

Statistical Commission
Forty-eighth session
7 – 10 March 2017
Item 3(b) of the provisional agenda
Transformative Agenda for Official Statistics

Background document
Available in English and Russian

English version

**Report of the EECCA conference
on the transformative agenda for official statistics**

Prepared by the United Nations Statistics Division

**EECCA Conference:
Transformative Agenda for Official Statistics**

6-7 October 2016

**National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Belarus (Belstat)
12 Partizansky Avenue, Minsk, Belarus**

Co-organized by:

United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD)
United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP)
National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Belarus (Belstat)

With the support of:

Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat)
European Free Trade Association (EFTA)
National Research University Higher School of Economics (HSE-Moscow)

Report of the Conference

Introduction and background information

The Eastern Europe, Caucasus, and Central Asia (EECCA) Conference on a Transformative Agenda for Official Statistics (the Conference) was held on 6-7 October 2016 on the premises of the National Statistical Committee of the Republic of Belarus (Belstat) in Minsk. The Conference was part of a series of regional conferences on a Transformative Agenda for Official Statistics in support of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other global, regional and national development policies and initiatives that built on the outcome of the High-Level Global Conference organized by UNSD and Eurostat in January 2015 in New York and the recognition by the 46th and 47th sessions of the United Nations Statistical Commission¹ of the emerging demands for high-quality statistics and the need for modernization of national, regional, sub-regional and international statistical systems.

The Conference organised jointly by Belstat, ESCAP and UNSD with the support of Eurostat, EFTA and the Moscow Higher School of Economics aimed at taking stock of various regional, sub-regional and national ongoing and planned initiatives for integrating and modernizing statistical systems; and eventually aligning the global initiative for a Transformative Agenda to the EECCA context, and vice versa. The Conference was held back-to-back with the Eurostat High-level Seminar for EECCA countries on Modernising Official Statistics (EECCA HLS, 3-5 October 2016, Minsk). Chief Statisticians and managers from national statistical offices/committees (NSOs) from EECCA countries, Mongolia and the Russian Federation participated in the Conference along with senior representatives from the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-Stat) and the Statistics Department of the Eurasian Economic Commission (EEC). Ms. Ekaterina Paniklova, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative in Belarus participated in the opening session.

The Conference was organized in three substantive sessions and one breakout session, covering broadly the five thematic areas of the Transformative Agenda, with substantial time assigned to group discussions and plenary interventions. In order to maintain consistency and comparability with the outcome and conclusions of other regional conferences, this report will be structured according to the five thematic areas of the Transformative Agenda: coordination; communication and advocacy; integration; innovation; and capacity building and training.

The agenda, background documents and presentations of the Conference are available at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/nationalaccount/workshops/2016/eecca/iod.asp>

Participants acknowledged the necessity to modernize and strengthen statistical systems at the national, regional and global levels in order to respond more effectively and efficiently to existing and emerging user needs and in particular to address the data demand in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (SD) and other regional and national development policies. The need for the formulation of a sub-regional roadmap for a Transformative Agenda was emphasised to be based on the principle of standardisation and interoperability, exploring collectively the potential of administrative data, geospatial information and other existing data sources, such as Big Data, for the production of official statistics.

These different elements will be further elaborated under each thematic area but it is important at this stage to stress the following characteristics of EECCA statistical systems at national and regional level mentioned during the Conference:

- Statistical systems from EECCA countries have undergone a comprehensive transformation not such a long time ago. In the early nineties, the disintegration of the Soviet Union and the transition from centrally planned to market oriented economies have resulted in a profound change of the role of official statistics. These changes brought along the need for institutional guidance and as a result, the “*Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics in the Region of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE)*” were developed and eventually adopted by the Conference of

¹ <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/47th-session/documents/2016-4-Transformative-agenda-for-official-statistics-E.pdf>
<http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/47th-session/documents/2016-4-Transformative-agenda-for-official-statistics-R.pdf>

European Statisticians (CES) in 1991 and the Economic Commission for Europe the following year.

