

## Chapter XV

## Statistics

The United Nations continued its statistical work programme in 2005, mainly through the activities of the Statistical Commission and the United Nations Statistics Division. In March, the Statistical Commission recommended to the Economic and Social Council the adoption of a draft resolution launching the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme; the Council adopted the resolution in July. The Commission also endorsed the 2006-2007 work programme for the Statistics Division, and approved the Commission's multi-year programme of work for 2005-2008.

The Commission reviewed the work of groups of countries and international organizations in various areas of economic, social, demographic and environment statistics and made specific recommendations and suggestions.

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### Work of Statistical Commission

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The Statistical Commission, in accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2004/236 [YUN 2004, p. 1255], held its thirty-sixth session in New York from 1 to 4 March [E/2005/24]. Among other actions, the Commission: recommended to the Council a draft resolution launching the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme (see p. 1372) and requested the Statistics Division to act as the umbrella organization for setting standards, providing technical expertise and training and setting priorities; requested the Statistics Division to revise and update the Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses; endorsed the creation of a Committee on Environmental-Economic Accounting; recommended the creation of an intersecretariat working group on service statistics; and endorsed the recommendations of the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts (ISWGNA) for enhancing the implementation of the System of National Accounts, 1993 (1993 SNA) [YUN 1993, p. 1112] and noted that the Statistics Division would take the lead in devising a strategy to address the impediments to implementing the 1993 SNA.

The Commission supported the proposed strategic focus for the technical cooperation activities of the Statistics Division; welcomed the start of data collection in the context of the International Comparison Programme (ICP) and the increase in participating countries; noted the progress in preparing the *United Nations Handbook on Poverty Statistics*; and welcomed the efforts of the Statistics Division to keep the revision of the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC) on schedule. It noted the work carried out by the Inter-Agency Expert Group on Millennium Development Goal Indicators; welcomed the efforts of the World Health Organization (WHO) to address the concerns expressed by the Commission at its thirty-fourth [YUN 2003, p. 1293] and thirty-fifth [YUN 2004, p. 1259] sessions; and reaffirmed the need for a better and more effective involvement of the international community of official statisticians at all stages of the development of health statistics. It also encouraged the Delhi Group on Informal Sector Statistics to continue to develop clearer definitions for producing data on the informal sector and to measure its contribution to gross domestic product and employment. The Commission endorsed the 2006-2007 Statistics Division work programme, and approved its own multi-year programme of work for 2005-2008.

On 22 July (**decision 2005/244**), the Council took note of the Commission's report on its thirty-sixth session [E/2005/24], decided that the thirty-seventh session should be held in New York from 7 to 10 March 2006 and approved the provisional agenda and documentation for that session.

### Economic statistics

#### National accounts

In response to a 2004 Statistical Commission request [YUN 2004, p. 1256], the Secretary-General submitted the ISWGNA report [E/CN.3/2005/4] on progress made in updating the 1993 SNA [YUN 1993, p. 1112]. The report also described 1993 SNA implementation and addressed the Commission's 2004 request [YUN 2004, p. 1256] for an assessment of the factors impeding implementation in developing countries. ISWGNA provided infor-

mation on the progress made on some of the 44 issues considered by the Advisory Expert Group on National Accounts in 2004 [ibid.], including balance of payments and public finance matters. It also discussed action taken to respond to the Statistical Commission's emphasis on transparency and broad involvement in the update programme [ibid.], which included the creation of the 1993 SNA website. ISWGNA also reviewed progress in implementing the 1993 SNA, including the results of a data availability analysis that reflected an improvement in both reporting on and implementation of the 1993 SNA in Member States. As requested by the Statistical Commission in 2004 [ibid.], the Statistics Division sent a questionnaire to all Member States and territories to enable it to determine the factors impeding implementation of the 1993 SNA. The survey revealed that the main factors impeding implementation were data inadequacy, lack of statistical training and inadequate staff resources, particularly in Africa. ISWGNA drew four main recommendations from the survey for the Commission's consideration: developing countries, particularly in Africa, might wish to increase the staffing of their national accounts departments; a study could be carried out among Member States on sharing human resources management experiences; another to determine best practices in operating domestic statistical training programmes; and a further one on data-collection best practices and strategies.

