



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General
2 December 2021

Original: English

Statistical Commission

Fifty-third session

1–4 March 2022

Item 3 (d) of the provisional agenda*

**Items for discussion and decision: regional
statistical development**

Report of the Economic Commission for Europe on regional statistical development

Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2021/224 and past practices, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) on regional statistical development. In its report, the Commission highlights the major statistical activities in the ECE region that may be of interest to the global statistical community, presents activities to support member States in meeting the challenges that have arisen as a result of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and describes progress made in regional statistical work in response to internationally agreed development goals, such as the Sustainable Development Goals, climate change, hazardous events and disasters. The Statistical Commission is invited to comment on the work undertaken in the ECE region and to identify synergies and opportunities for the interregional exchange of experiences.

* E/CN.3/2022/1.



Report of the Economic Commission for Europe on regional statistical development

I. Introduction

1. At its fifty-second session, held from 1 to 3 and on 5 March 2021, the Statistical Commission requested the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) to submit a report on statistical development in the ECE region¹ to the Commission at its fifty-third session, to be held from 1 to 4 March 2022.

2. The Statistical Commission had previously considered the regional statistical development in the ECE region in 2017. In that report ([E/CN.3/2017/6](#)), the Commission had noted the potential global applicability and usefulness of standards and guidelines developed by the Conference of European Statisticians, including the Generic Statistical Business Process Model, the Common Statistical Production Architecture, and methodological guidelines on measuring human capital, migration, poverty, global production, data integration, statistical business registers and climate change-related statistics, especially for the implementation of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

3. In the present report, ECE highlights the work undertaken by the Conference of European Statisticians that may be of interest to the global statistical community, covering topics such as core values of official statistics, the measurement of the value of official statistics, data stewardship, new forms of employment, poverty, social exclusion, statistics on children and youth, the circular economy and statistical modernization. In the report, ECE also presents activities to support member States in meeting the challenges arising as a result of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) pandemic and describes progress made in regional statistical work in response to internationally agreed development goals, such as the Sustainable Development Goals, climate change, hazardous events and disasters.

4. The objective of the statistical work programme of ECE is to advance official statistics at the national and international levels in support of evidence-based policymaking and of the assessment of progress made towards the Sustainable Development Goals, and to ensure the coordination of statistical activities undertaken in the ECE region. The work is steered by the Conference of European Statisticians² and its Bureau. The coordination of statistical work in Europe has its roots in the League of Nations. The first Conference on Statistics was held in Geneva in 1928 and led to a series of meetings of statistical experts. The Conference will hold its seventieth plenary session in June 2022.

5. The ECE region consists of countries with very diverse levels of economic, social and statistical development. Twenty-seven of its member States are members of the European Union. Many member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) are included in the ECE region, and, since the mid-1990s, all OECD member countries participate in the work of the Conference of European Statisticians. Most countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central

¹ The ECE region includes 56 countries from Europe, North America (Canada and the United States of America) and Central Asia (Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan), and Israel.

² Members of the Conference of European Statisticians include the 56 States members of ECE and all member countries of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development. Argentina, Brazil, Mongolia, Philippines and other countries also participate in the work of the Conference.

Asia are supported by the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-Stat).

6. Given the institutional landscape in the ECE region, close international coordination and cooperation is crucially important. Many of its activities are undertaken jointly between ECE and its main partners, Eurostat and OECD. ECE also coordinates its work with the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States, the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the European Free Trade Association (EFTA) and the World Bank. Good collaboration exists with the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, the regional commissions of the United Nations, and other United Nations agencies, such as the International Labour Organization, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women), the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction, the United Nations Environment Programme, the United Nations Initiative on Global Geospatial Information Management, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, the World Meteorological Organization, the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the United Nations Population Fund and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF). In total, ECE works together with about 25 international partners in various statistical areas.

7. ECE focuses its capacity development activities on the countries of Eastern Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, in close collaboration with partners. The activities include global assessments of national statistical systems (conducted jointly with Eurostat and EFTA), training workshops and advisory services in a broad range of statistical areas related to the ongoing statistical work of ECE and areas in which ECE has expertise.

8. The work of ECE benefits from the active involvement of experts from member States and international partners in developing guidance on emerging statistical issues that can be applied in countries with different levels of statistical capacity. The areas in which ECE undertakes methodological work are shown in the figure below.

