

**UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE  
CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS**

**UNECE Work Session on the Communication of Statistics**  
(29 June – 1 July 2011, Geneva, Switzerland)

**INFORMATION NOTICE No.1**

The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) will host the work session in Geneva, Switzerland, from 9.30 a.m. on 29 June to 5 p.m. on 1 July 2011

**I. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING**

1. At its 2010 plenary session, the Conference of European Statisticians included the Work Session on the Communication of Statistics in its 2010-2011 meeting programme. The meeting will be held from 29 June to 1 July 2011 in Geneva, Switzerland.
2. The objective of the meeting is to exchange experiences and best practices on the communication and dissemination of statistics. The meeting will address the challenges faced by statistical organizations to communicate effectively with all their audiences and stakeholders. Attention will be focused on social media, gathering user feedback from websites, external and internal communications, audience segmentation and cultural change.

**II. AGENDA OF THE MEETING**

3. The programme of the meeting will consist of the following substantive topics:
  - (i) Social Media. Part 1: Metrics and measurement
  - (ii) Social Media. Part 2: Successes and failures
  - (iii) Gathering user feedback from web sites
  - (iv) External communication: audience segmentation
  - (v) Internal communication: introducing and managing cultural change
4. Detailed explanatory notes on the nature of topics (i) – (v) are provided in Section VII below. A detailed agenda will be prepared in May and published on the meeting website.

**III. PARTICIPATION AND ACCREDITATION**

5. The target audience of the meeting includes managers and experts responsible for communication and media relations in national and international statistical organizations.
6. Representatives of all Member States of the United Nations and interested intergovernmental organizations are welcome to participate in the meeting. All delegates must be accredited by the competent authority of their country or international organization. All delegates attending the meeting are requested to have a valid passport and, if required, a visa. Applications for visas must be made as soon as possible to the Embassy of Switzerland in the country in which the delegates reside, with reference to the UNECE Work Session on the Communication of Statistics.

#### IV. REGISTRATION AND CALL FOR PAPERS

7. Delegates should complete the registration form sent with this notice and return it to the UNECE Secretariat ([vadim.isakov@unece.org](mailto:vadim.isakov@unece.org)) by **31 March 2011**. All participants are asked to provide a brief written report (**2 pages**) on the topics to be discussed at the meeting. Refer to paragraphs 12-13 below for more information.

8. Papers and presentations about any of the topics on the agenda are hereby requested. Participants intending to submit a paper should take note of the deadlines and requirements in paragraphs 14-16 below.

#### V. ACCOMMODATION

9. Delegates are requested to make their own accommodation arrangements. Information about accommodation options in Geneva can be found at <http://www.unece.org/meetings/practical.htm>. Further information about the meeting venue will be provided in a second information notice to be published on the meeting website in March 2011.

#### VI. DOCUMENTATION, METHODS OF WORK AND OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

10. The working language of the meeting will be English. Russian interpretation will also be provided. All documents should be submitted in English.

11. Meeting documents will be made publicly available on the website of the UNECE Secretariat at: <http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2011.06.dissemination.htm>. Delegates are encouraged to download the papers from the website (available from early June) and bring their own copies to the meeting. Written papers posted on the website before the meeting will not be distributed in the conference room.

##### **Reports from all participating agencies**

12. Each participating organization is requested to provide a brief written report (**2 pages**) on the current situation and issues in their office regarding each of the meeting topics. These reports **will not be presented or explicitly discussed during the meeting**, but will be collated into a booklet and provided to all delegates as background information. They will also be valuable in assisting the session organizers to develop their sessions and guide the discussion.

13. A template for these reports is attached. They should be submitted to the UNECE Secretariat by **30 April 2011** via email to [vadim.isakov@unece.org](mailto:vadim.isakov@unece.org).

##### **Call for papers to be presented at the meeting**

14. The following deadlines and requirements apply to the submission of papers and associated presentations:

- The intention to submit a paper should be communicated to the UNECE Secretariat by **31 March 2011** by completing the relevant section of the registration form.
- Final papers should be emailed to [vadim.isakov@unece.org](mailto:vadim.isakov@unece.org) at the UNECE Secretariat by **30 April 2011** at the latest.
- Authors who intend to present their written papers are invited to email their presentations to [vadim.isakov@unece.org](mailto:vadim.isakov@unece.org) by **18 June 2011** so they can be installed on the projection equipment. Presentations will not be made available to delegates before the meeting, unless requested by the presenters.

15. Papers should be submitted in **Microsoft Word** (.doc) or **Rich Text File** (.rtf) formats. The UNECE Secretariat will send each author a template containing the header, document number and format. The recommended length for each paper is up to five pages of text (3 000 words).