In March [E/2005/24], the Commission concluded that delivering the 1993 SNA update by 2008 would require focus, discipline and significant effort. It recommended maintaining the timetable for completing the 1993 SNA update and urged ISWGNA to prioritize the contingency plans for issues that might turn out to be intractable by applying the decision-making structure embedded in the governance structure.

The Commission endorsed the ISWGNA recommendations for enhancing implementation in developing countries and noted that the Statistics Division would take the lead in devising a strategy to address the impediments to implementation, which should focus on Africa. The Commission encouraged countries to intensify advocacy and reach out to high-level users and policy-makers in order to strengthen their awareness of the importance and usefulness of national accounts, thereby facilitating increased funding for the implementation of the 1993 SNA and for the budgets of National Statistical Offices or other agencies responsible for national accounts.

### Service statistics

The Statistical Commission had before it a report of the Organisation for Economic Coopera-

tion and Development (OECD) on service statistics [E/CN.3/2005/5], which noted that services were increasingly important in modern economies, contributing some 68 per cent of value added to the world economy in 2002. OECD had submitted an interim report on the subject in 2004 [YUN 2004, p. 1256]. The report identified priority areas for improving service statistics, including engaging more countries in the service statistics agenda; improving implementation of existing guidelines within countries; and ensuring a clearer assignment of roles and responsibilities between organizations in addressing service statistics recommendations to countries. Annexed to the report was a document from the Voorburg Group on Service Statistics, which discussed its strategic vision for 2005-2008, focusing on classification issues, output measures and price indices.

In March [E/2005/24], the Commission recommended the creation of an intersecretariat working group on service statistics to identify the division of labour among international organizations regarding the maintenance and update of recommendations, such as those stemming from the Voorburg Group, and knowledge transfer. It would also promote the use of best practices. The Commission agreed that OECD should continue to coordinate international work on service statistics and provide a single annual report on the work undertaken by the various expert and city groups on service statistics, as mandated by the Commission in 2003 [YUN 2003, p. 1291]. The Commission agreed that the Voorburg Group should continue to develop internationally comparable concepts and methods in service statistics related to the measurement of output and prices and use of classifications.

The Commission also had before it the report of the Task Force on Statistics of International Trade in Services [E/CN.3/2005/6], which reviewed its own progress and that of its Technical Subgroup on the Movement of Natural Persons, and discussed future plans for increasing the quality of data, including promoting the implementation of the *Manual on Statistics of International Trade in Services*. The Task Force also outlined its continuing contribution to the current revisions of the basic economic statistics frameworks and classifications, as they affected trade in services, particularly the revision of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) *Balance of Payments Manual*, fifth edition.

In March [E/2005/24], the Commission noted the policy interest in improving data on remittances.

### International Comparison Programme

The Statistical Commission had before it the Secretary-General's note transmitting a World

Bank report on the International Comparison Programme (ICP) [E/CN.3/2005/7], which discussed the Programme's financial and organizational status, described its research and development activities and the status of regional programmes, and reviewed data-collection and publishing plans. The report noted that the ICP Global Office was coordinating the Global Ring Comparison programme and was preparing the ICP Operational Manual and Price Collector's Guide for national coordinators. Other ICP activities included: overhauling the ICP website; development of an integrated software system, the ICP Tool Pack; revision of the ICP Handbook; and the generation of poverty-focused purchasing power parities (PPPs).