- EECCA countries, with the exception of Eastern Europe countries, are affiliated with 2 UN regional commissions, namely ECE and ESCAP and some of them with 2 important sub-regional organisations involved in statistical activities (i.e. CIS and EEC). Furthermore, Eastern Europe and Caucasus countries are benefitting from extensive assistance from Eurostat through the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP) initiative and from other multilateral and bilateral partners. It was also acknowledged that national statistical systems in the region have evolved separately since the disintegration of the Soviet Union but have still a lot of features in common that would allow initiatives and actions to be designed and implemented in a more coordinated way at regional level.
- Most EECCA countries have undergone comprehensive assessments of their respective national statistical system. These assessments were conducted jointly by Eurostat, UNECE and EFTA to review the institutional, organisational and technical capacity of national statistical system to produce high-quality statistics in compliance with international, and when relevant European, principles, guidelines and methodology. Outcome and recommendations for improvement from these assessments were largely incorporated into national strategies and other master plans for the development of statistics. At regional level, one of the most prominent results of this round of assessments was the adoption of a Generic Law for Official Statistics (GLOS) for EECCA countries by the CES in April 2016. A second round of assessments was launched early 2016 with the objective to review progress and identify remaining and new challenges.

After an opening presentation of the outline of the Transformative agenda by UNSD, the Conference benefitted from contributions from Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Georgia, Kazakhstan, Moldova, Mongolia, Russia (HSE-Moscow), Tajikistan, EEC, ESCAP and Eurostat in plenary sessions. These contributions enlightened participants on the drivers of the transformation, challenges and good practices in the modernisation of national statistical systems and their deliveries and facilitated the deliberations in the breakout session.

Coordination at and between global, regional and national statistical systems

The presentations and discussions under this strategic area focused on the identification of the main drivers for the transformation and modernization of national statistical systems in the EECCA region but also on which of these drivers may be more specific to the region. It was acknowledged that emerging demand for data and statistics, and particularly in the framework of the SDG indicators, combined with stagnant resources, rapid development of technology, digital transformation, emerging competitors, and new data sources are driving the change in the production of official statistics at global, regional and national level.

Participants also debated on how current and future National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (NSDS) and other strategic plans could be revised and revamped to become catalysts for the transformation and modernization of national statistical systems. The role of global assessments and peer reviews to assess the level of maturity of national statistical systems in regards to modernisation and integration as well as their alignment with international/European standards and eventually recommendations to be formulated were also addressed along with the coordination mechanisms and tools that could be put in place at national and regional levels to promote and guide the transformation process. Initiatives and good practices for the transformation of official statistics and in particular examples of regional leadership, visions, and action frameworks were presented by EEC in support of the economic integration of the Eurasian Economic Union and by Eurostat on building the future of European statistics (ESS Vision 2020). Participants were informed that following the Asia-Pacific Conference that was held in August 2016 in Bangkok, ESCAP was currently drafting a common vision and framework for action for the transformation of statistics to be submitted to the ESCAP Committee on Statistics² by the end of the year. At CIS level, a regional conference for national

² For documents please see <http://www.unescap.org/official-documents/committee-on-statistics/session/5>

statisticians and partner organisations on the implementation of a monitoring system for Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) was organised in Bishkek 19-20 September 2016. In this regard, some countries in the region have already taken the initiative or have planned to setup inter-agency committees at high political and expert levels in order to coordinate the implementation of such a system at national level³.

