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Eighth meeting of the Executive Committee of the
Statistical Conference of the Americas of the
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Santo Domingo, 22-24 October 2008

**PRELIMINARY PROPOSAL FOR AN INTEGRATED PRESENTATION OF
INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL WORK IN LATIN AMERICA
AND THE CARIBBEAN ***

* This report was prepared by the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC).

2008-588

A. BACKGROUND

At its fourth meeting, the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (ECLAC) agreed to request the Commission, as the secretariat of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, to continue to intensify its contacts with the Economic Commission for Europe (ECE) in its role as secretariat of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES), in order to share experiences on the development of the statistical programme and on the integrated presentation of statistical work in the region.¹ At its seventh meeting, the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, pursuant to the aforementioned request, welcomed "the initiative for an integrated presentation of regional statistical work in order to contribute to coordination and to the timely information of countries on the different statistical activities being carried out in the region, encourage the participation of the latter in such activities, avoid duplication of efforts and foster regional and international cooperation; also approves the establishment of an initiative group, coordinated by the secretariat, which will present a status report and a draft programme of work at the next meeting of the Executive Committee."²

An initial measure designed to fulfil the above goals was the creation of an initiative group, coordinated by ECLAC and consisting of the Pan American Health Organization (PAHO), the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB). This group has undertaken to conduct a pilot experiment, following the model of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES).³ The experiment involves setting up a database containing information provided by the aforementioned bodies, including the statistical activities they conduct. For this purpose, a form was designed in which they identify their various activities according to a predetermined classifier, describe the corresponding thematic area and the general and specific objectives pursued and list the activities planned for the current year and those being considered for the following year, as well as the countries and other bodies involved in the activity (see annex 1). The period covered by the activities is the current year (2008) and the following year (2009). The aim of this experiment is to identify any difficulties involved in the process of database construction, and to quantify the times and other variables which may affect the positive outcome of the initiative.

As for the classification of statistical areas and types of activity, the classifier used will be that of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES), shown in annex 3. To classify the activities and programmes, it will differentiate between the following types of activities conducted by the bodies in the area of statistics: financing, technical assistance, training, data collection, production of indicators, supply of equipment, research and methodological development.

A very important phase in the construction of the integrated presentation of the statistical activities of international bodies working in the region will be the discussions and conclusion of agreements on the subject adopted at the eighth meeting of the Executive Committee. In the context of its work on item 3 of its agenda for that meeting, the Executive Committee will consider holding a meeting

¹ See *Report of the fourth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean* (LC/L.2795), Santiago, Chile, October 2007.

² See *Report of the seventh meeting of the Executive Committee of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC* (LC/L.2870), Santiago, Chile, February 2008.

³ Annex 2 contains a summary of information on the integrated presentation of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES), which contains the description of its purpose, preparation and use. See [online] <http://unece.unog.ch/disa/default.asp>.

with international bodies on statistical coordination in the region and the construction of an integrated database of the statistical activities of international bodies. Also present will be a representative of ECE, who will describe the experience of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) in that regard. It is hoped that the outcome of the discussions, and awareness of the European experiences, will lead to the expression and consolidation of the commitment of international bodies to participating actively in creating an integrated presentation, so that an initial version can be made available for the fifth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC, to be held in mid-2009.

The next challenge will be to produce the initial version of the integrated presentation. It is expected that at its eighth meeting, after learning of and discussing the European experience and the work proposal, the Executive Committee will decide that the initial version should be prepared. Once that is agreed by the Committee and the participating international bodies, it is proposed that data should be collected from those bodies from November 2008 to February 2009, so that the first version of the integrated presentation for Latin America and the Caribbean will be available as a working document for the fifth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC.

Annex 1

**SURVEY TO IDENTIFY THE STATISTICAL ACTIVITIES OF INTERNATIONAL BODIES
IN LATIN AMERICA AND THE CARIBBEAN**

A. IDENTIFICATION

| | |
|--|------------|
| Name of the organization | |
| Person responsible for providing the information | Name: |
| | Position: |
| Address of the organization | |
| Telephone numbers: | Telephone: |
| | Fax: |
| E-mail | |
| Web address (URL) | |
| Date | |

B. DESCRIPTION OF STATISTICAL ACTIVITIES^a

| | |
|--|--|
| Name of the activity or programme | |
| Thematic area of the activity or programme ^b | |
| General and specific objectives | |
| Connection to the goals of the Strategic Plan 2005-2015 of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of ECLAC | |
| Current activities (2008) | |
| Future activities (2009) | |
| Nature of the activity or programme ^c | |
| Countries and other bodies participating in the activity or programme | |
| Meetings planned (2008 y 2009) | |

^a A separate form should be used for each activity or programme.

^b Use the classifier of the Database on International Statistical Activities of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES).

^c Indicate one or more of the following activities: financing, technical assistance, training, data collection, production of indicators, supply of equipment, research and methodological development.

Annex 2

**DATABASE ON INTERNATIONAL STATISTICAL ACTIVITIES
(INTEGRATED PRESENTATION) OF THE CONFERENCE OF
EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS (CES)¹****A. PURPOSE**

This Database on International Statistical Activities (Integrated Presentation) (DISA/IP) is a unique tool that has been crucial in the achievement of effective coordination of international statistical work in the ECE region. Its purpose is embedded in the terms of reference of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) and the objectives that the Conference agreed upon in its 1991 plenary session and reaffirmed in 2002, namely:

- To improve national statistics and their international comparability;
- To promote close coordination of the statistical activities in Europe of international organizations;
- To respond to any need for international statistical cooperation arising out of transition, integration and other processes of cooperation both within the ECE region and between the ECE region and other regions.

