

**STATISTICAL COMMISSION and  
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**COMMISSION OF THE EUROPEAN  
COMMUNITIES (EUROSTAT)**

**CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS**

Joint UNECE/Eurostat seminar on business registers  
(Geneva, 19-20 February 1998)

**REPORT**

**INTRODUCTION**

1. The Joint ECE/Eurostat seminar on Business Registers was held in Geneva from 19 - 20 February 1998. It was attended by Albania, Andorra, Austria, Belgium, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Bulgaria, Croatia, Czech Republic, Denmark, Estonia, Finland, France, Georgia, Hungary, Italy, Latvia, Lithuania, Netherlands, Poland, Slovak Republic, Slovenia, Switzerland, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, United Kingdom, United States of America. Representatives of Eurostat also attended the meeting. Japan was present under article 11 of the terms of reference of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe.

2. The provisional agenda was adopted.

3. Mr. John Perry (United Kingdom) was elected Chairman and Ms. Mirjana Stresec (Croatia) was elected Vice-Chair.

**ORGANIZATION OF THE SEMINAR**

4. The following substantive topics were discussed at the seminar on the basis of papers and seminar documents listed in the annex.

- (a) Information about ongoing activities and projects by ECE and Eurostat
- (b) Current situation of business registers in member countries
- (c) Development of business registers in transition countries
- (d) Coverage and quality of business registers

- (e) Business registers and national accounts
- (f) Need for seminars on statistical units for business registers and on the use of business registers as co-ordinated survey tools

#### **SUMMARY OF THE MAIN CONCLUSIONS REACHED AT THE MEETING**

5. Recommendations for future work are given below. Other conclusions that the participants reached at the Seminar on the above topics will be presented (in English only) in a separate report which will be prepared after the Seminar and distributed to participants. It will also be distributed, on request, to other interested persons.

#### **FUTURE WORK**

6. The meeting concluded that there is an urgent need for a training course on the definition and application of statistical units in business registers. The need is particularly striking in the case of Central and East European transition countries, but not limited to these countries. It was proposed that a training course dealing with practical applications of definitions and methodologies could be organized provisionally in early 1999 as a Training for European Statisticians (TES)-course. In addition, it was suggested that a Seminar dealing with theoretical issues related to statistical units in business registers be organized jointly by ECE and Eurostat during 1999. Modalities of the organisation and dates of the Seminar will be communicated to member countries as soon as possible.

7. The participants recommended that a further joint ECE/Eurostat meeting on business registers be held in 1999 to consider the following issues:

- Quality issues including those relating to the use of administrative inputs;
- Uses of business registers including the making of population estimates;
- Review of the training course on statistical units for business registers and future training needs;
- Further development of business registers in transition countries; further development of ID cards carried jointly by Eurostat and ECE and harmonization of the information contained in them. The joint document containing the set of ID cards for both EU and non EU countries will be presented at the next joint meeting.

8. The Seminar also recommended that the next joint ECE/Eurostat meeting on business registers take place in 1999 in Luxembourg, back-to-back with the Eurostat meeting of the Working Party on business registers.

9. Both the use of business registers as a coordinated survey tool and the relation between statistical and administrative registers could in future benefit from seminars addressing these issues. In view of the importance of these issues, as expressed by this meeting, the two secretariats will prepare proposals to be discussed at the next joint meeting.

**ANNEX**

**Papers presented at the Joint ECE/Eurostat seminar on business registers  
(Geneva, 19 - 20 February 1998)**

1. The papers listed below can be obtained on request from the ECE secretariat.

(CES/SEM.37/3)	Croatia	Re-development of the business register for statistical purposes, by Ms. M. Stresec, CBS, Croatia
(CES/SEM.37/4)	Netherlands	The development of business registers in Central Asian Republics:an evaluation of a co-operation project, by Mr.H. Van der Ven, CBS, Netherlands
(CES/SEM.37/5)	Italy	The treatment of variables within a business register:a Probabilistic approach, by Mr.Andrea Carone and Ms.Caterina Viviano, Istat, Italy
(CES/SEM.37/6)	UK	Developing economies and their business registers, by Mr. John Perry, ONS, UK
(CES/SEM.37/7)	Hungary	New business register and data collection system at the Hungaria CSO, by Mrs. Aniko Garai and Mr. Jozsef Santa, Hungarian CSO
(CES/SEM.37/9)	Austria	How to maintain a business register under conditions of restricted access to administrative files: limits and opportunities, Austrian CSO
(CES/SEM.37/11)	Azerbaijan	The business register, updating of the register and use of the results of sample surveys in the process of updating, by State Committee for Statistics of Azerbaijan
(CES/SEM.37/12)	Denmark	Quality, activity and a new Business Register, by Statistics Denmark
(CES/SEM.37/14)	USA	Measuring Business Births and Deaths Using the Business Establishment List , by Mr. Michael A. Searson, Bureau of Labor Statistics

(CES/SEM.37/15)	USA	Electronic Reporting Initiatives at the US Bureau of the Census, by Mr. Thomas L. Mesenbourg, United States Bureau of the Census
(CES/SEM.37/16)	Georgia	Some issues involved in updating of business registers in transition countries, by Mr.Tugusi Vaja,State Department for Statistics of Georgia
(CES/SEM.37/17)	Poland	Business register in Poland, by Ms. Ewa Lintzel, Central Statistical Office of Poland
(CES/SEM.37/18)	Kyrgyzstan	Analysis of the situation and development of business register and classifications, by the National Statistical Committee of the Kyrgyz Republic
(CES/SEM.37/19)	France	Determining the principal activity of a unit, by INSEE, France
(CES/SEM.37/20)	UK	The business register and National Accounts in the United Kingdom, by Mr. John Perry, ONS, UK.
Seminar paper 1	Eurostat	Description of a possible TES course on statistical units ,by Mr.P.Struijs, Eurostat
Seminar paper 2	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Information on business register in Republika Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina , prepared by SO of Republika Srpska, Bosnia and Herzegovina.
Seminar paper 3	Eurostat	Inventory of main documents relevant to business registers, by Mr. P. Struijs, Eurostat
Seminar paper 4	Japan	The establishment and enterprise information data base for the business register, by Statistics Bureau of Japan

Seminar paper 5	Denmark	Results from the 1997 industry survey on an arbitrary sample, by Statistics Denmark
Seminar paper 6	Bosnia and Herzegovina	Register of business and other subjects, by Institute of Statistics, Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina