Annex I

[English only]

Mandate and Terms of Reference for the Steering Group on statistics for Sustainable Development Goals

A. Background

1. The Conference of European Statisticians (CES) decided to “launch work on a road map for the development of official statistics for monitoring SDGs.” The Conference further specified that this road map could include:
   (a) An outline of the setup of providing statistics on SDGs (who does what and when);
   (b) Identification of new areas of statistics where internationally harmonized indicators need to be developed in cooperation with international organizations, academia, civil society, and other stakeholders;
   (c) A strategy on how to reinforce communication with other data providers and users of official statistics, including policy makers;
   (d) A strategy on how to deal with the required disaggregations of data;
   (e) A plan for the necessary capacity building for reporting on SDGs;
   (f) Collaboration between various international agencies in the region.

2. Several ongoing global processes related to the implementation of SDGs call for action at regional level, such as:
   (a) Regional input to the work of the High-level Political Forum (HLPF) which will have a central role in overseeing the processes at the global level and “will facilitate sharing of experiences, including successes, challenges and lessons learned, and provide political leadership, guidance and recommendations for follow-up. It will promote system-wide coherence and coordination of sustainable development policies”;
   (b) Input to the Interagency Expert Group on SDG Indicators (IAEG-SDGs);
   (c) Input to the High Level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for Agenda 2030 (HLG-PCCB) that will establish a global action plan for data for the follow up and review of the 2030 agenda for sustainable development.

B. Mandate

3. The work of the Steering Group is conducted within the CES work programme. The Steering Group is created for a period of five years. It will provide regular reports to the Bureau and CES.

4. The work of the Steering Group will reflect the work of the HLG-PCCB and IAEG-SDGs operating under the UN Statistical Commission to provide a link with the developments at the global level. It will take into account the guidance given by the UN Secretary General on the global follow-up and review process.

5. The Steering Group may identify concrete tasks or activities to support its work that could be undertaken by groups of experts (Task Forces). In such cases, after having verified
the interest by a sufficient number of CES member countries and the availability of resources, the Steering Group will submit proposals to the CES Bureau for review and approval.

6. The Steering Group may identify opportunities to brief the UNECE Executive Committee and other relevant regional policy bodies to ensure that the work and products of the CES relating to SDGs fully reflect the policy priorities of the UNECE region. Communication with all relevant stakeholders (including the policy community) will be crucial.

C. Objective

7. The objectives of the Steering Group are:

(a) To follow up on the implementation of the CES road map on statistics for SDGs. The road map provides a strategy on how to implement a system for producing data on SDGs, and guide the CES members in implementing the Declaration on the role of national statistical offices in measuring and monitoring the Sustainable Development Goals (ECE/CES/89/Add.1) adopted by the Conference in 2015;

(b) To update and adjust the road map to reflect global developments and progress at regional and national levels.

D. Planned activities and outputs

8. Building on already existing collaborative efforts in the UNECE region, the Steering Group will:

(a) Maintain a road map including concrete actions and priorities for the development of official statistics for SDGs under CES;

(b) Implement activities of the road map, such as:

(i) Outline the mechanism for providing statistics for SDGs (who does what and when);

(ii) Analyse the need and establish criteria for a set of regional indicators for SDGs, based on the global ones;

(iii) Identify new areas where methodological work could be undertaken to provide statistics for SDGs under CES and as an input to the global initiatives. The Steering Group may propose to the CES Bureau to set up Task Forces to carry out specific tasks;

(iv) Develop a strategy on how to reinforce communication with other data providers and users of official statistics, including policy makers;

(v) Develop a strategy on how to deal with the recommended disaggregations of data following the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and ensuring data quality;

(vi) Define the necessary capacity building for CES member countries for providing statistics for SDGs;

(vii) Identify the relevant partners throughout the process and ensure coordination of activities; and
(viii) Promote collaboration between various international agencies, scientists and other data producers on SDGs (e.g. through the UN World Data Forum) to ensure efficient data flows and avoid double reporting.

(c) Coordinate the CES work on statistics for SDGs using a bottom-up approach, and in close collaboration with Eurostat and OECD;

(d) Advise the UNECE Secretariat on statistical capacity building activities in support of SDGs. These activities should be closely coordinated with other regional partners;

(e) Promote the sharing of methods, techniques, research, training materials and other resources related to statistics for SDGs.

(f) Review progress and outcomes of possible CES tasks forces working in the area of statistics for SDGs.

9. The main outputs of the Steering Group will be:

(a) Updated road map for the development of official statistics for SDGs, taking into account the priorities of CES member countries and their needs;

(b) An assessment of the readiness of CES members to provide data on the global and possible regional list of indicators;

(c) An analysis of statistical capacity building needs of CES countries for SDGs;

(d) Identification of new areas where methodological work is needed to produce statistics for SDGs, and the establishment of priorities.

E. Methods of work

10. The Steering Group will primarily work via email, wiki workspace and telephone conferences. Face-to-face meetings may be organised at events attended by a significant number of Steering Group members, such as the plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians and other meetings.

F. Membership

11. The following countries and organizations are members of the Steering Group: Switzerland (co-chair), United States (co-chair), Canada, Denmark, France, Germany, Italy, Kyrgyzstan, Mexico, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Poland, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Sweden, Turkey, United Kingdom, Eurostat and The Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Other countries and organizations may also join the Steering Group as the work progresses.

12. UNECE will act as Secretariat to the Steering Group.