Statistical work programme of the Economic Commission for Europe



Source: Economic Commission for Europe; see https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2021-12/11%20Statistical%20Programme_2022_approved.pdf.

9. The statistical work of ECE is aligned with the 2030 Agenda. Information about its planned activities, including the list of meetings, can be found in the annual statistical work programme of ECE.³ The recent results of this work are presented in the following sections.

II. Impact of and response to the coronavirus disease pandemic

10. The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on the work of national statistical offices in the region. The statistical offices have faced a considerable increase in demand for statistics to manage the pandemic and its impacts, as well as

³ See <https://unece.org/statistics/statistical-programme-2022>.

unprecedented obstacles to collecting data and producing statistics. They have risen to the challenge, showcasing the value of official statistics and delivering results under difficult circumstances. In the case of many statistical offices, the pandemic has been an accelerator for innovation to maintain business continuity in exceptional circumstances.

11. The pandemic has affected all areas of statistics and prompted responses in every area of work of ECE, in particular with regard to innovation and building the resilience of statistical systems. All expert meetings and capacity development activities held since the pandemic broke out have addressed the impact of COVID-19 in their specific thematic area. In addition, to share experience and build capacity, several dedicated webinars were organized on:

(a) The provision of statistics and geostatistical data for managing the pandemic;⁴

(b) Data collection,⁵ and data dissemination and communication⁶ under the conditions of the pandemic, including a series of webinars on producing consumer price indices under lockdown;⁷

(c) Human resources management and training issues;⁸

(d) The role of national statistical offices in the changing world and the business continuity of official statistics, as discussed in a joint informal session of the Conference of European Statistics and the OECD Committee on Statistics and Statistical Policy, held in June 2020;⁹

(e) Sustaining organizational and product innovation in national statistical offices after the pandemic, as discussed in a joint informal session of the Conference of European Statistics and the OECD Committee on Statistics and Statistical Policy, held in June 2021.¹⁰

12. In order to support statistical production processes during the crisis caused by the pandemic, ECE has developed a wiki platform on COVID-19 and official statistics¹¹ to guide statistical producers to existing and newly developed resources from ECE and its partners. The platform provides national statistical offices and international organizations with a space to share experience and developments. It contains resources both on new statistical needs to support countries in managing the crisis, and on emergency measures to ensure the continuity of statistical production in core areas of economic, social and demographic statistics, such as national accounts, consumer prices, population censuses and household surveys.

III. Statistical guidelines and recommendations

13. The statistical guidelines and recommendations of ECE are prepared jointly with its main partners and are available on the ECE website.¹² The following are

⁴ See <https://statswiki.unece.org/display/GFGS/Webinar+on+Geo-statistical+Responses+to+the+COVID-19+Crisis>.

⁵ See <https://unece.org/info/events/event/348355>.

⁶ See <https://unece.org/info/events/event/348351>.

⁷ See <https://unece.org/info/events/event/348358>.

⁸ See <https://unece.org/info/events/event/348352>.

⁹ See <https://unece.org/statistics/events/CES2020>.

¹⁰ See <https://unece.org/statistics/events/CES2021>.

¹¹ See <https://statswiki.unece.org/display/COV/Home>.

¹² See <https://unece.org/publications/statistics>.

examples of the latest guidelines that may be of interest to the global statistical community:

(a) The *Framework on Waste Statistics* (2021) is a conceptual framework to harmonize international waste statistics and provide better information for managing waste and monitoring the implementation of important waste-related policy frameworks;

(b) The *Guidelines on Assessing the Quality of Administrative Sources for Use in Censuses* (2021) provides guidance to producers of population and housing censuses on how to assess the quality of administrative data for use in the census;

(c) The *Guide on Producing Consumer Price Indices under Lockdown* (2021) presents recommendations and emerging best practices in data collection, data calculation methods and data communication for the consumer price index under lockdown conditions, based on experience during the COVID-19 pandemic;

(d) The second edition of the *Road Map on Statistics for Sustainable Development Goals* (2022) provides members of national statistical systems and other stakeholders with guidance on measuring progress towards the Goals and its targets, taking into account recent challenges and developments in that regard. The second edition of the Road Map builds on the first edition from 2017, which has been widely used in countries and international organizations;