Main conclusions and proposed key actions:

- Recognizing that the momentum is right for addressing the need for modernization of official statistics, particularly in the context of the 2030 SD Agenda, and taking this opportunity to promote and maintain at global, regional and national level a high level political commitment to develop and sustain sound institutional and organisational frameworks, including human, financial and technical resources, for the production of official statistics;
- Development partners to support the translation of the GLOS into national legislative frameworks and thus strengthening the national statistical systems and enhancing the key coordinating and leadership role of the NSO in the NSS; not only for the production of statistics but beyond that also for the design and implementation of the new national statistical production architecture in support of the monitoring of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and other emerging user needs;
- NSOs and other producers of official statistics to incorporate into multi-year and annual statistical programmes outcome from global assessments and in particular recommendations about the modernisation and integration of national statistical systems and developing a consistent roadmap at regional level (see also capacity building and training);
- Enhancing coordination mechanisms and tools among major multi-lateral organisations and bilateral partners for the transformation of official statistics in the EECCA region aiming at intensifying collaboration and partnerships for developing and sharing new methods, tools, technological infrastructure and know-how.

Communication and advocacy

Despite the longstanding statistical tradition and recent achievements in strengthening statistical capacities in EECCA countries, participants reflected on how a targeted communication and advocacy strategy on the value of and principles for official statistics could redress the situation of insufficient funding and dependence on external sources; tenuous institutional and legal statistical frameworks, fragile data governance and accountability; lack of timely, accurate, comparable and relevant data; and weak demand and capacity in the use of data for decision making. It was broadly acknowledged that there is room for further improving the communication on the comparative advantages and value of official statistics, as well as enhancing statistical literacy among users and developing partnership with the data community, in particular in the framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

The ambition of official statistics is that deliveries remain relevant by engaging actively in a regular dialogue with users to better understand their needs at national and regional level. It was also acknowledged that different user groups have different needs that should be addressed by offering tailored information through appropriate communication channels. In that respect, official statistics will have to further develop and implement modern dissemination and communication strategies, built around emerging technologies that are changing rapidly the way users treat, handle and use data. Participants noted that it is crucial to better explain official statistics by complementing publications with explanatory and analytical input. These products will contain less text and figures, but more graphs, maps, images and videos.

³ i.e. Armenia, Azerbaijan, Tajikistan and Ukraine

Effective communication strategies and opportunities must be maintained and encouraged by public and private dialogue with key partners such as the policy makers, the media, the academy and researchers, the civil society, business associations and professional societies. For the latter, it was illustrated during the Conference how the Russian Association of Statisticians (RASt), a non-governmental professional organisation recently established, could be instrumental for establishing partnerships among the data and statistical communities and for communicating the value of official statistics. It was also mentioned that specific training courses on communication (i.e. drafting press releases, speaking to the media, statistical outreach) and communication and advocacy material could be respectively organised and developed at regional level in Russian language.

Main conclusions and proposed key actions:

- Developing common communication guidelines and strategies across the EECCA region upon the comparative advantages of official statistics for the monitoring of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- Improving partnership with academic institutions and the data communities aiming at promoting and sustaining the modernization and integration of statistics;
- Engaging policy makers and other stakeholders through enhanced communication strategies and advocacy for the appropriation of the necessary financial and human resources, infrastructure and technologies from national own resources for the production of official statistics and eventually the transformation of official statistics;
- Establishing consolidated national statistical strategic plans and work programmes for official statistics production and dissemination through a process involving users and including all producers of official statistics; In that respect expanding the participation in existing statistical advisory committees to all major user communities at national level (i.e. Statistical Council) and actively engaging them in the development and monitoring of these programmes;
- Identifying at regional and national level “champions” among policy makers, researchers, business community, international and regional organisations, and other stakeholders to advocate for the modernisation and integration of official statistics;
- Developing and implementing at regional and national level educational programmes to increase data literacy of users and their capability to use statistics effectively in their own decisions (see also capacity building and training);
- Developing comprehensive statistical dissemination policies and implementing modern data dissemination tools such as user-friendly web-based databases, including self-tabulation tools, complemented with standardized metadata, new visualisation tools, data maps and geo-referenced information based on existing global and regional initiatives such as the ECE communication and dissemination initiative;
- Enhancing the availability of and accessibility to anonymised micro-data for research purposes and implementing the open data initiative based on good practices identified across the EECCA region (e.g. Moldova);
- Gradually, through the standardisation and rationalization of production processes, including expanded use of alternative data sources (i.e. administrative records and Big Data), engaging human, technical and financial resources, released from the routine production, in strengthening analytical and communication capacity coordinate by a dedicated organisational unit at the national statistical office; This transformation could be supported by initiatives such as the ESCAP Resource Facility which aims at supporting national statistical systems to undertake analytical and research studies for developing economic statistics;

