

ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

Committee on Statistics

First session
4-6 February 2009
Bangkok

**Activities of the Interstate Statistical Committee
of the Commonwealth of Independent States**

Corrigendum

The dates of the session *should read* as above.

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ECONOMIC AND SOCIAL COMMISSION FOR ASIA AND THE PACIFIC

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First session
15-17 December 2008
Bangkok

**Activities of the Interstate Statistical Committee
of the Commonwealth of Independent States¹**

Introduction

1. The Commonwealth of Independent States (hereinafter CIS) established on December 8, 1991 consists of 12 sovereign states; it is based on the principles of the equality of all its members, and does not possess supranational powers.
2. The Statistical Committee of the member states of the Commonwealth (hereinafter CIS-STAT) was one of the first branch bodies of the CIS, created on December 30 1991 by the decision of the Heads of Governments of the Commonwealth for coordination of statistical activities in the Commonwealth countries. In accordance with its approved Statute, it is subordinate to the Council of the Heads of Governments of the Commonwealth and carries out its activities in close interaction with national statistical services of the Commonwealth countries, Council of the Heads of these services and other interstate bodies.
3. According to the Decision of the Council of the Heads of Governments of the Commonwealth adopted on February 10, 1995 CIS-STAT officially received the status of an Interstate body and by the decision of May 26, 1995 it was renamed to Interstate Statistical Committee.
4. In its activities CIS-STAT follows the Charter of the Commonwealth of Independent States, interstate (intergovernmental) agreements adopted in the framework of the Commonwealth, decisions of the Council of the Heads of States and the Council of the Heads of Governments as well as the Statute of the Committee.

¹ This document was contributed by Mr. Mikhail Korolev, Chairman, Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS). It has been reproduced without formal editing. The views expressed are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the United Nations.

5. Main tasks and directions of work of CIS-STAT:

- coordination of the activities of national statistical services of the Commonwealth on most important aspects of statistics;
- promoting the reforming of statistics in the conditions of transition to market economy;
- development of common recommendations and standards on the problems of methodology and organization of statistics;
- provision of common information and statistical space and organization of interstate information exchange;
- analysis of socio-economic processes in the Commonwealth of Independent States.

6. Main functions of CIS-STAT:

- provision of the state governing bodies of the CIS member countries and CIS bodies with internationally comparable information on socio-economic processes in the CIS countries, as well as in the world economy for adopting by them the decisions on the problems of forming economic policy and improvement of economic cooperation;
- provision with internationally comparable information of other users: representatives of business circles, scientific organizations, trade unions and other social organizations, broad public and international organizations;
- development of recommendations on the use in the CIS member states of coordinated methodology based on the corresponding international standards;
- interstate exchange of statistical information, publishing of statistical abstracts and statistical information bulletin, as well as other information materials;
- creation, functioning and systematic updating of general statistical base of the CIS member states containing main socio-economic indicators;
- preparation of analytic and information materials on the dynamics and trends of economic cooperation of the CIS member states;
- development of short and middle-term forecasts of the dynamics of most important macro-economic indicators.

On the activities of CIS-STAT

7. Reforming of statistics in the CIS countries required at the beginning of the 90's the adoption of state programmes of transformation of statistics and accounting in accordance with international

standards. This envisaged the assistance of CIS-STAT to the national statistical services in the solution of the following questions:

- legal regulation of the organization of statistics on the principles practiced in the world; development of model law on statistics;
- transition of economic and social statistics to the international standards;
- implementation of international classifications;
- broader use of sample, expert and other methods of statistical observation applied in the conditions of market economy;
- adequate organization and structural changes in the system of statistical bodies;
- improvement of the primary sources of information, reforming of the reporting of enterprises and organizations;
- application of modern information technologies in statistical activities.

By present time national laws on statistics (ratified by legislative bodies of the Commonwealth member states) have been adopted by all 12 countries.

8. Development of coordinated statistical methodology, based on the corresponding international rules and standards (recommended by such international and regional organizations as UN, UN ECE, Eurostat, OECD, ILO, IMF, the World Bank and other), is one of the most important functions of CIS-STAT, aimed at the reforming of statistics, securing comparability and succession of statistical elaborations.

9. Considerable attention was given by the Committee to rendering assistance to the CIS countries in implementation in their regular statistical practice *of the international standard on national accounts – SNA 1993*, approved by the UN Statistical Commission. In this connection CIS-STAT has prepared and recommended to the national statistical services for practical use a number of methodological documents on the problems of compilation of key SNA accounts and computation of most important aggregates.