(e) The publication *Approaches to Measuring Social Exclusion* (2021) consolidates current and emerging good practices in measuring social exclusion and assessing the potential of those practices for delivering comparable results;

(f) The *Guide to Sharing Economic Data in Official Statistics* (2021) is designed to facilitate the exchange and sharing of economic data to ensure the correct measurement of global production and provide meaningful data on the activities of multinational enterprises. It contains analyses of concrete examples of data exchange and obstacles and provides guidance, tools and principles to overcome the barriers to data sharing;

(g) The *Conference of European Statisticians' Set of Core Climate Change-related Indicators and Statistics Using the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting* (2021) and its implementation guidelines include descriptions of the 44 climate change-related indicators recommended for implementation in the ECE region, the selection criteria for the indicators, the underlying statistics and the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting accounts, and guide countries in establishing their own national sets of climate change-related indicators;

(h) The publication *Poverty Measurement: Guide to Data Disaggregation* (2020) consolidates good practices in disaggregating poverty indicators and assessing their robustness, and provides recommendations to statistical offices for the production, analysis and dissemination of disaggregated poverty measures;

(i) The *Guidance on Communicating Gender Statistics* (2020) provides national statistical offices with assistance in communicating to policymakers and the public on six key themes: communicating about the gender pay gap, communicating statistics on gender-based violence, the language of gender in statistical communication, maintaining impartiality when communicating gender statistics, interacting with users of gender statistics, and addressing gaps in gender statistics;

(j) The *Satellite Account for Education and Training: Compilation Guide* (2020) refers to the establishment of a framework for a satellite account based on expenditure related to education and training, and includes a discussion of the methodology and the necessary data sources. The aim of the guide is to help countries

to construct internationally comparable satellite accounts for education and training and to improve the cost-based measurement of human capital;

(k) The *Strategic Communications Framework for Statistical Institutions* (2019) provides advice and material to support the implementation of strategic communication frameworks by official statistics organizations. It addresses questions of branding, crisis management, issue management and necessary skill sets, and includes a model on communication maturity;

(l) The publication *Measuring International Labour Mobility* (2018) provides practical guidance on the definitions, methods and data sources that can be used to measure labour mobility and includes country case studies;

(m) The *Guidance on Modernizing Statistical Legislation* (2019) contains a description of common elements and requirements for modern legal frameworks to guarantee the flexibility, independence, integrity and accountability of national statistical systems and the high quality of official statistics.

14. A key avenue for statistical development in the ECE region is the conduct of in-depth reviews of selected statistical areas in order to identify gaps and address emerging issues. The reviews often lead to work on developing new statistics and guidelines, sharing good practices or developing common tools and standards for statistical production. All in-depth review papers can be found on the web page of ECE.¹³ The most recent reviews are on:

- Collaboration with private data providers (2022, paper by Poland et al.)
- Measuring the non-observed/informal economy (2021, paper by Mexico, IMF and ECE)
- Subjective poverty measures (2021, paper by Poland)
- New forms of employment (2021, paper by Canada)
- Measuring the circular economy (2020, paper by Finland et al.)
- Measuring well-being in the era of “digital society”: implications for official statistics (2020, paper by Canada)
- The role of statistical community in climate action (2020, paper by the Conference of European Statisticians steering group on climate change-related statistics)

IV. Methodological work on emerging issues

A. Core values and fundamental principles of official statistics

15. Improving the governance and legal framework of statistical production is fundamental to producing high-quality statistics and is a priority for many countries in the ECE region and beyond. ECE has a long history and expertise in supporting national statistical offices in this endeavour, beginning in 1991, when the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics were first developed. The Principles were endorsed by ECE in 1992 and were subsequently adopted by the Statistical Commission in 1994 and by the General Assembly at the highest political level in 2014.

16. Over the years, ECE has worked with Eurostat and EFTA to strengthen institutional frameworks for official statistics, especially in the countries of Eastern

¹³ See <https://unece.org/statistics/ces/statistical-development-through-depth-reviews>.

Europe, the Caucasus and Central Asia, on the basis of global assessments of national statistical systems. The *Generic Law on Official Statistics for Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia* was developed together with EFTA and Eurostat as part of a United Nations Development Account project with support from the Statistics Division, and, in 2019, the *Guidance on Modernizing Statistical Legislation* was published.