- Exploring at regional and national level the implementation of modern data dissemination and communication channels such as mobile devices and social media based on national best practices identified in the EECCA region.

Integration

It was stressed that the transformation of official statistics calls upon more integrated statistical systems and moving away from traditional ‘silo’ approach of statistical agencies and related production processes. It was mentioned that institutional arrangements for the modernisation and integration of statistical systems depend greatly upon the existing and future legal environment, the coordination and governance arrangements, the ICT infrastructure as well as the available human and financial resources. Participants acknowledged that integrated systems contribute to, but in return also benefit from, effective national coordination and management mechanisms, and the use of standard tools, methods and technologies that eventually can be shared within and across national statistical systems. Furthermore, it was noted that advancing common statistical business architecture in the EECCA region and beyond may further facilitate the global and regional coordination of capacity building programmes through standardization of various segments of the production processes as well as the development and sharing of know-how, and IT infrastructure and tools.

It was also acknowledged that strategic development plans are the proper vehicles to set up the road maps to modernisation that should be translated into operational programmes. It was stressed that proper quality management framework and practices are required to ensure that throughout the modernisation process, statistical information remains fit-for-purpose. Thus, quality considerations should support the modernisation process and therefore be embedded in any initiative and strategy related to the transformation of official statistics. In that respect, it was suggested that every national statistical office should setup a specialized horizontal corporate service unit for planning, integration of production processes, quality management and monitoring and methodology.

Participants mentioned that noticeable progress in terms of institutional and organisational frameworks and integration of national statistical systems has been achieved in the region thanks the support of multilateral and bilateral partners based on the Generic Law for Official Statistics (GLOS) and the implementation of tools developed by the High-level Group on Modernisation of Official Statistics (HLG-MOS) such as GSBPM. However, there is a need from regional and global organisations to further work on international methodology, nomenclatures and guidelines to ensure consistent approach to classifying, measuring and reporting of statistical data and metadata such as for more integrated business, environmental and household statistical frameworks that eventually would benefit to the compilation of SDG Indicators.

The situation with regard to the use of secondary data sources for statistical purposes differs to a large extent from one country to another. As commonly acknowledged, making use of administrative data requires sound legal base, well-established interaction between data owners and the NSOs and eventually NSOs’ ability to influence administrative data structure, classifications and definitions applied. Concerning Big Data, not much work has been conducted so far in the region. It was recognised that the potential of Big Data should be carefully explored at global and regional level but that ultimately such secondary data sources would not fully replace traditional statistical data harvested through surveys and census but rather complement them (see also strategic area “innovation and modernisation”). An issue of concern however was how to engage with third party information while maintaining public trust in Official Statistics without compromising the adherence to the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, and when relevant the European statistics Code of Practice.

Main conclusions and proposed key actions:

- Developing institutional arrangements and governance schemes that are needed to address the modernization and integration of the NSS including the legal environment, coordination and governance arrangements, ICT network infrastructure, and human and financial resources;

