



**Economic and Social
Council**

Distr.
GENERAL

CES/2001/29
15 November 2000

ORIGINAL : ENGLISH

**STATISTICAL COMMISSION and
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Forty-ninth plenary session
(Geneva, 11-13 June 2001)

**REPORT OF THE ECE-Eurostat-OECD JOINT CONSULTATION
ON THE EUROPEAN COMPARISON PROGRAMME**

Note prepared by the Secretariat

1. The meeting was held from 23 to 25 October 2000 in Geneva (Switzerland). It was attended by participants from Austria, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, Greece, Hungary, Italy, Lithuania, Netherlands, Russian Federation, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland and The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. Representatives of the Statistical Office of the European Community (Eurostat), the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT) also attended the Consultation.
2. The meeting was opened by Mr. Paolo Garonna, Director, Statistical Division, ECE.
3. The provisional agenda was adopted.
4. Mr. Roland Rittenau (Austria) was elected the Chairman.

ORGANIZATION OF THE CONSULTATION

5. The following substantive topics were discussed at the meeting on the basis of submitted papers:

- (i) Current status of the ECP;
- (ii) Methodological developments;
- (iii) Completion of the 1999 round of ECP;
- (iv) Management and financial implications of continuing the ECP; updating 1999 results.

6. The discussion was based on papers prepared by Austria, Bulgaria, Russian Federation, CIS Statistical Committee, Eurostat, OECD and the ECE Secretariat.

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN CONCLUSIONS REACHED AT THE MEETING

7. Recommendations for future work are given below. Other conclusions that the participants reached at the meeting on the above topics will be presented in a separate report to be prepared within two weeks after the meeting. It will be distributed to participants and, on request, to other interested persons.

RECOMMENDED FUTURE WORK

Publication of 1999 ECP results

8. The meeting emphasised that it is important that the overall ECP results covering all countries in the ECE region are published soon after Eurostat and OECD finalise the results for the countries co-ordinated by them. The countries co-ordinated by Eurostat and OECD have undertaken comparisons for 1999. The CIS-STAT and the State Committee of the Russian Federation on Statistics have undertaken a comparison for the CIS countries and Mongolia with data for 2000.

9. The meeting proposed that the ECE Secretariat should assume responsibility for the publication of the overall ECP results as in previous rounds.

10. The meeting recommended that the results of both comparisons with data for 1999 and 2000 be published. The availability of data for 1999 for the CIS-Mongolia group needs to be ascertained by the CIS Statistical Committee and the State Committee of the Russian Federation on Statistics (appropriate indices as well as GDP expenditures of the countries involved in the comparison are needed in order to interpolate the information collected in 2000). The availability

of data for 2000 for Croatia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Israel, Russian Federation, Ukraine and the non-European participants needs to be ascertained by the OECD.

11. Participants stressed that it is important to preserve the 'fixity' principle and have only one set of results for each country.

12. The meeting also agreed that the numeraire currency for the presentation of the 1999 ECP results should be the Euro and EU-15 taken as 100.

Future consultations

13. Participants emphasised that future consultations were highly desirable in view of the new organisation of the ECP work in the ECE region. The consultations are of particular importance for co-ordination of the work between the Secretariats of ECE, Eurostat, OECD and the CIS Statistical Committee. They are also of interest to all countries that are members of the ECE.

14. The meeting recommended that a joint Consultation with all the international and national statistical offices directly involved in the calculation of the 1999 round PPPs should be organised in the autumn of 2001 in Geneva.

Future work

15. The meeting agreed that the new benchmark round of comparisons for the ECE region should be with data for 2002.

16. The meeting recommended that the following text be included in the programme of work of the Conference:

- (a) ECE should assume responsibility for the publication of the overall 1999 ECP results and publish them soon after Eurostat and OECD finalise the results for the countries co-ordinated by them. ECE should consult with the other international organisations to find ways of facilitating the process of publication.
- (b) A joint Consultation with all the international and national statistical offices directly involved in the calculation of the 1999 round PPPs should be organised in the autumn of 2001.