17. The documents, which are aligned with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics, provide guidance on developing the statistical legislation needed to support the modernization of statistical systems and offer the full value of official statistics. The *Generic Law on Official Statistics* has also been adapted by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) into the *Generic Law on Official Statistics for Latin America* and by the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA) into the *Guide on the Generic Law for Official Statistics in the Arab Countries*, and has fed into the update of the Handbook of Statistical Organization, which was endorsed at the forty-eighth session of the Statistical Commission. As of November 2021, at least 24 countries from all over the world have revised their statistical legislation based on the guidance in these documents. Since 2020, legal and managerial experts have held regular meetings to continue working on this topic.

18. In 2021, the national statistical offices in the ECE region initiated a discussion about the core values of official statistics to find an effective response to the rapidly increasing challenges that they faced. The Conference of European Statisticians, noting the importance of explicitly recognizing, upholding and demonstrating the core values of official statistics, established a task team to develop a list of core values, to identify a set of behaviours to “live the values” and to map them against the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.

19. ECE has also been examining the value added by official statistics from customers’ perspective. There is an increasing awareness within the community of producers of official statistics that the benefits and value of their products derive from meeting the needs of society. Official statistics are not the only source of statistical information and consumers justifiably want to know why they should choose and trust them over other sources. Governments and other funders want to know whether the resources invested in official statistics offer a good return on their investment. Official statisticians want their efforts to be recognized and understood.

20. Driven by these factors, the Recommendations for Promoting, Measuring and Communicating the Value of Official Statistics were developed in 2018. This was followed by a report on measuring the value of official statistics, in which a user-centric approach to determining what constitutes value is proposed.

B. Data stewardship

21. The role of national statistical offices is changing in response to new demands and opportunities, including as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. Since 2018, the Conference of European Statisticians has had ongoing discussions on data stewardship and the role of national statistical offices in the new data ecosystems, taking into account outcomes of similar discussions at meetings at the regional and global levels.

22. In early 2021, the Conference of European Statisticians initiated work to develop definitions of “data governance” and “data stewardship” in the context of official statistics and to identify a minimum set of core responsibilities for a data steward. This could provide a basis for developing common principles and recommendations at a later stage. National statistical offices can position themselves in the new data ecosystem in various ways and have a range of possibilities with regard to data stewardship, from minimal engagement to full stewardship. They are

at different starting points because some already have cross-Government roles, but there is no one-size-fits-all solution. The initiative allows the national statistical offices to move forward at their own pace and to take on different degrees of stewardship roles.

23. A strong link to the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics is maintained to clarify what statistical offices can and cannot do to avoid undermining trust in official statistics. This work is carried out in close coordination with the Working Group on Data Stewardship, in order to avoid duplication, and builds on outcomes of the work done by that group at the global level. The draft definitions of the main terms and of the main responsibilities are scheduled to be ready for consultation in the first half of 2022 and the final report in June 2023.

C. Modernization of official statistics

24. At its forty-seventh session, the Statistical Commission agreed that the progress of the ECE High-level Group for the Modernization of Official Statistics should be reported on regularly (see E/2016/24, decision 47/103 (g)). As a result, an overview of ECE activities relating to the modernization of official statistics was submitted in a background paper to the Commission at its forty-eighth session.

25. Producers of official statistics are facing many challenges from operating in a continuously changing environment. The demand for new, more timely and granular statistical data is always increasing, while budgets are under pressure. ECE works with countries to create models, standards, frameworks and guidelines to assist them in modernizing statistical organizations to meet those challenges. This work is steered by the High-level Group for the Modernization of Official Statistics, consisting of 13 committed chief statisticians and led by Canada. The work is carried out by four “modernization groups” through annual projects, workshops and sprints.

26. The ECE High-level Group oversees the development and maintenance of key standards and models that support statistical modernization, including the Generic Statistical Business Process Model,¹⁴ the Generic Activity Model for Statistical Organizations,¹⁵ the Generic Statistical Information Model¹⁶ and the Common Statistical Production Architecture.¹⁷ The models provide statistical offices with a universal language for developing common tools and are used as de facto standards throughout the world. The models are regularly reviewed and new versions are developed based on user feedback. Work on linking the Generic Statistical Business Process Model and the Generic Statistical Information Model was carried out in 2020.