- Mapping existing business processes, technology architecture, information systems and capabilities using available generic tools such as those developed under the auspices of the High-level Group for the Modernisation of Official Statistics (GSBPM) and making the necessary adjustments aiming at streamlining statistical production processes and eventually improving quality of deliveries, efficiency and effectiveness
- Advancing standardisation of the components of statistical production within and across national statistical systems using for example the Common Statistical Production Architecture (CSPA) aiming at creating a favourable environment for the modernisation of national statistical systems and in particular for enhancing the standardisation of technical infrastructure and interoperability of IT tools;
- Reconsidering the structure and organisation of the NSO in order to reflect the changes in production processes and data sources; in that respect exploring the possibility to create dedicated organisational units within the NSO dealing with planning, integration of production processes, quality management and monitoring and methodology;
- Strengthening, expanding and regionally and internationally supported basic data and integrated statistics programmes like the household survey programmes, migration and population statistics, business and other economic survey programmes, censuses and the International Comparison Program (CPI);
- Enhancing the access to administrative records and registers and exploring initiatives for multi-source and mixed-mode data collection and processing aiming at improving quality of final deliveries, efficiency gains and reducing response burden; the 2020 round of population and housing census could be an excellent opportunity to implement the mix-mode approach.

Innovation and modernization

The presentations and discussions under this thematic area explored different scenarios for harnessing the innovative and transformational power of ICT. In that respect the discussions tackled the issue of formulating an innovation and modernisation strategy for official statistics at national level and the role of the global and regional statistical systems to advance this vision. Participants discussed the modalities for the transfer and sharing of technological and managerial skills on modern and innovative data collection, production and dissemination technology, including geo-spatial information and mobile devices, at and between the national, regional and global level. It was also mentioned that this topic was rarely discussed at global and regional level but would definitely deserve particular attention in the near future at strategic as well as technical level. It was broadly acknowledged that further integration of statistical systems and standardisation of processes based on the Common Statistical Production Architecture (CSPA) was a prerequisite for harnessing the innovative and transformational power of modern technologies for the production of official statistics, from the data collection to dissemination.

Some good practices were presented by Azerbaijan and Belarus on how IT can be used in order to streamline production processes, improve quality of final deliveries, reach out a larger number of users with different needs, and eventually reduce the burden on respondents. It was noted however that the technical transformation of official statistics must be accompanied by the strengthening of specific know-how and the redeployment of human resources along with the reorganisation of the NSO. It became evident that cooperation among producers of official statistics at global and regional level, and continuous interaction with the data communities, users and other stakeholders would stimulate the development of sound technological architecture based on the principles of standardisation, interoperability and shared IT services and infrastructure; including common platforms for data storage, analysis and processing and a common secure IT network for data exchange.

It was also stressed that the possibility to expand the use of administrative data should be promoted and the incorporation of Big Data into the production of official statistics fully explored. It was acknowledged that Big Data can potentially be integrated with existing data systems (mix-mode) but that would probably never replace fully traditional statistical data collection systems and the use of administrative data in the production of official statistics.

Main conclusions and proposed key actions:

- Advancing standardisation of the components of statistical production within and across national statistical systems using common statistical production architecture (CSPA) aiming at mainstreaming statistical processes and eventually creating the favourable environment for the implementation of standardised IT infrastructure and tools initiatives;
- Setting up governance and coordination mechanisms at regional level (EECCA) to promote, develop and mainstream innovative technologies and tools for the production of official statistics such as user-friendly data extraction and visualization tools, and e-data collection and processing technologies aiming at expanding the outreach of statistics, realising cost efficiencies, improving effectiveness, securing timeliness and data quality as well as reducing response burden;
- Developing continental and/or regional repositories of open source software (e.g. seasonal adjustment, outlier detection and visualisation) with dedicated deployment and operational support (e.g. helpdesk);
- Exploring the feasibility of regional centres in charge of maintaining and lending hardware and mobile devices for temporary deployment in the framework of specific data collection and processing activities such as population, housing, agricultural and business census operations;
- For external trade statistics and migration statistics, further developing data and metadata clearing warehouses for statistical purposes, aiming at facilitating mirror statistics exercises between partner countries in the EECCA region; in that perspective, promoting statistical data and metadata exchange standards such as SDMX and HTML.