10. On the basis of the SNA concepts there were issued methodological recommendations to make estimates of non-observed economy, including shadow economy and informal sector, illegal (criminal) activity.

11. CIS-STAT has also prepared on the basis of international standards the documents on *financial statistics and government finance statistics, in particular, on finance statistics of enterprises and on price statistics*.

12. *In the field of external economic relations statistics* the CIS statistical services widely use corresponding methodological recommendations developed by CIS-STAT on the basis of international standards and adapted to the peculiarities of the CIS countries economy.

13. Regarding *statistics of production and entrepreneurship* CIS-STAT has prepared, on the basis of international standards, recommendations on the calculation of most important indicators of statistics of industry, agriculture and other branches of economy; volume indices of retail turnover; indices of prices for machinery and equipment in the composition of capital investments; provision of population with durable goods and selected goods of light industry; yield capacity of agricultural crops.

14. There were developed principles of the conduct of economic censuses in the CIS countries, as well as recommendations on the conduct of agricultural censuses and other.

15. There was carried out, as well, considerable methodological work to secure international comparability of *labour statistics* indicators on the basis of the conventions and recommendations of ILO and other international organizations on the problems of employment, wages and salaries, strikes, labour cost and conditions, etc.

16. In the conditions of the transition to market economy CIS-STAT gave much attention to the study of new phenomena and improvement of *socio-demographic statistics*.

17. In particular, there was prepared a Model set of social indicators of living standards of population on the basis of minimum set of social indicators recommended by the UN Statistical Commission.

18. Since 1993 CIS-STAT has been carrying out a complex of organization and methodological works connected with the conduct of *national population censuses in the member states of the Commonwealth* in the framework of the World Programme.

19. Beginning from 2004 CIS-STAT carries out preparatory methodological work for conducting the next 2010 round of population censuses approved by the Council of the Heads of States of the Commonwealth. The most complex methodological issues are discussed at the Coordinating Council which was set up under the auspices of CIS-STAT; the Council is composed of the qualified representatives of national statistical services of the CIS countries.

20. *Development and promoting general principles of building up the system of economic classifications*, coordinated with international standards, is an important direction in the field of statistical methodology in the framework of the Commonwealth. A great deal of work has been done by CIS-STAT to prepare model classifications which are based on international recommendations and reflect national peculiarities of the Commonwealth countries. For the period from 1992 through 2008 the following model classifications were developed: types of ownership and organizational and juridical forms of economic activities (based on national laws on statistics of the Commonwealth

countries); functions of the general government and individual consumption by purpose. Special attention was paid to the development and introduction into practice of the model statistical classification of kinds of economic activities as well as classification of products goods and services. These model classifications were used in the CIS countries for development of their own national classifications.

21. In 2006 in accordance with the decisions of the Councils of the Heads of States and Governments of the CIS countries CIS-STAT was entrusted with a new function *of forecasting of the most important macro-economic indicators on short-term and mid-term basis*. CIS-STAT has developed methodological approaches for forecasting of the rates of growth of key macro-economic indicators and the results of forecasts are published on a regular basis.

22. Common statistical data base called "Statistics of the CIS" was set up on the basis of data collected by CIS-STAT from the CIS countries. This data base in addition to series data on key statistical indicators from 1992 also contains information on main indicators of social and economic cooperation. The data base contains about 400 thousand indicators which are grouped by 24 major sections of statistics.

23. Being an official disseminator of statistical information on the CIS countries the Committee systematically prepares reports, compendiums, press releases on the most important socio-economic activities in the CIS countries both in Russian and English and disseminates them to a wide circle of users. Statistical information compiled by CIS-STAT, is used by superior governing and economic bodies of the CIS countries, interstate bodies of the Commonwealth, ministries and agencies, various international organizations, scientific and research organizations, social organizations, representatives of business, mass-media and other users.

24. Different methods of dissemination of information among the users are used: publications, electronic products such as CDs, electronic mail. Beginning from 1992 to 2008 CIS-STAT has released 164 statistical yearbooks and compendiums, 438 statistical bulletins, more than 1000 reports and analytic notes, 550 press- releases.

25. To facilitate wider use of information the site **of CIS-STAT in Internet** in Russian and English was set up by the Committee. It contains information on major activities of the Committee, the list of its publications and electronic products, systematically updated data base which contains monthly, quarterly and annual data, results of international comparisons, analytic materials and reports.