27. Reusing statistical tools developed by colleagues, or developing such tools jointly, increases efficiency. The Sharing Tools Modernization Group supported and encouraged the practical implementation of the Common Statistical Production Architecture, a blueprint for statistical organizations which can easily be shared.

28. The Modernization Group on Capabilities and Communication is responsible for aspects of human resources management and training, and internal and external communication in statistical organizations. In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the focus of the work was changed to crisis management, internal communication, remote and hybrid working, and training and recruitment. The Group also works on

¹⁴ See <https://statswiki.unece.org/display/GSBPM/Generic+Statistical+Business+Process+Model>.

¹⁵ See <https://statswiki.unece.org/display/GAMSO/Generic+Activity+Model+for+Statistical+Organizations>.

¹⁶ See <https://statswiki.unece.org/display/gsim/Generic+Statistical+Information+Model>.

¹⁷ See <https://statswiki.unece.org/display/gsim/Generic+Statistical+Information+Model>.

data ethics and ethics management, as well as the development of guidelines on risk management for statistical organizations.

29. The Blue Skies Thinking Network is the innovation hub of the modernization work programme, through which emerging opportunities are sought for modernizing statistics. Discussions focus on areas that have the greatest potential to help statistical agencies to confront the COVID-19 pandemic, such as synthetic data sets, secure multiparty computation, COVID-19 joint biosecurity centre platforms, rapid survey systems and network data, as well as on facilitating the progression from experimentation to implementation in official statistics.

30. Every year, ECE supports two modernization projects to address the most urgent matters facing statistical offices and to produce tangible outputs and tools. Recent projects were on:

(a) Input privacy-preservation techniques, aimed at facilitating access, and combining and analysing privacy-sensitive data sources held by different parties;

(b) A synthetic data guide for national statistical organizations, which is a starter guide providing rich data in accordance with integrity and confidentiality imperatives;

(c) Machine learning for official statistics, to advance the sound and efficient use of machine learning in the production of official statistics;

(d) A strategic communication framework, to guide statistical offices in the development of a strategic approach to protect, enhance and promote the Organization's reputation and brand.

D. Measurement of forms of employment

31. Over the previous decade, the labour markets in many countries have been undergoing structural changes. New forms of employment have emerged, such as employment in the gig economy, platform work and teleworking. These developments have significant economic and social impacts and there is increased interest from policymakers in statistics to describe the developments in the labour market. As the global community looks ahead to post-COVID-19 recovery, new questions are being asked regarding the long-term effects of the pandemic on the prevalence of different forms of employment.

32. There is a lack of internationally agreed concepts and definitions on new forms of employment. In 2021, the Conference of European Statisticians started work on a conceptual framework for measuring new and emerging forms of employment, to help countries to produce relevant, coherent and internationally comparable statistics on forms of employment. The framework should identify and map the relationship between concepts related to new and established forms of employment, as well as existing statistical frameworks, and ensure that forms of employment are measured, described and classified consistently. The framework should be aligned with the International Classification of Status in Employment 2018 (ICSE-18).

E. Measurement of poverty and social exclusion

33. ECE promotes exchange of experience and methodological work on measuring poverty and inequalities, and supports the measurement of progress made towards Goal 1 on the reduction of poverty and Goal 10 on inequalities. A recent methodological publication, *Poverty Measurement: Guide to Data Disaggregation* (ECE, 2020), directly addresses data needs in accordance with the commitment under

the 2030 Agenda of leaving no one behind. It builds on the comprehensive Guide on Poverty Measurement (ECE, 2017) and provides direction on applying various data disaggregation approaches for measuring poverty, with the aim of improving the international comparability of poverty statistics.

34. The measurement of social exclusion complements the measurement of poverty by identifying groups of people who are not living in poverty but may be excluded in other ways, or who are experiencing multiple forms of exclusion. It can also draw attention to the deprivations and disadvantages that limit participation, rather than to the outcomes of those limitations, which may yield insights on appropriate interventions. In its 2021 report, *Approaches to Measuring Social Exclusion*, ECE consolidates current and emerging good practices in measuring social exclusion and in assessing their potential for delivering comparable results.