Capacity building and training

Capacity building programmes and projects are conducted in the EECCA region under the auspices of various multilateral and bilateral partners. As mentioned earlier, EECCA countries, with the exception of Eastern Europe countries, are affiliated with 2 UN regional commissions, namely ECE and ESCAP and some of them with 2 important sub-regional organisations involved in statistical activities (i.e. CIS and EEC). Furthermore, Eastern Europe and Caucasus countries are benefitting from extensive assistance from Eurostat through the European Neighbourhood Policy (ENP). EFTA but also the World Bank (ECASTAT), UNFPA and ILO, among others, are strongly committed to contribute to the development of statistical capacity in the region. However, discussions during the 2 days of the Conference illustrated that there is a need from the donor side to better coordinate capacity building activities and that in this respect, existing coordination mechanisms and tools could be strengthened. It was acknowledged that the outcome and recommendations from global assessments (Eurostat, EFTA and ECE) and the results of the annual coordination survey (Eurostat and ECE) are excellent instruments respectively for the identification of priorities in terms of capacity building and for sharing information about forthcoming and past technical cooperation activities. It remains that the national statistical office should take a stronger coordination role within the national statistical system and gradually ensure that technical capacity building and cooperation activities to be less donor-oriented and more demand-driven.

Participants welcomed the announcement from Kazakhstan to setup a Russian speaking countries statistical training centre in Almaty. Kazakhstan, not only will offer the infrastructure, but is committed to share with colleagues in the region and beyond capacities and know-how accumulated during years of cooperation with multilateral and bilateral partners in Russian and English languages. Global and regional organisations may contribute to its implementation as well as its integration into

existing networks such as the SIAP Network for the Coordination of Statistical Training in Asia and the Pacific and a global network that will be established in the framework of the UN Development Account 10th tranche (2016-2019). It was also proposed that the training centre gradually develops into a knowledge centre sharing training documentation and material on-line and developing e-learning courses in Russian and, when relevant, English languages. It was suggested when developing the training programme to take into account the curricula already proposed by universities and other higher schools such as the *National Academy for Statistics, Accounting and Audit* (Ukraine) and the *Moscow Higher School of Economics*.

Main conclusions and proposed key actions:

- Conducting at regular intervals reviews (e.g. global assessments) assessing the institutional, organisational and technical capacity of national statistical systems to produce high quality statistics in line with international and European standards and providing recommendations to be incorporated into the strategic statistical plans and annual work programmes;
- Coordinating and aligning capacity building and training programmes with existing strategic statistical plans and annual work programmes, including recommendations for improvement provided from reviews and assessments;
- Reinforcing and supporting the role of the national statistical office as focal point and national coordinator of capacity building activities and technical cooperation projects in the field of statistics;
- Organising at regular interval strategic workshops and seminars at global and regional level for the development and standardisation of IT architecture and tools in support of official statistics;
- Strengthening the statistical curricula proposed by universities and high schools in the region (e.g. *National Academy for Statistics, Accounting and Audit* and the *Moscow Higher School of Economics*) and supporting the initiative from Kazakhstan to setup a Russian speaking countries statistical training centre in Almaty;
- Exploring jointly the possibility with global and regional organisations and other partners the possibility to further develop the statistical training centre in Almaty into a knowledge platform sharing training documentation and material on-line, developing e-learning courses in Russian language and eventually exploring the possibility to create a regional repositories of open source software (cloud computing) with dedicated deployment and operational support (e.g. helpdesk);
- Complementing existing statistical training programmes and university curricula with specific courses related to modernisation and integration of official statistics such as change management, e-data collection, Big Data and data science; geo-referenced statistics, integrated production, data analysis and visualisation, communication, quality management and, last but not least, statistical literacy;
- Exploring possible governance structure and operational mechanisms for pooling human resources and technical infrastructure at regional level such as tablet for geo-referenced census operations within and across national statistical systems.

