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**Economic Commission for Europe****Conference of European Statisticians****Sixty-ninth plenary session**

Geneva, 23 June 2021 (online), 24-25 June 2021 (hybrid)

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

**Opening and adoption of the agenda****Annotated provisional agenda for sixty-ninth plenary session**

The plenary session will include an informal online meeting on 23 June 2021, and a formal hybrid meeting on 24-25 June 2021.

**I. Provisional agenda**

*Informal joint session of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) and OECD Committee on Statistics and Statistical Policy (CSSP), 23 June 2021 (online)*

1. Opening and adoption of the agenda.
2. Post-Covid: sustaining organisational and product innovation in national statistical offices.
  - (a) Innovation in National Statistical Offices products and activities;
  - (b) Innovation in National Statistical Offices organization and working arrangements.

*Formal meeting, 24-25 June 2021 (hybrid meeting)*

3. Official statistics for climate action.
4. Coordination of international statistical work in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region:
  - (a) Outcomes of the recent in-depth reviews carried out by the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians;
  - (b) Measuring circular economy.
5. Work of the High-level Group for the Modernisation of Official Statistics.
6. How national statistical systems adhere to the core values of official statistics.
7. Reports, guidelines and recommendations prepared under the umbrella of the Conference:
  - (a) Second Edition of the Road Map on statistics for Sustainable Development Goals;
  - (b) Waste statistics framework;
  - (c) Assessing the quality of administrative sources for use in censuses;



- (d) Approaches to measuring social exclusion.
- 8. Programme of work of the Statistics subprogramme of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe:
  - (a) Reports on the work of the Conference of European Statisticians, its Bureau and Teams of Specialists;
  - (b) Matters arising from the sixty-ninth session of the European Commission for Europe;
  - (c) Programme planning documents for the Statistics subprogramme of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.
- 9. Election of the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians.
- 10. Other business.
- 11. Closing of the meeting.

## **II. Organization of the Conference of European Statisticians plenary session**

The sixty-ninth plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) will take place from 23 to 25 June 2021. The meeting will be held in two parts: an informal joint session of CES and OECD CSSP on 23 June (online), and a formal hybrid meeting allowing in-person participation on 24-25 June 2021. The formal part will have simultaneous interpretation in English, French and Russian.

The meeting timetable will be made available on the Conference website (<https://unece.org/statistics/events/CES2021>) at a later date. Information about the meeting platform and connection details will be sent out to registered participants a few weeks before the plenary session.

## **III. Annotations to agenda items**

The sixty-ninth plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) will convene in accordance with the *Rules Governing the Work of the Conference and its Bureau* (CES/2019/2).

### **1. Opening and adoption of the agenda**

The provisional agenda and timetable were agreed upon by the CES Bureau at its February 2021 meeting. The provisional agenda is presented for the approval of the Conference.

### **2. Post-Covid: sustaining organisational and product innovation in national statistical offices**

This part of the meeting will be held as a joint CES-OECD CSSP session.

#### **(a) Innovation in National Statistical Offices products and activities**

This session will be organized by OECD.

The session will look at innovation in NSO products and activities in response to policy demand articulated during the crisis. A recurring theme in the policy debate has been how to formulate policies for a strong, resilient, inclusive and sustainable recovery. Good, integrated policies require good evidence and data, especially at the interface of economic, social and environmental domains. Against this background, the session will address the following questions:

- For which types of (new or established) indicators and data has there been specific demand from policy makers on monitoring the way out of the crisis?
- How have NSOs responded; which conceptual frameworks guided the choice of indicators and evidence?
- What has been the institutional evolution in this context, if any? For example, in some countries, the crisis and the demand for new evidence accelerated the transformation of NSOs towards becoming data stewards.

**(b) Innovation in National Statistical Offices organization and working arrangements**

This session will be organized by New Zealand, Poland and UNECE.

The session will examine how NSOs and international organizations innovated in their working arrangements to adapt to COVID-19 and how they can transition to a ‘new normal’ in the working environment coming out of the crisis.

The session will build on discussions at the previous CES plenary sessions about communication, value creation, the broadening of official statistics and the role of NSOs in national data systems. It will look at different approaches based on the diversity of NSOs and their experiences during the pandemic. The session will address the following questions:

- What were the key organisational enablers that allowed NSOs to react quickly to crisis and how to maintain this agility?
- What obstacles and challenges have become evident in NSO efforts to remain resilient, agile and responsive? How were staff kept motivated under conditions of teleworking, an uncertain future, and in some cases reduced budgets?
- Which innovations were introduced (e.g. new partnerships, sub-contracting, data sources, new ways of conducting surveys); what innovation has been most successful?

### **3. Official statistics for climate action**

The session will be organized by the CES Steering Group on climate change-related statistics.