F. Statistics on children and youth

35. The global commitment to the 2030 Agenda and to the aim of leaving no one behind has highlighted the need for high-quality and internationally comparable data on children and youth. Such data are also needed greatly for monitoring the Convention on the Rights of the Child and for related national laws, policies, regulations and services. In 2020, ECE launched a joint initiative with UNICEF to improve the availability, quality and comparability of statistics on children and youth. The initiative includes the compilation of an inventory of international databases in that regard and the analysis of selected national contexts, in order to formulate recommendations for best practices on definitions, data collection and reporting. The focus is on three policy-relevant data gaps: violence against children; children and adolescents in institutional care; and children with disabilities.

G. Measurement of the circular economy

36. In many countries, including in the European Union, an increasing number of policy initiatives are aimed at establishing a circular economy. However, no single definition of a circular economy and how to measure it has been agreed upon internationally. In 2021, a task force was established to explore how to harmonize approaches for measuring the circular economy and provide a platform for exchange of experience and knowledge in this area, in close collaboration with the Statistics Division, OECD, Eurostat and other international organizations. The task force is working on practical guidelines for measuring the circular economy, including on clarifying the scope of measurement, key terms and definitions; identifying key statistics and indicators needed from the perspective of policy; identifying data sources for measuring the circular economy, with particular attention paid to the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting and the Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics; and describing the required institutional collaboration. The work is planned to be completed by June 2023.

V. Methodological work in support of internationally agreed development goals

A. Statistics for the Sustainable Development Goals

37. The work of the statistics subprogramme of ECE is fully aligned with the Sustainable Development Goals in support of national statistical offices as providers and national coordinators of statistics on the Goals. Two road maps on statistics for

the Goals have been prepared to guide countries in this area. The first edition of the *Road Map on Statistics for Sustainable Development Goals*, issued in 2017, was widely used in countries and international organizations. A second edition has been prepared in 2021 to reflect new information, lessons learned and emerging challenges. Practical tools continue to be developed and experienced shared to support countries in implementing the *Road Map*. The work is currently focused on improving data transmission from countries to custodian agencies and international databases and on providing tools to identify needs and priorities for capacity development.

38. In 2020, ECE launched its regional platform on statistics regarding the Goals,¹⁸ which consists of a knowledge hub and a dashboard and database of selected Goal indicators. The purposes of the platform are to communicate developments on measuring the Goals in the ECE region, provide easy access to up-to-date indicators on implementing the Goals and disseminate data and metadata. The platform serves a wide range of audiences interested in the Goals.

39. At its eighty-first session in 2019, ECE requested a yearly report on the implementation of the 2030 Agenda in the ECE region to support the annual discussions at the Regional Implementation Forum on Sustainable Development. The first report, published in 2020, included an overview of the situation and trends and showed the variation among countries in respect of selected indicators under each of the 17 Goals. The second report, *Is the UNECE Region on Track for 2030?*, published in 2021, provided an assessment of progress in the region through a common methodology used by the five regional commissions. The report also featured stories from United Nations country teams and agencies active in the region, which allowed a closer look at how various regional and country-level actions relate to sustainable development outcomes.

B. Climate change-related statistics

40. In 2018, the Statistical Commission considered the work carried out on climate change-related statistics on the basis of a joint report by the Statistics Division, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change and ECE. The Commission expressed support for the work on the core set of climate change-related indicators, welcomed the harmonized and coordinated efforts being undertaken by the Division and ECE in terms of methodological work and the development of indicators, and encouraged the continuation of those efforts.

