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Economic statistics: other economic statistics (city groups on economic statistics and Intersecretariat Working Group on Price Statistics)

Intersecretariat Working Group on Price Statistics

Note by the Secretary-General

1. The Secretary-General has the honour to transmit to the Statistical Commission a note on the activities of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Price Statistics prepared by the International Labour Organization (secretariat of the Working Group), which is contained in the annex. The document is transmitted to the Commission in accordance with a request of the Statistical Commission at its thirtieth session.¹

Action by the Commission

2. The Commission is requested to comment on the activities of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Price Statistics set out in the note by the International Labour Office.

Notes

¹ See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 1999, Supplement No. 4 (E/1999/24)*, chap. I.B.

* E/CN.3/2000/1.

Annex

Activities of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Price Statistics

1. The terms of reference of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Price Statistics were presented to the Statistical Commission at its thirtieth session (E/CN.3/1999/7/Add.1).
2. The scope of the work of the Working Group was debated at length when it was being established: whether it should be restricted to the consumer price index (CPI) or be extended to cover other price indices in particular the producer price index (PPI), a topic of interest for the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank. It was agreed that the mandate of the Working Group should, in principle, cover all price statistics; that the revision of the ILO *Manual on Consumer Price Indices*^a and the preparation of the PPI manual should be carried out separately but in a coordinated manner; and that the elements of coordination should be a harmonized outline of the two manuals and ample cross-references, where necessary.
3. Since the thirtieth session of the Statistical Commission, the Working Group has held two meetings at Geneva, in February and in November 1999. Reports on those meetings are available on request from the secretariat of the Working Group.
4. A technical expert group on the CPI was set up and had its first meeting in February 1999. It met again in November 1999 during the joint Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)/ILO meeting on CPI at Geneva. The ILO/ECE is the secretariat of this group.
5. The Ottawa Group on Price Indexes had a special session on the revision of the ILO *Manual* during its meeting at Reykjavik, Iceland, 25-27 August 1999. The Ottawa Group was informed of the procedures to be used for the revision of the *Manual* and the draft outline was presented to the Ottawa Group. The Working Group took this opportunity to meet informally.
6. A technical expert group on the producer price index was formed under the coordination of IMF. Its work is organized in step with that of the technical expert group on the CPI to ensure that the manuals have consistent organization and use consistent concepts and terminology. This group had its first meeting, back-to-back with the CPI technical expert group meeting, during the joint ECE/ILO meeting on CPI at Geneva in November 1999. The last international manual on producer prices was published by the United Nations in 1979.^b
7. A reference group to the CPI technical expert group was created in order to ensure that the revision process is broad-based and that all regional concerns are addressed.
8. Work on the revision of both manuals has started, with agreement on a common outline and free exchange of information and relevant text between the two processes. Writing of draft chapters has started and the editing processes have been established. It is anticipated that a first version of the revised *Manual* will be ready by spring 2001.

Notes

^a Geneva, 1989.

^b *Manual on Producers' Price Indices for Industrial Goods*, Statistical Papers, Series M, No. 66 (United Nations publication, Sales No. 79.XVII.11).
