

Development of International Handbook on Consumer Price Indices: background note for meeting of Ottawa Group, Reykjavik August 1999

Background

A new Inter-Secretariat Working Group on Price Statistics (IWGPS) has been set up to develop and document best practice guidelines on concepts and methodology of price statistics. Membership covers all the main international organisations with an interest, namely OECD,UNSD,IMF,World Bank,Eurostat, ECE and ILO. Its objectives are threefold:

- to arrange the development of the ILO manual on Consumer Price Indices;
- to arrange in parallel for the establishment of standards and manuals on other price statistics, including Producer Price Indices;
- to assist in the development of a framework for price statistics.

In order to assist with the revision of the current CPI manual a Technical Expert Group for updating the manual on CPI (TEG-CPI) has also been set up. The group is time limited and advisory. It exists solely for the production of a revised CPI manual and its role is to give technical advice. Its membership includes members of the Ottawa Group on Price Indexes. It can therefore be regarded as a subgroup of the Ottawa Group although it reports to the IWGPS.

Method of working

It is envisaged that chapters of the draft manual will be prepared by different authors who will be appointed from amongst the members of the Ottawa Group, TEG-CPI, IWGPS as well as other experts in price measurement from developing countries and countries in transition.

An editor will be appointed on the recommendation of TEG-CPI for integrating the work done by the experts as well as co-ordinating and supervising their work and the observance of deadlines.

The ILO/ECE will act as secretariat for TEG-CPI.

TEG-CPI will consult and work closely with the Ottawa Group. Input will be sought from the latter on the work programme and advice sort on the draft outline and chapters including an international glossary of terms. Ottawa Group members will also be encouraged to help in the drafting of chapters or act as chapter editors. The Group will be asked to comment on the handbook in its final draft form.

The agenda of the ECE/ILO meeting on Consumer Price Indices to be held in Geneva 2-5 November 1999 will be aligned so that invited papers prepared for the meeting can be subsequently used as inputs into the revised handbook.

Workplan and scheduling

Subject to review the following schedule has been agreed:

- **April 1999**-final draft outline completed, initial nomination of authors, final agenda for joint ECE/ILO meeting on CPIs (scheduled 3-5 November 1999);
- **August 1999**-presentation of Glossary of Terms, editorial style and page format to Ottawa Group meeting plus more detailed discussion about authors;
- **November 1999**-review of papers presented at ECE/ILO meeting, selection of text to be included in manual;
- **March 2000**-review of existing draft text & identification of new text & authors;
- **June 2000**-Zero draft manual to be submitted to IWGPS & Ottawa Group for comments at its meeting (preferably November 2000 rather than March 2001);
- **September 2000**-ammendments submitted by IWGPS, identification of areas where new text required;
- **December 2000**-first draft of final text to be reviewed;
- **January 2001**-final draft to be approved by TEG-CPI & IWGPS;
- **February/March 2001**-CPI manual to be submitted to Statistical Commission for information.

Action required by Ottawa Consumer Group

The Ottawa Group members are invited to:

- endorse the workplan (and confirm the date of the next Ottawa Group meeting);
- confirm the nature of their involvement as a Group and as individuals;
- comment on the draft outline of the new CPI handbook;
- provide input into the draft glossary of terms.