41. The work of ECE on climate change-related statistics is led by a steering group chaired by the Netherlands and is carried out in close collaboration with the European Environment Agency, Eurostat, FAO, the International Energy Agency, OECD, the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, ECLAC and the Statistics Division. The work supports countries in making official statistics more useful for climate change policy, analysis and reporting and follows up on the 2014 Recommendations on Climate Change-Related Statistics by the Conference of European Statisticians. The results, which may be of interest globally, include:

(a) A paper published in June 2018 entitled “What do national statistical offices need to know about greenhouse gas inventories?”;

(b) The *Conference of European Statisticians’ Set of Core Climate Change-related Indicators and Statistics Using the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting*, developed by an ECE task force led by Italy and endorsed by the Conference of European Statisticians in 2020, guides countries on establishing national sets of climate change-related indicators through the provision of 44

¹⁸ See <https://w3.unece.org/sdghub>.

metadata sheets, a list of contextual indicators and possible disaggregation variables, as well as implementation guidelines;

(c) The paper entitled “In-depth review of the role of the statistical community in climate action”, in which it was concluded that the statistical community has to step up its efforts and engage much more actively in the complicated, multi-stakeholder landscape of data for climate action at the national and international levels;

(d) The Expert Forum for producers and users of climate change-related statistics, held annually since 2012, provides a platform for sharing experience, discussing concepts and measurement issues, and identifying areas for the development of practical guidance. At the 2021 edition of the Expert Forum, discussions were held, among other things, on measuring climate change vulnerability and adaptation, carbon footprints and consumption-based emissions, and good practices in producing, disseminating and using climate change-related statistics. Good practices presented at the Expert Forum are published on the ECE wiki platform;¹⁹

(e) The publication *Climate Change-Related Statistics in Practice 2021* contains a summary of plans and achievements by selected ECE countries, including their efforts to develop national climate change-related indicator sets.

42. In June 2021, at the plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians, discussions were held on the role of national statistical offices in providing statistics for climate action and addressing the significant information needs in a coherent and sustainable way. The Conference noted that producing climate change-related statistics and data requires systemic approaches, the linking of various statistical fields, innovation, collaboration across the national statistical system, and effective communication with users.

43. In response, a new ECE task force is being established to provide guidance on the role of national statistical offices in achieving national climate objectives, including concrete ways in which they can contribute to climate reporting, inform national policymaking and the public, and showcase what the statistical system already offers to support climate action.

C. Statistics for disaster risk reduction

44. In response to the growing demand for data in the context of the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015–2030, the Conference of European Statisticians started work on measuring hazardous events and disasters in 2015. Official statistics include vast amounts of relevant data, for example, on population, transport and infrastructure, that could contribute to disaster management and risk reduction but that are not used to their full potential.

45. In 2019, the Conference of European Statisticians endorsed the *Recommendations on the Role of Official Statistics in Measuring Hazardous Events and Disasters*, prepared by a task force led by Italy. The Conference continues to provide guidance on the practical implementation of the recommendations; support the statistical operationalization of terms, definitions and classifications used in disaster risk management; and develop a set of core statistics and indicators.

46. Recently, the task force has focused its activities on providing immediate support to guide statistical offices in dealing with the pandemic (e.g. through a wiki platform and webinars). In June 2021, the first global expert forum for producers and users of disaster-related statistics was organized in cooperation with all five regional

¹⁹ See <https://statswiki.unecce.org/display/GPCCS/Good+practices+on+climate+change+related+statistics>.

commissions, the Statistics Division and the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction. At the forum, participants identified a list of important areas of work, which will now be taken up by the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Disaster-related Statistics that was set up by the Statistical Commission in 2019 (see [E/2019/24](#), decision 50/116). These areas of work include improvement of the quality of key statistics (demographic, social, business, etc.), the development of methods to fill data gaps and the review of existing statistical classifications.

47. A task team is developing a set of core statistics and indicators related to disasters. The core indicators will be organized as an indicator framework, using the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific Disaster-related Statistics Framework as a starting point.

48. A statistical review and pilot testing of the proposed definitions and classification of hazards in the *Hazard Definition and Classification Review: Technical Report* of the United Nations Office for Disaster Risk Reduction and the International Science Council, as well as the accompanying hazard information profiles, are ongoing, involving interested countries.

VI. Action to be taken by the Statistical Commission

49. **The Commission is invited to comment on:**

(a) **Ongoing methodological work in the ECE region, such as that described in section IV of the present report, that would be useful to report to future sessions of the Commission;**

(b) **Areas in which the outcomes of the methodological work of ECE could be used as a basis for further work, including at the global level;**

(c) **Work of the High-level Group for the Modernization of Official Statistics of ECE and the implementation of statistical modernization standards and models beyond the ECE region through existing global initiatives;**

(d) **Synergies and opportunities for exchange of experience across regions.**
