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Economic Commission for Europe

Conference of European Statisticians

Seventy-second plenary session

Geneva, 20 and 21 June 2024

Item 1 of the provisional agenda

Opening and adoption of the agenda

Annotated provisional agenda for the seventy-second plenary session

The plenary session will be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, Switzerland starting at 9:30 on Thursday, 20 June 2024.

I. Provisional agenda

Joint plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians and the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe

1. Opening and adoption of the agenda.
2. Strategic directions in the work of statistical offices and geospatial agencies.
3. Linking data across domains and sources.
4. Integration of geospatial and statistical data.
5. Use of Artificial Intelligence and Large Language Models in official statistics and authoritative geospatial data.

Plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians – continued

6. Implementation of the 2025 System of National Accounts in the Conference of European Statisticians member countries.
7. 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) Topics of in-depth reviews in 2024 and 2025.
8. Data ethics – a key enabler of social acceptability.
9. Work of the High-Level Group for the Modernisation of Official Statistics.
10. Reports, guidelines and recommendations prepared under the umbrella of the Conference:
 - (a) Role of national statistical offices in achieving national climate objectives;



- (b) Subjective poverty measures;
 - (c) New version of the Generic Statistical Information Model.
11. 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 2024 United Nations Statistical Commission session;
 - (c) Programme planning documents for the Statistics subprogramme of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe;
 - (d) Evaluations related to the Statistics subprogramme.
 12. Other business.
 13. Adoption of the report and closing of the meeting.

II. Annotations to agenda items

The seventy-second 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* (ECE/CES/2019/2). It will take place on 20 and 21 June 2024 in Geneva. The meeting will be held in person.

The meeting will have simultaneous interpretation in English, French and Russian. The meeting will take place back-to-back with the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) Committee on Statistics and Statistical Policy (CSSP) (in Paris) and the meeting of the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe (UN-GGIM: Europe), with a joint day between CES and UN-GGIM: Europe.

The meeting timetable will be made available on the CES website: <https://unece.org/statistics/events/CES2024>.

Joint plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians and the Regional Committee of United Nations Global Geospatial Information Management for Europe

1. Opening and adoption of the agenda

The provisional agenda was agreed upon by the CES Bureau at its February 2024 meeting and consulted with UN-GGIM: Europe. The provisional agenda is presented for the approval of the Conference.

2. Strategic directions in the work of statistical offices and geospatial agencies

At its February 2023 meeting, the CES Bureau decided that an open discussion on strategic issues should periodically be held at the CES plenary sessions.

The session will include presentations on strategic directions and expected future trends in the work of national statistical offices (NSOs) and national mapping, cadastral and land registration authorities (NMCAs). Presentations will be followed by a strategic discussion on how cooperation and collaboration between NSOs and NMCAs at national, regional and global levels can benefit both communities, the achievement of Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and the post-2030 agenda, and help to address the challenges identified.

3. Linking data across domains and sources

The Conference usually discusses one of the topics reviewed in depth by the CES Bureau in detail to collect input for further work. This time the discussion will focus on linking data across domains and sources, based on an in-depth review paper prepared by Canada (ECE/CES/2024/5).

Linking data plays a key role in enabling producing better information and insight for policymakers who seek to address multidimensional issues in society. Increase in the availability of new data types and technology development provides new opportunities for linking and accessing data on scales that are more extensive than ever before. This requires a systematic approach and cultural change among all stakeholders.

One of the ways to link data is through geospatial references. The session will look at the opportunities for this kind of linking together with the geospatial community.

As a result of the review, the CES Bureau agreed that a road map should be developed to support linking data across domains. The discussion will inform further work in this area.

4. Integration of geospatial and statistical data

This session will explore progress in integration of statistical and geospatial information, taking into account multiple aspects: governance, technology, practical implementation and innovative practices.

