I. BACKGROUND

1. In recent years, many national and international statistical organizations have initiated developments to restructure the statistical production process. The “Data Deluge” and technological advances are providing opportunities to use new types of sources, enhance existing outputs, and develop new ones. These developments have significant implications for the structure and efficiency of statistical organizations, and a major impact on strategic decisions related to budget, human resources and corporate strategy.

2. Several existing international groups are involved in expert-level discussions on specific aspects of the modernisation of official statistics, such as methodology, information technology, software tools, and enterprise architecture, but until recently there has been no overall coordination of these activities. To achieve strategic oversight and especially better coordination of developments in different groups and countries, a forum on the highest level (Director General) was needed. The Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) established what is now the High-Level Group for the Modernisation of Official Statistics (HLG-MOS) for this purpose, in 2010.

3. The HLG-MOS has a vision and a strategy to implement that vision, which was adopted by the CES in June 2018.

4. These Terms of Reference reflect a renewed confirmation of the role and responsibilities of the HLG-MOS, based on experience gained so far.

II. MANDATE

5. The HLG-MOS reports to the Conference of European Statisticians (CES). It therefore derives its legitimacy and mandate from this body. It should prepare strategically-focused annual progress reports, to inform and solicit comments from the CES and its Bureau.

III. OBJECTIVES

6. The mission of the HLG-MOS is to oversee development of frameworks, and sharing of information, tools and methods, which support the modernisation of statistical organisations. The aim is to improve the efficiency of statistical production processes, and the ability to produce outputs that better meet user needs. The HLG-MOS will discuss and collaborate with other bodies involved in related work, both within and beyond the official statistics community. Within the official statistics community, it will take a leadership and coordination role.

7. The HLG-MOS will oversee and steer the work of relevant CES expert groups, and will coordinate, and give leadership where needed, to other relevant international expert groups and UN regional commissions. It is responsible for stimulating development of global standards and overseeing activities undertaken in collaboration.

8. The objectives of the HLG-MOS are:

   (a) To promote common standards, models, tools and methods to support the modernisation of official statistics;

   (b) To drive new developments in the production, organisation and products of official statistics, ensuring effective coordination and information sharing within official statistics, and with relevant external bodies;

   (c) To advise the Bureau of the CES on the direction of strategic developments in the modernisation of official statistics, and ensure that there is a maximum of convergence and coordination within the statistical “industry”.

IV. PLANNED ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

9. The main activities and outputs of the HLG-MOS for the period up to the end of 2019 are:

   • To frame a collective strategy on developments related to the modernisation of statistical production and services, and formulate and disseminate new ideas and proposals in this field;

   • To organise annual workshops with representatives of relevant expert groups and projects, to help the HLG-MOS to identify key priorities and tasks to implement the vision and strategy;

   • To determine a yearly list of key priorities and their timeframes and allocate them to relevant expert groups. The resources will be drawn from consenting members of the CES.

   • To make the results of its work public via a wiki site and other communication tools.

   • To maintain and support the implementation of the necessary standards and models to support the modernisation of official statistics.

   • To actively promote relevant standards, methods and tools.
V. TIMETABLE

10. These Terms of Reference are valid for a period of 3 years (January 2017 to December 2019), after which they will be reviewed by the CES Bureau:
   - The results of annual collaborative projects in key priority areas will be released at the end of each year
   - A review, and, if necessary, revision of the key models and standards for statistical modernisation will be completed by the end of 2018
   - CES plenary sessions will review progress annually

VI. METHODS OF WORK

11. The HLG-MOS will meet physically at least twice per year, for 1-2 days, usually back-to-back with other events. In-between these meetings, it will work mainly via electronic communication and telephone or video conferencing.

VII. MEMBERSHIP

12. The HLG-MOS members are the level of heads of national statistical organisations and chief statisticians of international organisations. An appropriate geographical balance in the membership of the HLG-MOS will be ensured.

13. The members of the HLG-MOS undertake to devote the necessary time to adequately discharge their duties.

14. The members of the HLG-MOS will select from amongst themselves a Chairperson, with a maximum term of 4 years.

15. The membership of the HLG-MOS as at January 2017 is as follows:
   - Mr Pádraig Dalton (Ireland) Chairman
   - Mr David Kalisch (Australia)
   - Mr Anil Arora (Canada)
   - Mr Gian Carlo Blangiardo (Italy)
   - Mr Tjark Tjin-a-Tsoi (Netherlands)
   - Ms Liz MacPherson (New Zealand)
   - Mr Shin-Wook Kang (Republic of Korea)
   - Ms Genovefa Ruži (Slovenia)
   - Ms Mariana Kotzeva (Eurostat)
   - Ms Martine Durand (OECD)
   - Ms Lidia Bratanova (UNECE)

16. Members of the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians may participate in HLG-MOS meetings.

17. The HLG-MOS may invite additional persons to participate in some or all of its activities, depending on priorities and interests, where their contributions would be of benefit to the work of the group. These persons shall be representatives of other national or international organisations which demonstrate their commitment to actively contribute to the work of the HLG-MOS, and support the implementation of the strategy.

18. The HLG-MOS will be supported by the UNECE Secretariat.