The Conference will discuss the role of NSOs in providing statistics for climate action and approaches for addressing the large information needs related to climate action, the Sendai Framework and sustainable development in a coherent and sustainable way.

Official statistics are uniquely positioned to capture the interlinkages among social, economic and environmental domains, which are crucial for a full picture of climate change drivers, impacts, mitigation and adaptation measures. Increasingly important are also information needs concerning the financial aspect of climate change and sustainable finance.

Building on the outcomes of the 2020 CES in-depth review of the role of the statistical community in climate action, the discussion will address the following questions:

- How to strengthen the work on climate change-related statistics in NSOs and address large information needs in a coherent and sustainable way? What can be done to make these statistics as timely, frequent, relevant and accessible as in other domains?
- How to promote the value of official statistics for fact-based decision making related to climate change and create win-win partnerships with other data producers, policymakers, and the research community?
- What are the statistical challenges of measuring the financial aspect of climate change? This can include measuring green finance, green investment and, more broadly, linkages between the economy and climate change.

#### **4. Coordination of international statistical work in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region**

##### **(a) Outcomes of the in-depth reviews carried out by the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians**

The Conference will be informed about the outcomes of the two in-depth reviews carried out by the CES Bureau since the previous CES plenary session (“Measuring circular economy” in October 2020 and “New forms of employment” in February 2021). These reviews are important tools of coordination to address emerging issues and identify gaps or duplication of work. The reviews focus on strategic issues and highlight concerns of statistical offices of both a conceptual and a coordinating nature.

##### **(b) Measuring circular economy**

The Conference usually discusses one of the in-depth review topics more in detail to collect further input. The session will be based on the in-depth review paper on measuring circular economy (prepared by a group of experts led by Finland). As a result of the in-depth review, the Bureau set up a Task Force on measuring circular economy.

The Conference will be also informed about the outcome of the discussion on promoting circular economy and sustainable use of natural resources during the UNECE Commission session in April 2021.

The CES discussion will gather input for the work of the Task Force and will consider how to better meet policy makers’ needs for statistics on circular economy.

#### **5. Work of the High-level Group for the Modernisation of Official Statistics**

The High-level Group for the Modernisation of Official Statistics (HLG-MOS) was set up to guide strategic developments in the ways official statistics are produced. The Conference has expressed strong support for the work, endorsed the vision and the strategy for modernizing official statistics, and asked HLG-MOS to present annual reports to the CES plenary session.

HLG-MOS will submit its annual report to the Conference for approval, including the outcomes of the recent projects in the area of statistical modernisation: on machine learning and on input privacy preservation.

#### **6. How national statistical systems adhere to the core values of official statistics**

The session will be organized by Ireland.

Trust is at the heart of official statistics. To be trusted, NSOs need to know their core values and to ensure that their institutional settings and cultures reflect the core values in which the users of official statistics place their trust.

The European Statistics Code of Practice and United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics play an essential role in defining those core values and together with national policies, codes of practice and legislation are pre-requisites for effective and efficient national statistical systems. However, it is essential that these codes, principles and laws are lived and adhered to through organisational behaviours, customs and practices to allow for an effective response to rapidly increasing challenges faced by official statistics.

The discussion will address the following questions:

- Is the existence of codes of practice and associated rules, policies and procedures (and perhaps even legislation) in itself sufficient to engender trust in Official Statistics amongst our data providers and users in the current environment?

- What additional initiatives could supplement the existing codes of practice and associated rules, policies, procedures and institutional cultures to support the core values?
- How to use our values and behaviours to build an awareness and understanding that Official Statistics are different (in a positive way) from “unofficial statistics”?
- What challenges have NSOs faced in adhering to the core values and how were they dealt with? What additional items could have helped them if they were in place?

## 7. Reports, guidelines and recommendations prepared under the umbrella of the Conference

Four documents are submitted to the 2021 CES plenary session for endorsement.

### (a) Second Edition of the Road Map on statistics for Sustainable Development Goals

The Conference endorsed the first edition of the *Road Map on statistics for SDGs* in 2017. The Road Map has been widely used by countries, international organizations and other stakeholders. In June 2018, the Conference asked the CES Steering Group on statistics for SDGs (co-chaired by Poland and Sweden) to prepare a second edition of the Road Map taking into account the new challenges and developments.

The CES Bureau reviewed the draft Second Edition of the *Road Map on statistics for SDGs* at its February 2021 meeting and asked the Secretariat to send it for an electronic consultation to all CES members. Subject to a positive outcome of the consultation, the 2021 CES plenary session will be invited to endorse the document.

Furthermore, the Conference will be informed about the rotation of members of the Interagency and Expert Group on SDG indicators (IAEG-SDGs) and the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for statistics for the 2030 Agenda (HLG-PCCB).