In March [E/2005/24], the Commission welcomed the start of data collection in most regions and the increase in the number of participating countries, which stood at over 150. It also welcomed the actions of the ICP Executive Board, the ICP Global Office of the World Bank and the African Regional Coordinator to ensure that price collection commenced in Africa as soon as possible. The Commission expressed satisfaction with the positive outlook for producing preliminary results by the end of 2006 in accordance with the current timetable.

### **Other economic statistics**

#### *Energy statistics*

The Statistical Commission had before it a report prepared by Statistics Norway [E/CN.3/2005/3] reviewing the work undertaken in energy statistics by the main organizations involved in regional and international statistics. The report emphasized the need for high-quality energy statistics, and identified a number of problems regarding the quality of those statistics, including insufficient resources, duplication and differences in definitions and methodology. Statistics Norway's recommendations for addressing those problems included: reassessing the resources needed to meet the increased workload and objectives; better integration of the energy statistics and energy policy communities; and increased harmonization and integration of energy statistics activities of international/regional organizations, such as revising and updating the reference methodological handbooks and user manuals, and putting in place clear agreements on data sharing. It was also recommended that a forum be established for the main organizations involved in regional and international statistics with a mandate to strengthen international co-operation.

In March [E/2005/24], the Commission acknowledged the importance of quality energy statistics from both a socio-economic and an environmental perspective, particularly in terms of their timeliness, coverage, reliability and transparency. It emphasized the importance of energy statistics in greenhouse gas emissions inventories, particularly in the context of the implementation of the Kyoto Protocol [YUN 1997, p. 1048] to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change [YUN 1992, p. 681]. The Commission noted the need to meet the international demand for energy statistics, while limiting the reporting burden on countries, and underlined the need to assist countries, particularly developing countries, in strengthening their capacity to produce energy statistics. It stressed the importance of the exchange of best practices in improving the quality of energy statistics, and recognized the Joint Oil Data Initiative as a good example of collaboration among countries and international organizations. The Commission also emphasized that energy statistics should be better integrated with other statistical systems, especially those linked to economic development, environment and national accounts.

The Commission recommended that the Statistics Division convene an ad hoc expert working group to: prioritize the wide range of technical and other issues covered in the Statistics Norway report; identify the most appropriate forums within which to address those issues; and report to the Bureau of the Commission, which would take up the group's recommendations to ensure that their implementation began in advance of the Commission's 2006 session.

As requested by the Commission, the ad hoc expert working group on energy statistics met in New York from 23 to 25 May [E/CN.3/2006/10]. It recommended the creation of a city group to contribute to the development of improved methods and international standards for national official energy statistics, and an intersecretariat working group to enhance international collaboration and coordination.

#### *Price indexes and statistics*

The Statistical Commission had before it the report of the Ottawa Group on Price Indexes [E/CN.3/2005/8], which indicated that, since its 2003 report to the Commission [YUN 2003, p. 1292], it had held two meetings. The Group noted the key role played by the Universal Standard Products and Services Classification (UNSPSC) in deriving price indexes for international comparison, and registered its support for the international statistics community to be involved in the development and maintenance of that clas-

sification under the supervision of the Statistics Division. The Group acknowledged the significant achievement of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Price Statistics (ISWGPS) in producing international manuals on consumer and producer price indexes, and supported the view that the manuals be seen as “living documents”. Also before the Commission was the ISWGPS report [E/CN.3/2005/9], which focused on progress made in developing the series of price index manuals.

In March [E/2005/24], the Commission noted the existence of classification schemes related to electronic commerce, such as UNSPSC, and supported the Ottawa Group’s proposal that the Statistics Division investigate its potential as a “derived” classification and consider the establishment of correspondence tables with existing international statistical classifications.

#### *Informal sector statistics*

The Statistical Commission had before it the report of the Delhi Group on Informal Sector Statistics [E/CN.3/2005/10], which outlined the issues discussed at the Group’s seven meetings held between 1997 and 2004 and indicated its achievements in and plans for improving the quality and comparability of informal sector statistics.

