

## Terms of Reference Executive Board HLG-MOS

### I. BACKGROUND

1. As the importance of the work undertaken by the High-Level Group for the Modernisation of Official Statistics (HLG-MOS) grew, and the expectations of statistical organisations for concrete outputs increased, it was important to put in place an appropriate governance structure for the different HLG-MOS initiatives. The Executive Board of the High-Level Group for the Modernisation of Official Statistics (HLG-MOS) was therefore established in 2013 for the strategic and financial management of on-going HLG-MOS activities and projects.
2. The coordinating role of the Executive Board with respect to the four modernisation committees increased as well as the role in guiding proposals for future HLG-MOS activities and projects. At the 2019 annual HLG-MOS meeting the role of the Executive Board as well as the role of the Blue-Skies Thinking Network (BSTN) were strengthened. These updated Terms of Reference reflect this.

### II. MANDATE

3. The Executive Board receives its mandate from the Conference of European Statisticians. The 2013 CES Plenary Session reviewed and approved the annual progress report of the HLG-MOS, including the proposed new governance structure for activities and groups overseen by the HLG-MOS. The Executive Board is part of that structure. It reports to the HLG-MOS that oversees its work and provides leadership and direction.
4. The HLG-MOS defines the mission, provides mid- and long-term vision and decides on the overall strategy. The HLG-MOS approves the proposed annual work plan of the HLG-MOS and endorses its outputs. It has tasked the Executive Board with identifying and proposing new activities and with implementation and monitoring the work programme of the groups and projects that are part of the HLG-MOS structure (see annex III).

### III. OBJECTIVES

5. The Executive Board is responsible for the strategic management of on-going HLG-MOS projects and activities. It will assess and plan new projects and activity proposals for endorsement by the HLG-MOS and seek support and resources from interested organisations. Following the completion of a project, the Executive Board will monitor, evaluate, and where necessary, oversee the implementation or use of the project results. It will assess the need for any follow-up activities and advise the HLG-MOS accordingly.

6. The Executive Board will have a coordinating role with respect to the Modernisation Groups and will advise them on the inputs they should provide to ensure the successful completion of each annual work programme. It will further coordinate requests for additional resources needed for the completion of the activities.

7. The Executive Board will decide about follow-up of new ideas and opportunities that were identified by the Blue Skies Thinking Network. Operating procedures defining tasks of the BSTN and the Executive Board, and the options for further action are specified in Annex I.

#### IV. PLANNED ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

8. The main activities and outputs of the Executive Board will be:

- To report annually to the HLG-MOS on the outcome of the work programme and to propose projects and activities for endorsement by the HLG-MOS for next year's work programme.
- To oversee the organisation of projects and activities and to coordinate the allocation of resources necessary to ensure the successful completion of the work programme sponsored by the HLG-MOS, including setting up Task Teams, organizing “sprint” sessions, workshops and other relevant activities.
- To hold regular virtual meetings with managers of the HLG-MOS projects and Chairs of the Modernisation Groups and BSTN and report on their progress.
- To ensure project outputs are available to all interested parties, encouraging their adoption.
- To monitor developments relevant to the modernisation of official statistics.

#### V. METHODS OF WORK

9. The Executive Board will work mainly through web conferences and wikis. It will meet monthly with managers of projects and chairs of Modernisation Groups. The Board should meet physically at least once per year, usually on the margins of other events. It will ensure effective communication with all stakeholder groups, using all appropriate communication channels.

10. The Board will elect one or two of its members from a national organization to be chair/co-chair. The secretariat support will be provided by UNECE. The chair(s) and secretariat will consult with and report to the chair of the HLG-MOS and report on progress on a regular basis to the HLG-MOS and the Modernisation Community.

#### VI. MEMBERSHIP

11. The Board will be comprised of senior managers (for example, equivalent to deputy chief statistician level) from national and international statistical organizations, with the authority to commit the resources of their organizations to supporting HLG-MOS activities. It will on a

regular basis invite as observers, the chairs of each of the modernisation committees and the BSTN, as well as the HLG-MOS project managers. This to report on progress and to ensure coordination and give access to broader perspectives on modernisation activities.