### (b) Waste statistics framework

The Bureau established a Task Force on waste statistics in February 2017 to draft a conceptual framework to harmonise international waste statistics, and provide better information needed for managing waste and monitoring implementation of waste-related policy frameworks.

The CES Bureau reviewed the draft *Waste statistics framework* at its February 2021 meeting and asked the Secretariat to send it for an electronic consultation to all CES members. Subject to a positive outcome of the consultation, the 2021 CES plenary session will be invited to endorse the document.

### (c) Assessing the quality of administrative sources for use in censuses

In 2018, the Bureau established a Task Force on assessing the quality of administrative sources for use in censuses with the aim of developing guidance for national statistical offices.

The CES Bureau reviewed the draft *Guidelines on assessing the quality of administrative sources for use in censuses* at its February 2021 meeting and asked the Secretariat to send it for an electronic consultation to all CES members. Subject to a positive outcome of the consultation, the 2021 CES plenary session will be invited to endorse the document.

### (d) Approaches to measuring social exclusion

In June 2018, the CES Bureau set up a Task Force on measuring social exclusion to consolidate current and emerging good practices in measuring social exclusion and in assessing their potential for delivering comparable results.

The CES Bureau reviewed the draft report on *Approaches to measuring social exclusion* in October 2020 and asked the Secretariat to send it for an electronic consultation to all CES

members. Subject to a positive outcome of the consultation, the 2021 CES plenary session will be invited to endorse the document.

## **8. Programme of work of the Statistics subprogramme of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe**

### **(a) Reports on the work of the Conference of European Statisticians, its Bureau and Teams of Specialists**

The Conference will be invited to approve the reports related to the UNECE statistical work programme as follows:

(i) Report on the implementation of the UNECE Statistical Programme in 2020 (ECE/CES/2021/14);

(ii) Reports of the CES Bureau meetings, progress reports of Teams of Specialists (Steering Groups and Task Forces) and reports of expert meetings.

### **(b) Matters arising from the sixty-ninth session of the European Commission for Europe**

The Conference will be informed about the implications of the decisions of the Economic Commission for Europe on the work of Conference.

### **(c) Programme planning documents for the Statistics subprogramme of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe**

The Conference will be invited to review and adopt the official planning documents of the Statistics subprogramme prepared in the context of the United Nations Secretariat's planning and reporting cycle:

(i) UNECE Statistical Programme for 2021 (ECE/CES/2021/15) approved by the CES Bureau in October 2020. The document is in line with the Programme of Work of the Statistics subprogramme for 2021 (ECE/CES/2020/16), adopted by the Conference in June 2020 and approved by the UNECE Executive Committee in January 2021;

(ii) Programme of Work of the Statistics subprogramme for 2022 (ECE/CES/2021/16), including publications programme. The programme of work will continue to reflect the annual format presented in 2020 in line with General Assembly resolution 72/266, with enrichments reflecting General Assembly resolutions 74/251 adopted on 27 December 2019 and 75/243 adopted on 31 December 2020. At its meeting on 5 March 2021, the ECE Executive Committee adopted a document entitled "Sequential review of the proposed programmes of work of ECE subprogrammes" (doc. 2021/8). In line with the sequential review procedure, the Conference will be invited also to consider document "Outline of key components of the programme of work of the Statistics subprogramme for 2023" (ECE/CES/2021/INF.xx) and provide recommendations on these components, as necessary. Those recommendations agreed by the Conference and included in its decisions will be reflected in the proposed programme plan of the Statistics subprogramme for 2023.

## **9. Election of the Conference of European Statisticians Bureau**

The current term of all members of the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians expires at the closing of the 2021 plenary session, on 25 June. At the 2021 plenary session, therefore, elections for Chair and Vice-Chairs will be held for the two-year period from June 2021 to June 2023. All Bureau members are eligible to serve for another two years term.

According to the Rules governing the work of the Conference and its Bureau (CES/2019/2), the election of the Bureau is carried out on the basis of a proposal by the most senior previous Chairman of the Conference who consults the proposal with all CES members. As the meeting will take place online, the consultation will be organised via an electronic procedure in advance of the plenary session.

## **10. Other business**

Any additional issues that the Conference needs to be informed of can be taken up under this agenda item.

## **11. Closing of the meeting**

The decisions concerning individual agenda items will be adopted at the end of the relevant agenda item. These decisions will be circulated through all Geneva Permanent Representations to the participating delegations of the meetings, for their approval by silence procedure of 72 hours. This procedure is a part of the special procedures for the COVID-19 pandemic period by the UNECE Executive Committee ('Procedures to take decisions in formal meetings with remote participation' - ECE/EX/2020/L.12).

A detailed report will be prepared after the Conference and will be sent for comments to all participants. The finalized report will be translated into French and Russian.

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