Agenda

Thursday, 6 October 2016

Registration (09:00 – 09:30)

Welcome and opening (09:30 – 10:30)

- *Ms. Inna Medvedeva, National Statistical Committee, Belarus (10')*
- *Ms. Ekaterina Paniklova, UNDP Deputy Resident Representative, Belarus (15')*
- *Ms. Zeynep Orhun, UNESCAP (15')*
- *Mr. Gabriel Gamez, UNSD (20')*
including outline of the Transformative Agenda

Tea/coffee break (10:30 – 11:00)

Session 1: Measuring and communicating the value of statistics in support of the modernisation and transformation of official statistics
11:00-12:30

Chair: *Mr. Vadym Pishcheiko, State Statistics Service, Ukraine*

Presentations:

- *Ms. Ariunzaya Ayush, National Bureau of Statistics, Mongolia (15')*
- *Mr. Alexey Ponomarenko, National Research University Higher School of Economics, Russia (15')*
- *Mr. Tengiz Tsekvava, National Statistics Office, Georgia (15')*
- *Mr. Stepan Mnatsakanyan, National Statistical Service, Armenia (15')*

Questions and Answers (30')

Lunch break (12:30-14:00)

Session 2: Mainstreaming technological development in data collection, processing and dissemination: good practices and challenges
14:00-15:30

Chair: *Mr. Vladimir Sokolin, CIS-Stat*

Presentations:

- *Ms. Irina Kangro, National Statistical Committee, Belarus (15')*
- *Mr. Yusif Yusifov, State Statistical Committee, Azerbaijan (15')*
- *Ms. Stela Derivolcov, National Bureau of Statistics, Moldova (15')*
- *Ms. Gulnora Hasanzoda, Agency on Statistics, Tajikistan (15')*

Questions and Answers (30')

Tea/coffee break (15:30-16:00)

Session 3: Developing a collective vision for advancing the transformation of statistics at global, regional and national level
16:00-17:30

Chair: *Mr. Igor Ulianov, Federal State Statistics Service, Russia*

Presentations:

- *Mr. Kairat Orunkhanov, Committee on Statistics, Kazakhstan (15')*
- *Ms. Claudia Junker, Eurostat (15')*
- *Ms. Zeynep Orhun, UNESCAP (15')*
- *Mr. Dzhanbulat Baizhumanov, Eurasian Economic Commission (15')*

Questions and Answers (30')

Friday, 7 October 2016

Session 4a: Breakout Session
09:15-10:45

Group 1 Measuring and communicating the value of statistics in support of the modernisation and transformation of official statistics

Group 2 Mainstreaming technological development in data collection, processing and dissemination: good practices and challenges

Group 3 Developing a collective vision for advancing the transformation of statistics at global, regional and national level

Tea/coffee break (10:45-11:15)

Session 4b: Report in Plenary
11:15-12:30

Moderator: *Mr. Volker Täube, EFTA*

Lunch break (12:30-14:00)

Conclusions and the way forward (14:00 – 15:30)

Moderator: *Mr. Priit Potisepp, Estonia*

Panellists:

- *Ms. Inna Medvedeva, National Statistical Committee, Belarus*
- *Mr. Stepan Mnatsakanyan, National Statistical Service, Armenia*
- *Mr. Kairat Orunkhanov, Committee on Statistics, Kazakhstan*
- *Mr. Gabriel Gamez, UNSD*
- *Ms. Zeynep Orhun, UNESCAP*
- *Mr. Alexey Ponomarenko, National Research University Higher School of Economics, Russia*

Closing and farewell (15:30 – 16:00)

Refreshment (16:00)

Guidelines for the Breakout Session

The Conference will cover the five thematic areas of the Transformative Agenda and be organized in three substantive sessions (sessions 1-3) and one breakout session (session 4).

