

Terms of Reference

Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities

1. The Inter-agency Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities was established on 19 September 2002 by the Interagency Meeting on Coordination of Statistical Activities. Its objectives, which it takes over from the former ACC Subcommittee on Statistical Activities ((a), (b) and (c) below, modified by (d) below) are:

(a) to promote coordination, integration and complementarity among the statistical programmes of the international organizations, including the avoidance of duplication and reduction in reporting burdens on Member States and to promote coordination and consistency in statistical practices and development;

(b) to provide coordinated preparations for the treatment of statistical issues in intergovernmental meetings, including the Statistical Commission and coordinated follow-up of decisions of the intergovernmental bodies, thus providing a responsive focus for addressing the needs of Member States.

(c) to achieve through the coordination activity an integrated system in the collection, processing and dissemination of international statistics by promoting the coordination of the international official statistical system including technical cooperation in statistics. It also aims to facilitate the use in Member States of internationally agreed concepts, definitions, recommendations and classifications of different international organizations by coordinating the work on methodological development and promoting harmonization of the methodologies in various fields of statistics.

(d) to foster good practices in the structuring and programming of statistical activities in the international organizations; within the above framework the Committee focuses on emerging issues requiring coordination, takes a proactive approach and follows up on decisions to ensure action is taken

2. The members of the Committee comprise all members and observers of the former ACC Subcommittee on Statistical Activities, namely United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) and other divisions of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs (DESA) the Regional Commissions, the UN Programmes and Funds, the specialized agencies and related organizations, certain non-UN intergovernmental organizations (OECD, EUROSTAT, Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States, World Tourism Organization and World Trade Organization), regional development banks and the International Statistical Institute. Other organizations can participate by invitation.

3. Representation in the Committee is normally at the level of Director of an organization's statistical service or equivalent. Participation at the highest statistical level is considered indispensable for the effectiveness of the Committee's work.

4. The Committee functions on a task oriented basis using lead agency arrangements. The Committee meets on an ad hoc basis as required by circumstances, usually for two and half days, but the decision to hold meetings and their length is driven by substance and needs. In principle it is expected that there will be annual meetings, but advantage will be taken of the Statistical Commission session each year to bring the Committee together to take up any issues that need to

be considered at that time and to review the proposed agenda and need for the next scheduled Committee session; As formal Committee meetings provide an excellent opportunity for bilateral and multilateral discussions and networking, sufficient time should always be set aside in the meeting schedule for these activities. Coordination of activities between meetings, for instance through electronic discussion groups and follow-up to decisions made at meetings are an important and integral part of the work of the Committee.

5. The Committee elects a Chairman who serves for a two year period and is eligible for re-election for a second two year term. The UNSD is the permanent Secretariat.

6. A decisions-and-actions-only report is prepared for adoption at the end of each meeting. The report should specify the lead agencies which are responsible for any action and follow-up. There should also be a report on ongoing Committee activities which have occurred in the inter-meeting period. An annual report is made available to the United Nations Statistical Commission and if necessary or desirable the report is referred to the High Level Committee on Programmes of the United Nations Chief Executives Board on Coordination (CEB).