

ACC SUBCOMMITTEE ON STATISTICAL ACTIVITIES

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17 March 1994

Annotated list of coordination tools:
Directories, inventories and other tools
and reporting mechanisms, prepared as cooperative efforts by
the international organizations, for promoting coordination *

1. At its twenty-seventh session the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) Subcommittee on Statistical Activities 1/ "reconfirmed its view that a real need existed for various tools and reporting mechanisms which may better facilitate the coordination of the work of international agencies in the field of statistics. They provided useful information to national and international organizations and improved the links between national, regional and international statistical organizations". 2/ The present note has been prepared to inform national statistical authorities of the tools available to the international statistical community for promoting coordination. These tools are presented as formal publications, documentation for the Statistical Commission 3/, the Statistical Commission's Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Coordination 4/, the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) 5/, and as other kinds of documents.
2. The Subcommittee decided that the following coordination tools would be maintained and issued during the 1994-1995 period:

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- (i) The Directory of International Statistics;
- (ii) A full annotated list of methodological publications;
- (iii) Documents containing information on programmes and plans of international statistical organizations;
- (iv) An inventory of statistical data collection activities;
- (v) An inventory of computerized statistical databases;
- (vi) A list of classifications used in statistics;
- (vii) A short annotated list of coordination tools.

3. A new coordination report is also in preparation for the Conference of European Statisticians in 1994 (described in para. 10 below). In addition, the reports of the meetings of the Statistical Commission, its Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Coordination and the ACC Subcommittee on Statistical Activities serve as useful coordination tools. Each of the coordination tools are briefly described below. Organizations which are generally covered in these tools are listed in the Annex.

4. Directory of International Statistics (in preparation). The purpose of the Directory is two-fold: (i) to make available to users of international statistics, up-to-date information on the statistical series and methodological guide-lines that are available, and (ii) to stimulate and further facilitate the efforts of the international organizations towards continued coordination of their data collection, processing and publishing activities.

5. The original Directory 6/ issued in 1975: (a) listed and described the functions of the major international organizations active in statistical work; (b) listed the statistical series compiled by the organizations of the United Nations system and some non-United Nations organizations active in international statistics; this included references to the organizations which collect the data from countries, the publications in which the data could be found, the frequency of the series and an indication of whether the series were maintained in machine-readable form; the series were listed by subject-matter; (c) provided a list and description of the methodological publications issued by each organization, and (d) presented an inventory of the machine-readable databases of economic and social statistics by subject and organization. It included

information on the types of statistics contained in them and the technical descriptions of the computer files.

6. Volume I of a revised version was issued in 1982 updating (b) and (d) above only. 7/ A draft of a Volume II covering (a) and (c) was also prepared but not issued. A further revised version is planned, covering all or part of the material included in the 1975 Directory (see also paras. 7, and 13 below).

7. A full annotated list of methodological publications (in preparation). The purpose of this list is to provide information on the available methodological publications published by the international organizations.

8. These publications include statistical concepts, definitions, standards, classifications and procedures that are presented as recommendations, guidelines, technical reports, manuals or handbooks for use by national statistical authorities. Their implementation should result in the production of reliable and comparable statistical data within countries, with benefit to countries and at the international level. They are issued by a wide range of the international organizations in their particular fields of authority and competence. The annotated list provides a list of these publications, author organizations and a brief description of the contents. This list may be prepared as part of the revised Directory referred to in para 4 above or as a separate product.

9. Documents containing information on programmes and plans of international statistical organizations. The purpose of these coordination tools is to present an overview of the programmes of the international organizations in their respective fields of statistics.

10. The latest information with regard to programmes and plans is contained in Reports of the Secretary-General to the twenty-seventh session of the Statistical Commission 8/ 9/ and in a document of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) (in preparation) 10/. The reports to the Statistical Commission provide updated information on the recent activities and future plans in statistics of the organizations of the United Nations system and of several international organizations outside the system. The reports are selective, providing information on those activities that organizations consider the most important in their overall work. The reports have been structured on a subject-matter basis. The classification used is derived from the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) Programme Classification, which is broadly in use in the United Nations system for reporting on programmes on a system-wide basis. The CES document contains an integrated presentation of international statistical work programmes by field of statistics, which covers all international organizations that are playing a major role in

each given field of statistics, with emphasis on the work related to the European region. The document will be submitted to the CES Plenary session in June 1994 (for further information on this document you may contact : Director, Statistical Division, Economic Commission for Europe, Palais des Nations, CH-1211 Geneva 10, Switzerland; tel.: 41-22-917-3255 or 41-22-917-4144; fax: 41-22-917-0123).

11. Inventory of statistical data collection activities. 11/ The Inventory aims to identify duplication and overlap in requests by international and regional organizations for data from countries and to assist national statistical offices and other national statistical agencies in obtaining an overview of the nature and timing of statistical reports expected by international and regional organizations.

