to interested statistical offices and research institutes. Requests for tapes should be addressed to the Statistical Division, Economic Commission for Europe, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10.

**Meeting on the co-ordination of statistics of households and families (Geneva, 12–14 January 1983)**

This meeting considered the relative merits of various definitions of households and families. Definitions vary in accordance with national data sources and with subject areas in which household and family statistics are required. Also discussed were the problems of integrating data which are based on either different concepts (family or household) or different definitions of the same concept. The meeting recommended a programme of future work in this field.

**Meeting on environmental indicators (Geneva, 7–9 March 1983)**

The meeting was convened in order to plan the concrete work by the Conference on this project. The discussion was based on the review of past work done on environmental indicators at the international level, primarily by the Senior Advisers to ECE Governments on Environment Problems, the Council for Mutual Economic Assistance, and the OECD. The meeting recommended to undertake a study of the need for and the use of environmental indicators, including their links to environment statistics, and an elaboration of a list of environmental concerns with a view to developing a system of environmental indicators. It was stressed that close contact should be maintained in this work with the uses of environmental indicators.

**Eighteenth session of the Working Party on Electronic Data Processing (Geneva, 21–25 March 1983)**

The meeting reviewed national reports on statistical EDP equipment and organization and on generalized computer programs as used in national statistical offices. It considered the following questions: (i) geographical co-ordinates in statistical processing; (ii) techniques for the prevention of disclosure of confidential information; (iii) methods of integration of statistical information systems; (iv) data modelling and structuring in the context of an integrated data base system; (v) generalized software for short-term statistical information systems; and (vi) national reports on the creation and development of automated statistical data banks.

**Meeting on migration statistics (Geneva, 25–27 April 1983)**

The participants reviewed the progress made by countries in improving the coverage and international comparability of their statistics on long-term immigration and emigration. Also reviewed were national plans for improving statistics on international migration flows in relation to the UN Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration. The participants also planned preparatory work for the next meeting on migration statistics, including possible bilateral and multilateral studies to examine differences between flows as measured by the country of immigration on the one hand and by the country of emigration on the other.

**Meeting on food and agricultural statistics in Europe (Geneva, 2–5 May 1983)**

The fourteenth session of the Study Group on Food and Agricultural Statistics in Europe was convened jointly by the Conference of European Statisticians, the ECE Committee on Agricultural Problems and the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO). The Study Group considered information requirements for the economic, social and policy analysis and assessment relating to agricultural population and labour force. Furthermore, the possibilities and problems of data coverage and organization of statistical observations in these areas were reviewed. The Study Group also discussed a programme of future work concerning statistics of the agricultural population, labour force and labour input, most of which should be implemented in the framework of the 1990 World Census of Agriculture. The Programme for the 1990 World Census of Agriculture will be the main agenda item of the Study Group's next session in June 1984.

**Meeting on general methodological problems in environment statistics (Helsinki, 2–5 May 1983)**

The meeting was the first in the series of meetings on general methodological

problems in environment statistics. The Government of Finland had invited the meeting to Helsinki.

The meeting considered (i) approaches towards the identification and definition of environmental parameters; (ii) the collection of data through random sampling as a basis for estimating environmental parameters; and (iii) the collection of environmental data through monitoring methods. Experts from five countries had contributed to the documentation for the meeting, which gave rise to an exchange of national practices and to discussion an identification of common methodological problems. The meeting also recommended that the next meeting in the series should be devoted to a consideration of (i) the compilation of generalized environment statistics; and (ii) the linkage of environment and economic statistics.

**Meeting on manpower statistics (Geneva, 16–19 May 1983)**

The meeting was convened jointly by the Conference of European Statisticians and the International Labour Organisation. It reviewed methodologies for measuring flows into, out of and within the labour force, discussed conceptual and measurement problems in the field of strike statistics, exchanged views on problems in producing seasonally adjusted labour statistics, and considered different measures of labour input and their links with national accounts and balances. It also gave initial consideration to the prospects for developing a possible labour accounting system, and recommended that this topic be the major item on the agenda of the next joint meeting on manpower statistics.

**Meeting on statistics of engineering industries and automation (Geneva, 30 May–1 June 1983)**

The first joint meeting on questions of statistics concerning engineering industries and automation was convened by the ECE Working Party on Engineering and Automation, jointly with the Conference of European Statisticians. The topics considered at the meeting were: (i) information on work at the international level concerning the harmonization of international nomenclatures; (ii) international co-operation in the ECE region on the harmonization of concepts, questionnaires, data collection, etc.; (iii) methodological aspects concerning statistics on engineering industries; (iv) collection of data and information and their publication by the ECE secretariat in the field of engineering and automation; and (v) programme of future work.

**Thirty-first plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians (Geneva, 13–17 June 1983)**

The Conference considered the two topics which had been selected for substantive discussion during this plenary session: the role, purpose and implications of

analytical and parastatistical work in statistical agencies; and legal and technical instruments for the protection of data and of privacy, and consequences on the statistical use and the linkage of data banks.

In addition to reviewing the activities in its current work programme, the Conference discussed in detail its future direction method of work. It adopted the programme of work for 1983/84–1987/88 and selected the following topics for substantive discussion at the thirty-second plenary session: problems of publication, dissemination and interpretation of data; and impact of the reliability of the statistical system as a whole on the quality of statistics. It also agreed to discuss in detail at its next plenary session the results achieved and the work to be undertaken in its work on international economic comparisons.