16. Authors of papers will be allocated time to give a presentation on their paper, highlighting the main issues. The length of time for this presentation will be confirmed by the session organizer after the abstract has been received. PowerPoint presentations or Adobe Acrobat full screen presentations may be used.

## **VII. EXPLANATORY NOTES TO THE AGENDA**

### **17. Topic (i): Social Media. Part 1: Metrics and measurement**

Social media are new, they are invigorating, they are cool – but are they effective? How do we know? How do we define success in this world? How do we compare social media effectiveness against other means of dissemination and communication? How do we define objective metrics and take reproducible measurements to evaluate our returns on investment?

This session is an opportunity to share and reflect on organization strategies and experiences on the theme of evaluating social media. We are particularly interested in case studies focused on lessons learned on this subject.

Potential topics may include:

- Defining success criteria up front and how initial metrics have been refined over time
- Useful tools to track usage, pick-up, and redistribution rates
- Case studies of social media channels that proved their worth – or, of particular interest, have been abandoned due to poor performance
- Comparative data on social media vs. traditional media as communications vehicles – audience demographics, size, geography, topics of interest, etc.
- Using measurement results to make a business case for agency investment

### **18. Topic (ii): Social Media. Part 2: Successes and failures**

Statistical organizations are embracing social media as a way to expand outreach and foster relationships, especially with new and nontraditional audiences. But along with the rewards of these new tools come risks as well. This session will include case studies and practical examples of both the promise and the pitfalls of social media.

Potential topics may include:

- Lessons learned from negative experiences
- The downside of two-way communication: Should your detractors have a voice? Should public comments be moderated?
- Objectivity vs. opinion: Is it appropriate for statistical organizations to provide commentary in blogs and other new media vehicles?
- Keeping your social media content fresh, relevant and immediate
- Overcoming internal challenges: e.g., securing management support; addressing jurisdictional issues (who is responsible for content); educating internal stakeholders about what social media is (and is not); working with firewalls and other technological constraints
- Planning for the worst: How a carefully thought out social media strategy can help an organization avoid unintended consequences
- Social media for the right reasons: Ensuring that these tools and tactics are part of an overall public relations strategy

## **19. Topic (iii): Gathering user feedback from websites**

How do you know if customers are satisfied with your website? Ask them! Gathering and responding to user feedback is a critical activity in making sure our websites are customer-focused and successfully communicating our often complex statistical information. Methods of collecting feedback include many types of surveys, focus groups, usability testing, eye tracking, and others. This session will show how several statistical organizations collected feedback from web users and what actions were taken or web changes made to respond to that feedback. Talks will include how the survey or other feedback collection method was conducted, who participated, what questions were asked, how the results were tabulated and disseminated within the organization, and what lessons were learned in the process.

Potential topics may include:

- Methods of collecting user feedback from websites (including challenges and best practices)
- Responding to user feedback survey
- Tabulating and disseminating user survey results within the organization
- Lessons learned

## **20. Topic (iv): External communication: audience segmentation**

This session is intended to stimulate discussion on external communications with particular emphasis on audience segmentation. A broad range of presentations are welcome covering all aspects of external communications and how statistical agencies approach this vital part of the process.

Statistical organizations have a highly diverse user base ranging from expert users to the lay public; how do we address such a diverse audience successfully? Do we prioritize some segments of our audience? Does the challenge of using limited resources force us to focus only on certain users? Is it possible to produce statistical analysis in a style which is not intimidating to our lay audience? Presentations on the many aspects of this topic are requested.

Potential topics may include:

- Ways of addressing segmented audience
- Comparing segmented audiences
- Setting priorities in addressing different audiences
- Producing statistical analysis for different segments of the audience

## **21. Topic (v): Internal communication: introducing and managing cultural change**

Effective internal communication is the key to the success of any organization, as it plays a vital role in helping the organization achieve its objectives. Good internal communication is particularly important in implementing change and promoting engagement within an organization. When the purpose is cultural change inside an organization, well planned internal communication is indispensable.

This session deals with the challenges and issues faced by statistical organizations in the area of internal communication. This includes not only communication between management and staff, but also between subject matter units and communication staff. With a special focus on achieving cultural change inside the organization, the session will examine tools and best practices used to improve communication within statistical organizations. It will focus on practical examples and case studies to illustrate these points.

Potential topics may include:

- Tools and best practices for internal communication
- Planning cultural change by means of internal communication
- Communication between managers and staff
- Communication between subject matter units and communication staff
- Improving communication between subject matter units

## **VIII. FURTHER INFORMATION**

22. For further information, please contact:

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