

IN THIS ISSUE >>>

**Empowering people for social change** | **Getting the data right for global development** | **New ECOSOC President elected**

**Global dialogue on development:** Commission to focus on empowering people, Google+ Hangout on sustainable development, 140 Member States expected at UN Statistical Commission

**Trends and analysis:** World Youth Report calls for participation of young people, Enhancing cooperation on international migration, Big data offers real time information

**Capacity development:** Cutting edge issues on global geospatial information, Preparing to evaluate the Millennium Development Goals

Publications and websites | Comings and goings | Calendar

## Feature Articles and Webcast

### Empowering people for social change

*Promoting empowerment of people will be at the core when the Commission for Social Development convenes for its 51st session. “Empowering individuals and social groups requires a comprehensive set of policies and institutions. From education and health care to economic and social policy, activities that seek to empower people are expected to increase opportunities and improve people’s quality of life”, said Ms. Larysa Belskaya, Vice-Chair of the Commission’s Bureau.*



Chaired by Ms. Sewa Lamsal Adhikari of Nepal, the Commission will meet from 6 through 15 February in New York with a focus on this year’s priority theme, “Empowerment of people in achieving poverty eradication, social integration and full employment and decent work for all”.

Ms. Adhikari described this upcoming session as crucial, given that the world community is now following up on the Rio+20 Conference, as well as preparing for the MDGs review, post-2015 development agenda and the design of sustainable development goals (SDGs).

She also pointed to the important track record of this functional commission, established by the Economic and Social Council in 1946. “The Commission has been playing a key role in shaping social policies,” Ms. Adhikari said, pointing to one of its achievements at the World Summit on Social Development in Copenhagen in 1995, when it “identified poverty eradication as one of the three mutually reinforcing and interdependent pillars of social development.”

#### Report features input from expert group meeting

Preparing for this event, the Secretary-General has submitted a report, exploring the linkages between empowerment and poverty eradication, full and decent employment for all, social integration, as well as sustainable development. The report also features input and recommendations from the expert group meeting, which was held in New York last September on the empowerment theme.

Leading up to that meeting, DESA and its Division for Social Policy and Development (DSPD) opened an online forum on

Facebook to collect input and questions on empowerment from across the globe. And the engagement level was high. “The questions were sound, they were provocative, they reflected concerns,” said John Mathiason of Cornell University, commending the engagement and participation on Facebook and Twitter.

“One interesting thing about empowerment is that you got to engage participation. When people both looked at Facebook and made their presentations on Facebook, Twitter and the survey, they were actually demonstrating that you can have empowerment of people who are far away,” Mr. Mathiason added.

### Opportunities for civil society to contribute

The Commission plans to organize its work in three main forums: the general debate, panel discussions and side events. There will also be many opportunities for civil society to contribute.

A Civil Society Forum will be convened on 5 February under the theme “Civil society: Promoting empowerment of people to achieve the goals of social development” as it relates to the priority theme of the Commission, as well as to the discussions associated with the preparation of the post-2015 development framework.

Held a day prior to the opening of the Commission, the Forum has set a tradition of bringing together prominent civil society actors, representatives of Member States and officials of the United Nations to reflect on a key issue relevant to the work of the current session. It will present its conclusions to the Commission at its opening session. In addition, more than 30 side-events, covering a range of relevant topics in regard to social development, will be organized during the Commission.

During this session, the Secretariat will make a room available to NGOs for briefings and other events.

### Social groups in focus

In addition to the empowerment theme, this session will “provide an opportunity to exchange views on other important key issues, such as disabled persons, youth, ageing, family and others”, Ms. Adhikari said, referring to the provisional agenda which will feature discussions on several different plans related to various social groups. The Commission also plans to review several reports of the Secretary-General on each of these issues as well as on emerging matters.

“This is a very good opportunity for the Commission to highlight and visualize not only the need for vulnerable groups to be empowered, but to contribute directly to the ongoing discussion that the General Assembly, ECOSOC and other relevant bodies of the UN are going to have with regards to the upcoming 2015 agenda for development,” said H.E. Mr. Carlos García González, Vice-Chair of the Bureau.

The work of the Commission can be followed on the website of DSPD, where visitors can find links to all the documentation produced ahead and during the meeting. Statements made by

delegates will also be made available online as the meeting takes place.