In March [E/2005/24], the Commission encouraged the Delhi Group to continue its work on developing clearer definitions for producing data on the informal sector and measuring its contribution to the gross domestic product and employment. The Delhi Group should study the social aspects of the informal sector to supplement its current focus on the economic dimension. The Commission noted that ISWGNA would collaborate with the Delhi Group to improve the presentation of the concept of the informal sector in the updated 1993 SNA.

#### *Environment statistics*

The Statistical Commission had before it the Secretary-General’s report on environmental-economic accounting [E/CN.3/2005/15], which discussed a proposal by a joint Statistics Division/United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) meeting (Copenhagen, Denmark, 20-21 September 2004) for the creation of a Committee on Environmental-Economic Accounting. The new body would coordinate the further development of the Accounting Framework, ensure its successful implementation in Member States to meet policy needs and facilitate the systematic compilation of related environment statistics.

Also before the Commission was the report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on Environ-

ment Statistics [E/CN.3/2005/16], which described its 2004 activities and outlined plans for 2005/2006.

In March [E/2005/24], the Commission endorsed the creation of a Committee on Environmental-Economic Accounting, noting that its work programme should have a long-term perspective. It requested that the Committee’s terms of reference be prepared and submitted to the Bureau of the Commission for approval. The Commission reconfirmed the role of the London Group on Environmental Accounting as the expert body in charge of methodological issues, which would support the role of the Committee. The Commission recognized the need for assisting countries in the implementation of environmental-economic accounting through the development of detailed compilation manuals and coordinated technical programmes, which should proceed in parallel with the improvement of environment statistics.

### **Demographic and social statistics**

#### **Population and housing censuses**

The Statistical Commission had before it a Secretary-General’s report on population and housing censuses [E/CN.3/2005/11 & Corr.1], which summarized the preparations carried out by the Statistics Division and the UN regional commissions with regard to the 2010 round of population and housing censuses, in response to the Commission’s 2004 requests [YUN 2004, p. 1258]. Specifically, the report described actions taken to ensure the success of the 2010 round, including the initiation of the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme, to be implemented from 2005 to 2014. Annexed to the report were: the conclusions and recommendations of the United Nations Symposium on Population and Housing Censuses (New York, 13-14 September 2004); elements of a draft resolution on the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme for the Commission to recommend to the Economic and Social Council for adoption (see below); and the conclusions and recommendations of the United Nations Expert Group Meeting to Review Critical Issues Relevant to the Planning of the 2010 Round of Population and Housing Censuses (New York, 15-17 September 2004).

In March [E/2005/24], the Commission endorsed the recommendations of the Symposium and Expert Group Meeting and asked the Statistics Division to act as the umbrella organization for setting standards, providing technical expertise and training and setting priorities, as needed, for the 2010 round. It also asked that the umbrella strategy evolve around regional arrangements to

the fullest possible extent. The Commission requested that work proceed on updating the *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*. It noted the establishment of the Population and Housing Census Trust Fund, coordinated by the Statistics Division, which would be used, according to regional needs, to bridge the distance between national statistical offices in exchanging resources and support. The Commission was concerned that the Economic Commission for Africa was not undertaking activities directly related to population and housing censuses and requested the Statistics Division to explore the possibility of maintaining a focus on Africa in the context of the 2010 census round. The Commission requested the Statistics Division to report in 2006 on action taken in response to its requests.

#### ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COUNCIL ACTION

On 22 July [meeting 36], the Economic and Social Council, on the recommendation of the Statistical Commission [E/2005/24], adopted **resolution 2005/13** without vote [agenda item 13 (c)].