DISA/IP began as an integrated presentation (IP) of the work of the three biggest international statistical agencies in Europe: ECE, EUROSTAT and OECD. It now incorporates the programmes of about 25 other agencies, including the Inter-State Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CISSTAT) and other organizations that impact on the ECE region, and almost all organizations operating at the worldwide level.

DISA/IP concentrates mainly on future work rather than past achievements. The IP is unique in that the work programmes are brought together and presented under about 50 headings and in a format permitting goals and planned activities to be monitored and coordinated.

The IP is constantly evolving: its content and the way it is used and presented are further developed year by year. Since June 2003 it has been a free online database publicly available on the ECE website at: <http://unece.unog.ch/IntPres/>.

B. PREPARATION

The preparation of the IP requires a great deal of work and time, especially for the ECE secretariat, which is responsible for updating it, but also for the two main international bodies involved, EUROSTAT and

¹ This text is based on the official website of the Database on International Statistical Activities (DISA) [online] <http://unece.unog.ch/disa/ipdb.default.asp>.

OECD. However, the process of preparing the IP has been useful in itself, because it enables the international bodies to see the work being planned in their related areas of activity.

There are broadly two phases in the preparation of the IP before it is formally tabled at the CES plenary sessions. The first phase involves the international bodies (about 25) that submit their programmes to the ECE secretariat to be assembled in January each year.

The second phase involves the detailed review of the IP by the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians. The aim is also to identify apparent overlaps and gaps and to try to ensure that the work of the agencies is relevant to the needs of the countries they are intended to serve. In this work, the Bureau is assisted by designated Rapporteurs (from countries or agencies).

C. USE

The use of the IP can be summarized as follows: it is a useful tool for international statistical coordination; most of its functions are fulfilled during the various phases of preparation; it provides an almost complete description of international statistical work that may impact on the ECE region; it provides evidence of successful coordination in most cases, but it also draws attention to areas that require attention or revisiting; it is a very useful reference document, a coherent catalogue of almost all planned work in international statistics. Since 2003, its content has been enriched with an addendum presenting the statistical work of all United Nations regional commissions; the IP can be used by countries as a reference tool, so anyone in a national statistical office or elsewhere who needs to know what is happening, for example in the field of prices (called a programme element in economic statistics), can do so easily and quickly by referring to the economic statistics section of the IP. This function has been significantly strengthened by converting the IP into a database.

Annex 3

CLASSIFICATION BY THEMATIC AREA ¹**1. Demographic and social statistics**

All areas within this domain (2008)

- Population and migration (2008)
- 1.2 Labour (2008)
- 1.3 Education (2008)
- 1.4 Health (2008)
- 1.5 Income and consumption (2008)
- 1.6 Social protection (2008)
- 1.7 Human settlements and housing (2008)
- 1.8 Justice and crime (2008)
- 1.9 Culture (2008)
- 1.10 Political and other community activities (2008)
- 1.11 Time use (2008)

2. Economic statistics

All areas within this domain (2008)

- 2.1 Macroeconomic statistics (2008)
- 2.2 Economic accounts (2008)
- 2.3 Business statistics (2008)
- 2.4 Sectoral statistics (2008)
- 2.4.1 Agriculture, forestry, fisheries (2008)
- 2.4.2 Energy (2008)
- 2.4.3 Mining, manufacturing, construction (2008)
- 2.4.4 Transport (2008)
- 2.4.5 Tourism (2008)
- 2.4.6 Banking, insurance, financial statistics (2008)
- 2.5 Government finance, fiscal and public sector statistics (2008)
- 2.6 International trade and balance of payments (2008)
- 2.7 Prices (2008)
- 2.8 Labour cost (2008)
- 2.9 Science and technology (2008)

¹ To view the classification by thematic area and the content of each item, see the ECE website [online] <http://unece.unog.ch/disa/disa.explorer.asp?Search=PAPE&Year=2008#>.

3. Environment and multi-domain statistics

All areas within this domain (2008)

- 3.1 Environment (2008)
- 3.2 Regional and small area statistics (2008)
- 3.3 Multi-domain statistics and indicators (2008)
 - 3.3.1 Living conditions, poverty and cross-cutting social issues (2008)
 - 3.3.2 Gender and special population groups (2008)
 - 3.3.3 Information society (2008)
 - 3.3.4 Globalization (2008)
 - 3.3.5 Indicators related to the Millennium Development Goals (2008)
 - 3.3.6 Sustainable development (2008)
- 3.4 Yearbooks and similar compendiums (2008)

4. Methodology of data collection, processing, dissemination and analysis

All areas within this domain (2008)

- 4.1 Metadata (2008)
- 4.2 Classifications (2008)
- 4.3 Data sources (2008)
 - 4.3.1 Population and housing censuses; registers of population, dwellings and buildings (2008)
 - 4.3.2 Business and agricultural censuses and registers (2008)
 - 4.3.3 Household surveys (2008)
 - 4.3.4 Business and agricultural surveys (2008)
 - 4.3.5 Other administrative and non-survey sources (2008)
- 4.4 Data editing and data linkage (2008)
- 4.5 Dissemination, data warehousing (2008)
- 4.6 Statistical confidentiality and disclosure protection (2008)
- 4.7 Data analysis (2008)

5. Strategic and managerial issues of official statistics

All areas within this domain (2008)

- 5.1 Institutional frameworks and principles; role of official statistics (2008)
- 5.2 Statistical programmes; coordination within statistical systems (2008)
- 5.3 Quality frameworks and measurement of performance of statistical systems and offices (2008)
- 5.4 Management and development of human resources (2008)
- 5.5 Technological resources (including standards for electronic data exchange and data sharing) (2008)
- 5.6 Coordination of international statistical work (2008)
- 5.7 Technical cooperation and capacity-building programmes (2008)