International activities of CIS-STAT

26. From the beginning of its existence and during almost 17 years CIS-STAT carries out cooperation with statistical services of the international organizations and a number of foreign

countries. The main objectives of this cooperation is introduction of international standards in statistical practices of the Committee and national statistical services of the CIS countries, exchange of experience and data, exchange of statistical publications.

27. During recent years there continued to expand cooperation with statistical services of the United Nations, its regional economic commissions and specialized agencies, with statistical services of the European Union, OECD, IMF, the World Bank, Consortium “Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st century”, International Statistical Institute, with statistical offices of many countries.

28. Interaction with international organizations is carried out on the basis of signing agreements and memoranda of understanding. The latter were signed with UN Statistics Division, Eurostat, the World Bank in connection with participation of the CIS countries in the global international comparison of the GDP for 2005.

29. There is an agreement with the US Bureau of Census on mutual exchange of publications.

30. Together with international organizations methodological assistance to the statistical services of the CIS was rendered on a regular basis on the questions of organization of statistical observation, calculation of statistical indicators, development of national accounts, systems of classifications and their introduction in statistical practice, etc.

31. The representatives of CIS-STAT participated in the sessions of the UN Statistical Commission, in the meetings of the Committee for Coordination of Statistical Activities, plenary sessions of the Conference of European Statisticians, ESCAP Committee on Statistics, meetings of the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians, meetings of the Executive Board of ICP, meetings of regional coordinators of the ICP, meetings of the OECD Committee on Statistics.

32. Cooperation of CIS-STAT with OECD and a number of other international organizations (UN, IMF, Eurostat) on introduction of the SNA 93 into regular statistical practices of the CIS countries was particularly important. In this connection a considerable number of seminars and consultations were jointly organized and carried out. As a result of these joint actions it made it possible to transit from the material product system (MPS) which was used in the former USSR to the SNA within relatively short period of time. In this context mention also should be made of cooperation of CIS-STAT with some international organizations (OECD, Eurostat, ILO, UN ECE) on preparation of the Handbook on Measuring Non-observed Economy. A number of joint seminars was held in order to facilitate implementation of the provisions of this Handbook. The importance of the international cooperation in this area increases in connection with the forthcoming implementation of the SNA 2008 in the CIS region.

33. The cooperation of CIS-STAT with the ILO in connection with implementation in the CIS region of the latest Handbook on CPI should be also mentioned in this context.

34. Of great importance was the interaction of CIS-STAT with international organizations in the field of international comparisons of GDP. CIS-STAT was actively involved in the implementation of European Comparison Program (ECP). Thus, it participated in international comparison of GDP of CIS countries for 2000 which was carried out in the framework of the ECP. In the organization of this work CIS-STAT cooperated closely with Rosstat of Russia and OECD.

35. Important landmark in the work on this subject was the realization of the UN International Comparison Programme in the framework of which there was conducted the global comparison of GDP for 2005 with the participation of 146 countries of the world. 10 CIS countries participated in this comparison and represented this region of the world. The role of coordinators of comparison in this region was carried out by CIS- STAT jointly with Rosstat.

Future directions of the work of CIS-STAT

36. Recommendations for statistical services of the CIS countries with respect to implementation of provisions of the SNA 2008. This project will require several years and establishing priorities in selection of the most appropriate topics considering peculiarities in the organization of the economy and statistics in the CIS countries, stage of development of national accounts, as well as close interaction with the international organizations.

37. One of the important directions of future work refers to improvement of methodology of compilation of the CPI on the basis of international standards.

38. CIS-STAT will continue the work in the field of international comparisons of GDP and PPPs in the framework of the next round of global comparison which is likely to be organized for 2011.

39. Expanding of analysis of socio-demographic processes is another important direction of the future work. Special attention will be paid to studying international migration.

40. It is intended to continue preparation for the next 2010 round of population censuses. This work will be carried out in accordance with the decision by the Council of the Heads of States to entrust the preparatory work on the methodology and solution of the organization matters to the Council of the Heads of Statistical Services of the CIS countries and CIS-STAT. It is intended to provide assistance to the CIS countries during the censuses and to secure generalization of the results of the censuses.

41. Preparation of a number of recommendations on implementation in statistical practice of the CIS countries of the revised versions of international economic classifications and above all statistical classifications of all kinds of economic activities and products.

42. Further improvement of the methods of forecasting.

43. Further development of international cooperation with statistical services of the international organizations and a number of foreign countries in order to facilitate implementation of modern methodology of statistics and international standards.

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