#### 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme

*The Economic and Social Council,*

*Recalling* its resolution 1995/7 of 19 July 1995, in which it requested the Secretary-General to proceed with the development of the 2000 World Population and Housing Census Programme and urged States Members of the United Nations to carry out population and housing censuses during the period 1995-2004, as well as its earlier resolutions endorsing previous decennial programmes,

*Having reviewed* the efforts made by Member States to carry out population and housing censuses as part of the 2000 World Population and Housing Census Programme and also the activities of the United Nations and funding agencies in support of national efforts in that regard,

*Recognizing* the increasing importance of the 2010 round of population and housing censuses for meeting data needs for the follow-up activities to the Millennium Summit of the United Nations, held in New York from 6 to 8 September 2000, the International Conference on Population and Development, held in Cairo from 5 to 13 September 1994, the World Summit for Social Development, held in Copenhagen from 6 to 12 March 1995, the Fourth World Conference on Women, held in Beijing from 4 to 15 September 1995, and the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II), held in Istanbul from 3 to 14 June 1996, and to other regional and national meetings,

*Considering* the importance of the population and housing census to the preparation of a meaningful core set of national data and information necessary for socio-economic planning and governance,

*Stressing* that, for a country as a whole and for each administrative area therein, periodic population and housing censuses are one of the primary sources of data needed for effective development planning and for the monitoring of population issues and socio-

economic and environmental trends, policies and programmes,

1. *Supports* the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme, consisting of a number of activities aimed at ensuring that Member States conduct a population and housing census at least once during the period from 2005 to 2014;

2. *Urges* Member States to carry out a population and housing census and to disseminate census results as an essential source of information for small-area, national, regional and international planning and development and to provide census results to national stakeholders as well as the United Nations and other appropriate intergovernmental organizations to assist in studies on population, environment and socio-economic development issues and programmes;

3. *Emphasizes* the importance of the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme for socio-economic planning, and requests increased support for the Programme;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to implement the 2010 World Population and Housing Census Programme.

#### Health statistics

In response to a 2004 Statistical Commission request [YUN 2004, p.1259], WHO submitted a report on health statistics [E/CN.3/2005/12], which described efforts to coordinate strategically the generation of health statistics and support countries in strengthening their health information systems. In particular, it covered: international programmes on the production of health statistics; support to statistical capacity-building at the country level; coordination of international programmes on the production of health statistics; harmonization of definitions, classifications and methodologies; collaboration at the regional level between WHO and other agencies involved in health statistics; and alternative methods of estimating the prevalence of HIV/AIDS. The report also described the future work of the WHO-based Health Metrics Network (the goal of which was to catalyse the development of country health information systems), which was awaiting the receipt of formal funding. WHO also reported that, in response to the Statistical Commission's 2004 request [YUN 2004, p. 1259], it had, together with the Statistics Division, established the Intersecretariat Working Group on Health Statistics to develop a coordinated and integrated agenda on the production of health statistics.

In March [E/2005/24], the Commission welcomed the WHO report and reaffirmed the need for better and more effective involvement of the community of official national and international statisticians at all stages of health statistics development. It recognized that the Health Metrics Network offered a promising approach for strengthening health information systems, par-

ticularly those of developing countries, while noting that the Network was not the appropriate forum for a strategic review of international programmes on the production of health statistics. The Commission stressed the need for the Intersecretariat Working Group on Health Statistics to continue its work on a coordinated and integrated agenda on the production of health statistics and asked for stronger involvement of country experts in its work; it agreed that WHO was best suited to lead the work of the Intersecretariat Working Group. The Commission welcomed WHO's announcement that it would make available a timetable regarding the planned release of microdata from the World Health Survey (2002-2003); it stressed the need for good metadata to accompany the publication of the microdata.

#### **Poverty statistics**

The Statistical Commission had before it the report of the Secretary-General on poverty statistics [E/CN.3/2005/13], which contained an update on the preparation of the *United Nations Handbook on Poverty Statistics*, including information on modifications made to the outline of the *Handbook* to address concerns raised by the Commission at its 2004 session [YUN 2004, p. 1259].