The session will take note of key frameworks and resources relevant in this context, such as the United Nations Integrated Geospatial Information Framework, the Global Statistical Geospatial Framework and its ongoing review, the targeted work of the Expert Group on Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information, the UN-GGIM: Europe Working Group on Data Integration, the High-Level Group for the Modernisation of Official Statistics' Geospatial View of Generic Statistical Business Process Model (GeoGSBPM), and the GEOSTAT projects of the European Forum for Geography and Statistics.

Based on practical implementation examples, the heads of NSOs and NCMAAs will be invited to consider the impact, benefits and challenges of collaborating on the integration of geospatial and statistical data at national and regional levels and discuss how to accelerate the progress. The discussion may also identify lessons learnt to be applied in the future integration of other data sources into the business processes of geospatial and statistical organizations.

5. Use of Artificial Intelligence and Large Language Models in official statistics and authoritative geospatial data

This topic was selected for discussion at the CES plenary session by the CES Bureau in February 2024, based on the outcome of an electronic consultation with all CES members and in consultation with UN-GGIM: Europe. The session will be chaired by Canada and Germany.

Machine Learning (ML) and Artificial Intelligence (AI) hold great potential for modernizing the work of geospatial and statistical organizations, streamlining production processes through automation or human assistance, and facilitating the utilization of new data sources such as social media and satellite imagery. The recent developments in AI such as Large Language Models (LLMs) offer new opportunities as they could boost the productivity of staff by assisting in their daily tasks (e.g., generating draft analysis based on a table of numbers), but more importantly, greatly improve the service to the users (e.g., language-based dissemination tools). However, LLMs could also change the way the society obtains knowledge, which raises a question of how providers of official statistics and authoritative geospatial data can remain relevant.

In a joint discussion, the heads of NSOs and NCMAAs will be invited to (i) share strategies and practical experiences of applying AI in their organizations; (ii) discuss lessons learnt,

opportunities, benefits, challenges and risks; (iii) consider the transformative potential of this technology and its implications for the work of NSOs and NCMAAs, and (iv) deliberate how the producers of official statistics and authoritative geospatial data should respond to these developments.

Plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians – continued

6. Implementation of the 2025 System of National Accounts in the Conference of European Statisticians member countries

This topic was selected for discussion at the CES plenary session by the CES Bureau in February 2024, based on the outcome of an electronic consultation with all CES members. The session will be chaired by the Netherlands (to be confirmed).

The work on developing guidance for the update of the System of National Accounts (SNA) has been completed – the proposed changes to SNA have gone through a transparent and inclusive global consultation process and the consolidated list of recommendations for the update has been endorsed by the fifty-fifth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC), except for the recommendation on marketing assets. The full draft of 2025 SNA is planned to be submitted to UNSC in March 2025.

This session will (i) discuss setting priorities, resources and budget implications, and promotion and mobilizing support for the implementation of the 2025 SNA, and (ii) help in identifying priorities and areas where CES could support the implementation of 2025 SNA in the region, based on countries' feedback from early implementation and assessments of the main challenges and risks.

7. 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

The Conference will be invited to approve the outcomes of three in-depth reviews carried out by the CES Bureau since the previous CES plenary session: “Use cases for alternative population bases” in October 2023 (ECE/CES/2024/4), and “Linking data across domains and sources” (ECE/CES/2024/5) and “Timeliness, frequency and granularity of official statistics” (ECE/CES/2024/6) in February 2024. 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) Topics of in-depth reviews in 2024 and 2025

The Conference will be invited to confirm the topics for in-depth reviews in 2024 and 2025 selected by the CES Bureau, based on the results of an electronic consultation carried out by the Secretariat in January 2024 among the CES member countries and international organizations (ECE/CES/2024/13).

8. Data ethics – a key enabler of social acceptability

The CES 2023 plenary session included a seminar on data ethics – a key enabler of social acceptability. The Conference asked the Bureau to discuss the follow-up to the seminar, taking into account the work undertaken under the High-Level Group for the Modernisation of Official Statistics (HLG-MOS), decide on further steps, and report back to the CES plenary session in 2024. The Conference will be informed about further work undertaken as follow-up to the seminar, including outcomes of the Workshop on Ethics in Modern Statistical Organizations, taking place on 26–28 March 2024 in Geneva.