12. The Inventory provides information on the statistical data collection activities from countries by the United Nations, the regional commissions and other international agencies. All statistical data collection modes are covered, whether by questionnaire, diskette, magnetic tape or computer. The Inventory is organized along subject-matter lines to facilitate its use. The classification of data collection activities used is derived from the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) Programme Classification for Statistical Activities. The Inventory contains a description of data collection activities including changes in activities over the preceding two years, as well as information on data collection through machine-readable products and by computer. Interchange of data among the international organizations is also discussed. Annexes contain a description of statistical data collected, information on addressees and publications in which statistical series appear, and list the requested deadlines for return by countries and month for dispatch. The Inventory has been prepared on a biennial basis for many years and is reviewed by the Statistical Commission's Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Coordination.

13. Inventory of computerized statistical databases. 12/ This inventory is an extended version of part (d) of the 1975 Directory (see para 4 above for purpose and description). The Inventory is structured by organization and has a subject-matter index. A machine-readable version of this Inventory, limited to those databases to which there is direct public access, is included in the United Nations Statistical Division's Core Statistical Time Series and Inventory of Computerized Statistical Database (CORESTAT) (in preparation).

14. List of classifications used in statistics. 13/ This list helps countries to be aware of the various international classifications that are available for statistical purposes. It was developed in reply to a request by the Conference of European

Statisticians in connection with work of the Conference and the Economic Commission for Europe in assisting countries in statistical work during the transition period to market economies. The Inventory distinguishes three broad types of classifications: economic classifications; population, housing and health classifications; and other classifications. The Inventory has been organized by agency. Work on updating this Inventory has been started and it will be restructured and organized along subject-matter.

15. Annotated list of coordination tools. The purpose of the list is to make national statistical offices and other users of the global statistical system aware of the existing coordination tools and reporting mechanisms. The present note constitutes the annotated list.

16. The Statistical Commission meets every two years and issues a report of its proceedings. 14/

17. The Statistical Commission's Working Group on International Statistical Programmes meets every two years and issues a report of its proceedings (in 1994 and 1995 it is scheduled to meet each year). 15/

18. The ACC Subcommittee on Statistical Activities meets every year and issues a report of its proceedings. 2/

Notes

1/. The ACC Subcommittee on Statistical Activities is an inter-agency coordination committee composed of the Directors/Chiefs of the Statistical Departments/Divisions of the international organizations active in statistics.

2/. Note by the Secretary-General transmitting to the Statistical Commission the report of the Subcommittee on Statistical Activities of the Administrative Committee on Coordination (ACC) on its twenty-seventh session (E/CN.3/1994/4), para 29.

3/. A United Nations intergovernmental body, made up of 24 Member States, normally represented by the director general of the national statistical office of each country, which aims to promote the development of national statistics and the improvement of their comparability and the coordination of international statistical work.

- 4/. An intergovernmental body, a subsidiary of the Statistical Commission, with special responsibility for coordination of international statistical work.
- 5/. An intergovernmental body, comprised of the Directors-General of the national statistical offices of the member countries of the Economic Commission for Europe.
- 6/. Directory of International Statistics, Statistical Papers, Series M No. 56, ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/56, Sales No. E.75.XVII.11.
- 7/. Directory of International Statistics, Volume 1, Statistical Papers, Series M No.56 Rev.1, ST/ESA/STAT/SER.M/56/Rev.1., Sales No. E.81.XVII.6.
- 8/. "Overall review of the statistical work of the international organizations", Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/1993/22).
- 9/. "Plans of the international organizations in the area of statistics", Report of the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/1993/23).
- 10/. "Integrated presentation of work programmes" (CES/....)
- 11/. "Inventory of statistical data collection activities", Note by the Secretary-General (E/CN.3/AC.1/1993/R.6 and E/CN.3/AC.1/1993/R.6/Add.1).
- 12/. "Inventory of Computerized Statistical Databases", Technical Working Group on Statistical Databases, ACC Subcommittee on Statistical Activities, April 1990.
- 13/. "International classifications used in statistics" (CES/688).
- 14/. Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1993, Supplement No.6 (E/1993/26).
- 15/. Report of the Working Group on International Statistical Programmes and Coordination on its sixteenth session (E/CN.3/1994/2).

ANNEX

LIST OF ORGANIZATIONS WHOSE STATISTICAL ACTIVITIES ARE GENERALLY COVERED IN THE COORDINATION TOOLS

UNITED NATIONS

United Nations Statistical Division (UNSTAT)
United Nations Office at Vienna (UNOV)
United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF)
United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD)
United Nations Development Programme (UNDP)
United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP)
United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA)
Economic Commission for Africa (ECA)
Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)
Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC)
Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)
Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)
United Nations Centre for Human Settlement (Habitat)
United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD)

SPECIALIZED AGENCIES AND RELATED ORGANIZATIONS

International Labour Organisation (ILO)
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)
United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO)
International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO)
World Health Organization (WHO)
World Bank
International Monetary Fund (IMF)
Universal Postal Union (UPU)
International Telecommunication Union (ITU)
World Intellectual Property Organization (WIPO)
United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO)
International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA)
General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT)
World Tourism Organization (WTO)

OTHER INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

African Development Bank
Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)
Customs Co-operation Council (CCC)
Inter-American Development Bank (IDB)
International Statistical Institute (ISI)
Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)
Statistical Office of the European Communities (EUROSTAT)