In March [E/2005/24], the Commission recognized that, while the current scope of the *Handbook* was adequate, future work might be needed to address new and emerging aspects of poverty. It welcomed the proposed work of the Statistics Division in poverty statistics, particularly capacity-building. The Commission also noted that the Rio Group on Poverty Statistics would publish a *Compendium on Poverty Statistics in 2005*, which would complement the *Handbook*. It further noted that the Rio Group intended to conclude its work in 2005.

#### **Disability statistics**

The Statistical Commission had before it the report of the Washington Group on Disability Statistics [E/CN.3/2005/14] summarizing the results of its 2004 meeting (Bangkok, Thailand, 29 September-1 October), which included agreement on a draft set of questions for the general disability measure, and the formation of a new working group to develop the protocols for implementing the general disability measure effectively.

In March [E/2005/24], the Commission thanked the World Bank for the grant to support the Group, noting that the funds would facilitate the participation of more developing countries in the Group's activities, help to develop disability

measures for generating comparable data, and pay for the testing of protocols in selected countries in every region of the world.

### **Other statistical activities**

#### **Information and communication technologies statistics**

The Statistical Commission had before it the report of the Partnership on Measuring Information and Communication Technologies for Development [E/CN.3/2005/23], which gave an overview of the progress made internationally with respect to the collection of information and communication technologies statistical indicators, in particular in developing countries. It described international community action to harmonize those efforts and to agree on a set of core indicators as a basis for developing comparable statistics. Partnership activities would be brought to the attention of the World Summit on the Information Society in November (see p. 933).

#### **International economic and social classifications**

The Statistical Commission considered the Secretary-General's report on international economic and social classifications [E/CN.3/2005/19], which described the status of the revision of the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities, the Central Product Classification, the International Standard Classification of Occupations, the Standard International Trade Classification, the Balance of Payments Manual and the Extended Balance of Payments Services Classification, and the agricultural classifications.

In March [E/2005/24], the Commission noted the progress made regarding the 2007 round of classifications revisions. It welcomed the expedited efforts of the Statistics Division to keep the revision of the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities on schedule, and urged that similar efforts be made for the Central Product Classification. The Commission noted with concern that a technical expert group was no longer being convened to assist in the revision of the International Standard Classification of Occupations and urged the International Labour Organization to establish such a group.

#### **Statistical capacity-building**

The Statistical Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General on statistical

capacity-building [E/CN.3/2005/17], which described the 2004 technical cooperation programme of the Statistics Division and its funding mechanisms.

Also before the Commission was the report of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the Twenty-first Century (PARIS 21) on statistical capacity-building [E/CN.3/2005/18], which outlined how national strategies for the development of statistics could assist a country to strengthen statistical capacity across the national statistical system. The report also described the support PARIS 21 could offer to countries in developing their national strategies.

In March [E/2005/24], the Commission reaffirmed the critical importance of statistical capacity-building, particularly in the context of increased national and international demand for development information. It supported the Statistics Division's proposed strategic focus for technical cooperation activities, and stressed the need for technical cooperation to be demand-driven, responsive to local conditions, nationally controlled and better coordinated. While recognizing the role of the Statistics Division in donor coordination, the Commission recommended that the Division work with the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities to review what coordination mechanisms would be most suitable and effective.

The Commission also noted the effectiveness of the regional and subregional approach to statistical capacity-building programmes, which allowed for the exchange of practical experiences relevant to the local socio-economic context; it further noted that countries that did not belong to subregional groupings might require special attention. As part of the sustained capacity-building effort, the Commission emphasized the importance of strengthening statistical training centres and supporting in-house training; it also pointed to the need for training in management and programme planning skills alongside statistical training. The Commission requested a regular report, beginning in 2006, on the ability of countries to produce individual indicators on how metadata should be presented to accompany indicators on all Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) [YUN 2000, p. 51]. It agreed to form a Friends of the Chair group to define the modalities of the report and develop suggestions on processes for bridging the information gap between users and producers of MDG indicators; the group would report its recommendations to the Commission.