12. The list of members will be confirmed annually by the HLG-MOS, taking due account of the representation of different regions, expertise and stakeholder groups. The Board can co-opt temporary members with relevant knowledge and experience for specific projects being undertaken.

13. The Executive Board will have a target membership of approximately 10 people that undertake to devote the necessary time to adequately discharge their duties.

## Annex I: Operating Procedure of the Executive Board and the Blue Skies Thinking Network

When new ideas are submitted to the BSTN, key follow-up questions will be expected to be answered by the core supporting group, usually within a period of 6-weeks:

- What is the proposal covering?
- What does it mean for official statistics?
- What has already been done?
- What future work is needed?

The core group, jointly with the Executive Board, can then decide:

- Not to pursue, if there is no strong evidence of enough value-added in what is being proposed.
- Put the work on hold, and re-visit it at a specified future time, when the value proposition may be clearer or resources become available.
- Recommend for further work.

If endorsed, the Executive Board will identify how resources can be assigned to follow-up work and what the time lines and deliverables will be. There are several options for advancing the work such as:

- A group of experts is set-up in an ad-hoc fashion under the BSTN to prepare a report or develop a prototype for a given service.
- Two or more NSOs accept to work jointly on the idea to move the agenda further and report back on progress.
- One of the standing Modernisation Groups is asked to include this work in its program (could include re-prioritizing of work if not enough resources are available).
- A project proposal for consideration by HLG-MOS, is prepared by the core team and if needed, a call for additional experts.

The outcomes of these short-term follow-up projects could be the following:

- Not to continue, if there is no strong business case
- A prototype that is of value but does not need follow-up
- To put the work on hold, and re-visit it at a specified future time, when the business case may be clearer
- A proposal for further work. This could take the form of a project proposal to be considered for the next year, or a smaller scale activity to be carried out under one of the HLG-MOS groups.

Information about the investigations being undertaken by this network is potentially very valuable to the wider community of official statisticians. It offers statistical organizations the chance to quickly sift new opportunities and assess the potential value they might obtain from investing further in a new area. To achieve this value, it will be necessary to actively promote what has been completed, what is being considered and what is in progress.

## Annex II: Membership of the Executive Board (as of January 1, 2019)

- Stéphane Dufour (Canada) – co-chair
- Bert Kroese (Netherlands) – co-chair
- Jenet Connell and Luise McCulloch (Australia)
- Jennifer Banim (Ireland)
- Piero Falorsi and Monica Scannapieco (Italy)
- Eduardo Jallath (Mexico)
- Vince Galvin (New Zealand)
- Eduardo Barredo Capelot (Eurostat)
- Taeke Gjaltema (UNECE) – Secretariat

### *Observers:*

- Chairs of Modernisation Groups:
  - Marina Signore (Italy)
  - Rosemary McGrath (New Zealand)
  - Anna Borowska (Poland)
  - Barteld Braaksma (Netherlands)
- Project Managers:
  - Connie Graziadei (Strategic Communications Framework Project Phase II)
  - Claude Julien (Machine Learning Project)

## Annex III: Structure of the High-Level Group for the Modernisation of Official Statistics and the position of its Executive Board (2019)

The UNECE work programme under the HLG-MOS is commonly branded as ModernStats. It consists of three Modernisation Groups that focus on activities in specific areas of work. The fourth group, the Blue Skies Thinking Network, assesses potential new areas of work. There are two annual projects to work more in-depth on a specific new area of work.

The HLG-MOS meets annually to update the strategic framework and vision. Progress on the current work programme of the HLG-MOS and future work are discussed at the annual Modernisation Workshop in November. The Executive Board meets on a monthly basis with representatives of the Modernisation Groups and the Projects and they provide modernisation updates to inform the statistical community. The Modernisation Groups also organize annual workshops to share and advance their work. Sprints sessions are a common tool for the Projects and Modernisation Groups to progress their work.

Four thematic workshops endorsed by the Conference of European Statisticians operate under the HLG-MOS and ModernStats banner as their focus is on innovative developments and identifying future work in specific areas.