9. 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 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, including the outcomes of recent projects in the area of statistical modernization, and inform about its plans for further work (ECE/CES/2024/9 and 10).

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

Three documents are planned to be submitted to the 2024 CES plenary session for endorsement.

(a) Role of national statistical offices in achieving national climate objectives

In February 2022, the CES Bureau established a Task Force to develop guidance on how national statistical offices can contribute to achieving national climate objectives. The guidance will identify concrete ways in which NSOs can be involved and showcase what the statistical system already offers to support climate action.

In February 2024, the CES Bureau reviewed the draft *Guidance on the role of national statistical offices in achieving national climate objectives* and approved sending it for an electronic consultation to all CES members. Subject to a positive outcome of the consultation, the document will be submitted to the 2024 CES plenary session for endorsement (ECE/CES/2024/1).

(b) Subjective poverty measures

In February 2022, the CES Bureau established a Task Force to develop a guide on measuring subjective poverty, including a set of subjective poverty indicators that could be used for international comparison.

In February 2024, the CES Bureau reviewed the draft *Guide on measuring subjective poverty* and approved sending it for an electronic consultation to all CES members. Subject to a positive outcome of the consultation, the document will be submitted to the 2024 CES plenary session for endorsement (ECE/CES/2024/2).

(c) New version of the Generic Statistical Information Model

The Generic Statistical Information Model (GSIM, version 1.2) was endorsed by the Conference in 2019. In 2020, the HLG-MOS Supporting Standards Group set up a dedicated task team, initially tasked with minor updates and subsequently with developing a full new version of the model (2.0). The new version was sent for a CES-wide consultation in June 2023 and considered by the CES Bureau in February 2024. The Conference will be invited to endorse the new version of the model (ECE/CES/2024/3).

11. 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 United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) statistical work programme as follows:

(i) Report on the implementation of the UNECE Statistical Programme in 2023 (ECE/CES/2024/14);

(ii) Reports of the CES Bureau meetings, progress reports of Teams of Specialists (Steering Groups and Task Forces) and reports of expert meetings (ECE/CES/2024/14/Add.1–19);

(iii) Report on the capacity-development activities under the Statistical Programme (ECE/CES/2024/20);

(iv) Annual report of the Regional United Nations Coordination Group for data and statistics in Europe and Central Asia (ECE/CES/2024/12).

(b) Matters arising from the 2024 United Nations Statistical Commission session

Under this item, the Conference will be informed about the implications of the decisions of the 2024 United Nations Statistical Commission session on the work of the Conference (ECE/CES/2024/11).

(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 2024 (ECE/CES/2024/15). The document is in line with the Programme of Work of the Statistics subprogramme for 2024 (ECE/CES/2023/16), adopted by the Conference in June 2023;

(ii) Programme of Work of the Statistics subprogramme for 2025, including publications programme (ECE/CES/2024/16). The draft programme of work follows the annual budget format approved by the United Nations General Assembly in resolution 77/267 adopted on 30 December 2022. The draft programme of work is based on the Statistics subprogramme's proposed programme plan for 2025, reviewed by the UNECE Executive Committee in December 2023 as part of the UNECE proposed programme budget for 2025, and submitted for consideration by the seventy-ninth session of the General Assembly.

The Conference will be also invited to review the "Outline of key components of the UNECE statistics subprogramme for 2026" and provide suggestions for its improvement.

(d) Evaluations related to the Statistics subprogramme

Under this item, the Conference will be informed about results of recently completed internal evaluations of *Modernizing Statistical Production Phase 3* and *Enhancing Coherence and Integration of Economic and Social Statistics in Support of the Implementation of 2008 SNA*, and an upcoming evaluation of *Supporting member States in statistics for the Sustainable Development Goals*, planned for 2025.

12. Other business

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

13. Adoption of the report and closing of the meeting

The decisions concerning individual agenda items will be adopted at the end of the relevant agenda item. 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.