The Commission welcomed the activities of PARIS 21 in supporting statistical capacity-building in developing countries. It cautioned

that efforts to formulate national statistical development strategies should not take away resources needed for core statistical activities, and stressed that the strategies should be flexible enough to accommodate local needs.

#### **Follow-up to UN conferences and summits**

The Statistical Commission had before it a report of the Secretary-General on indicators for monitoring the MDGs [YUN 2000, p. 51] and for follow-up to the outcomes of major UN conferences and summits in the economic and social fields [E/CN.3/2005/20]. The report described the work of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on MDG Indicators in 2004-2005 in compiling and analysing those indicators, reviewing methodologies related to the agreed indicators, coordinating data compilation at the global level and co-ordinating support to countries that were establishing country-led programmes of data collection, analysis and reporting for indicators.

In March [E/2005/24], the Commission took note of the advances made by the Inter-Agency Expert Group on MDG Indicators in compiling indicators for global monitoring. Observing that many countries still lacked the capacity to produce the necessary data and that a review of indicators being produced at the national level was necessary for all the MDGs, the Commission stated that an opportunity was available to inform policymakers of the realistic level of statistical capacity necessary to produce the MDG indicators.

#### **Presentation and standards for statistical data and metadata**

The Statistical Commission had before it an OECD report on the presentation of statistical data and metadata [E/CN.3/2005/21], which outlined progress in developing the second draft of the *Data and Metadata Reporting and Presentation Handbook*, and included a timetable for its launching by the end of 2005.

The Commission also had before it the report of the task force to establish standards on data and metadata exchange [E/CN.3/2005/22], which described the Task Force's progress since March 2004, and outlined the next steps for the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange initiative.

The Commission took note of the two reports.

#### **Coordination and integration of statistical programmes**

The Secretary-General submitted to the Statistical Commission the report of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities

(CCSA) on its third (New York, 1 March 2004) and fourth (New York, 1-3 September 2004) meetings [E/CN.3/2005/24]. Issues covered in the report included: progress in harmonizing the base year for index numbers to 2000 by the end of 2005; development of a draft declaration of principles for statistical activities in international organizations; information and communication technology indicators; statistics and the subnational level; and strategic issues related to the MDG indicators.

In March [E/2005/24], the Commission requested CCSA to make proposals regarding the use of national data by international organizations.

CCSA held two meetings in 2005: the fifth (New York, 28 February) and sixth (Rome, 12-14 September) [E/CN.3/2006/30]. Subjects discussed included: principles for statistical activities in international organizations; the implementation of good statistical practices in international organizations; and coordination of technical cooperation activities.

#### **Follow-up to Economic and Social Council policy decisions**

In response to a 2004 request by the Statistical Commission [YUN 2004, p. 1261], the Secretary-

General submitted the report of the Bureau of the Statistical Commission on the review of the Commission's working methods [E/CN.3/2005/2], which suggested a number of improvements.

In March [E/2005/24], the Commission agreed to implement the suggested working procedures on a trial basis for its current (thirty-sixth) session, at the end of which their effectiveness would be reviewed. The Commission decided that there was no need to review its terms of reference as set out in Economic and Social Council resolution 1566(L) [YUN 1971, p. 331], as they were sufficiently broad to cover the Commission's current work.

#### **Programme and institutional questions**

In March [E/2005/24], the Commission approved changes to the Statistics Division's 2004-2005 work programme [YUN 2003, p. 1276], and endorsed its 2006-2007 proposed programme of work [E/CN.3/2005/25].

The Commission also approved its 2005-2008 multi-year programme of work [E/CN.3/2005/26]; recommended that the topic for the programme review in 2007 be education statistics; approved the provisional agenda and documentation for its thirty-seventh (2006) session; and recommended that the 2006 session be held in New York from 7 to 10 March.