- For each plenary session, three contributors will make a short presentation (15 minutes, maximum 10 slides). These presentations are focusing on the major challenges, issues, opportunities, priorities and identified good practices and serve as input for following discussions in three parallel groups during the breakout session.
- For the breakout session, groups will have 1 hour 30 minutes to discuss a specific set of questions prepared in advance. Each group will nominate a rapporteur; preferably from a country that does not have a specific role otherwise.
- The groups should focus on the main challenges and the related actions, which are relevant to the transformation of the system of official statistics at the national, regional and global levels.
- The rapporteur of each group will have 10-15 minutes to present back in plenary the outcome and conclusions of the discussions in the breakout session, followed by 30 minutes of general discussions. Presentations by the rapporteurs and the plenary discussion will be moderated by the facilitator.
- Participants from bilateral and multilateral partner organisations and other stakeholders may decide in which group they wish to participate.

Groups for the Breakout Session (provisional)

Group 1	Group 2	Group 3
Measuring and communicating the value of statistics in support of the modernisation and transformation of official statistics	Mainstreaming technological development in data collection, processing and dissemination: good practices and challenges	Developing a collective vision for advancing the transformation of statistics at global, regional and national level
Armenia (1) Belarus (1) Georgia (1) Kazakhstan (1) Kyrgyzstan (1) Moldova (1) Mongolia (1) Russia (HSE) Ukraine (1)	Armenia (2) Azerbaijan (1) Belarus (2) Kyrgyzstan (2) Moldova (2) Mongolia (2) Ukraine (2) Tajikistan (1) Uzbekistan	Azerbaijan (2) Belarus (3) Estonia Georgia (2) Kazakhstan (2) Kyrgyzstan (3) Russia (ROSSTAT) Tajikistan (2) Ukraine (3)

Questions for the breakout session

Group 1 Measuring and communicating the value of statistics in support of the modernisation and transformation of official statistics

1. What are the characteristics of a successful and modern communication strategy that could convey statistical information to all users, decision makers and stakeholders in a timely and efficient way ensuring the correct and easy interpretation of the disseminated data?
2. To what extent the national statistical systems are exploiting and promoting the comparative advantages of official statistics? Which actions should be undertaken first and foremost to harness these advantages?
3. What concrete measures need to be implemented in the short and medium term that could efficiently communicate the value of official statistics to the government and other stakeholders in order to generate support?
4. What are the characteristics of a highly qualified, efficient work force to support the modernization of the statistical system? What should be done to motivate the employees to embrace institutional, organizational and technological changes that are necessary for the modernization of official statistics?

Group 2 Mainstreaming technological development in data collection, processing and dissemination: good practices and challenges

1. How does the access to the internet, mobile devices and cloud technology motivate investing in new online national data repository and innovative dissemination technologies such as social media or mobile applications? What is the experience of the EECCA countries?
2. How could the transfer and sharing of innovative technologies and technical skills for the production of official statistics, including data collection and dissemination, be promoted and implemented at the sub-regional, regional and global level?
3. What kind of coordination/cooperation mechanism would be needed to foster development of standard IT architecture and technologies across the EECCA countries?
4. How could the data communities at regional, sub-regional and country level be mobilised to secure access to administrative and other secondary data sources for the production of official statistics and ultimately to promote the open data initiative?

Group 3 Developing a collective vision for advancing the transformation of statistics at global, regional and national level

1. What are the main drivers of the transformation and modernization of national statistical systems? Are there specific regional and national factors and circumstances in the EECCA countries that require modernizing official statistics? What are the main challenges, opportunities and possible actions?
2. How can National Strategies for the Development of Statistics (e.g. NSDS) and other national and regional strategic development plans address and sustain the coordination, transformation and modernisation of official statistics?
3. What partnership arrangements could be developed between statistical institutions at global, regional and national level to enable the review and assessment of institutional, organisational and financial frameworks; data assets and gaps; and production processes with the objective to support the transformation of official statistics in the EECCA countries?
4. What forms of training and technical capacity building are most relevant and could work best at the different levels of maturity of the statistical system? How could e-learning and other technology driven training programmes be incorporated?

List of Participants

Country	Name	Position	Organisation e-mail address
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