With the arrival shortly of government representatives and civil society to UN Headquarters in New York, the stage is set for the important work of the Commission to begin. A vital platform for shaping future policies, it will help promote people’s empowerment across the globe.

The importance of empowerment for development has also been underscored by DESA’s Under-Secretary-General Mr. Wu Hongbo. As experts met last September to prepare for the Commission, he stated, “empowerment is critical to poverty eradication and to development. Indeed, I would even say that any long-term solution to poverty must start with empowerment.”

For more information:

[Fifty-first Session of the Commission for Social Development](#)  
[DESA’s Division for Social Policy and Development](#)  
[Experts answer online questions on empowerment](#)  
[Empowering people to advance development](#)

## Getting the data right for global development

*Statistics play a vital role as the world community works to enhance development across the globe. Health, the economy, the environment and the Millennium Development Goals; these are just a few of many areas measured and analyzed. On 26 February, the UN Statistical Commission will convene to assess how this work can be further improved to meet new and emerging challenges.*



“We are again looking forward to strong participation from Member States. As in past years, we expect about 140 countries to be represented by their experts from the capital, making the Statistical Commission a truly global forum on official statistics,” said Sabine Warschburger, Statistician in DESA’s Statistics Division, who has been coordinating the preparations for the Commission and its many side events for a number of years.

Established as a functional Commission under the UN Economic and Social Council in 1947, the UN Statistical Commission is the highest decision-making body for international statistical activities, especially when it comes to setting statistical standards, the development of concepts and methods and their implementation at the national and international levels. It also oversees the work of DESA’s Statistics Division.

As the World Statistics Day was celebrated a few years back, UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon underscored the important role of the Commission, saying that it “has created international methodological standards and guidelines in virtually every area of statistics. It has played a key role in helping governments strengthen their statistical reporting, making data more available and comparable across countries and regions than ever before.”

### Linking socio-economic information with geographic locations

This year, the Commission will discuss 13 agenda items including the implementation of the fundamental principles of official statistics; environmental-economic accounting; environment

statistics; national accounts; international comparison programme; international trade and regional statistical development in Africa. An additional 16 items will be presented for information, including education, employment, integrated economic statistics as well as development indicators.

Developing a statistical-spatial framework in national statistical systems is this year’s topic of the Commission’s annual in-depth review, which is usually carried out by a Member State. Previous themes have included population and housing censuses, a review of gender statistics, quality assurance frameworks, climate change, employment, education, industry and social statistics. The National Statistical Office of Australia has this year taken the lead in preparing the in-depth report, containing proposals on future work to develop a statistical-spatial framework.

Statistical-spatial information helps advance all development aims, as it links statistical and socio-economic information to a location, bringing much improved understanding and relevance to the data collected. It thereby promotes informed decision-making and policy analysis both at the local and global level.

### Need for measuring well-being, progress and sustainability

One of the most anticipated topics this year is the role of statistics in measuring progress within the field of sustainable development. In the Rio+20 outcome document “The Future We Want”, a call was made for broader measures of progress to complement GDP, while asking the Statistical Commission to work on this together with other UN entities and relevant organizations. This mandate presents an increased responsibility for the statistical community to improve existing frameworks and develop new approaches to capture the complex interaction of the economy, society and environment, and address the need for measures of well-being, progress and sustainability.

To help explore views on how the Commission can best respond to the Rio+20 mandate, the Monday High-Level Forum will be devoted this year to the theme of Official Statistics’ Response to the Rio+20 Mandate for Broader Measures of Progress. It will provide a forum of stocktaking and knowledge-sharing among National Statistical Offices (NSOs) and international organizations.

The Commission will address the implementation of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA) Central Framework, which has been adopted as international statistical standard by the Statistical Commission in 2012. It will also consider endorsing the revised Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES 2013) and a plan for its implementation. The main objective of the FDES 2013 is to guide countries to establish and develop their environment statistics, organizing the data into a structure of six different components.

Elements covered are (i) environmental conditions, quality, and their changes due to human influence; (ii) the availability and

use of the environmental resources in production and consumption; (iii) the generation, management and disposal to the environment of pollutants and other residuals from production and consumption; (iv) the occurrence and impacts of extreme events and disasters; (v) the quality of human settlements and environmental health; and (vi) the social and economic measures for the protection and management of the environment.

The System of Environmental Economic Accounting (SEEA) together with the FDES will help strengthen the measurement of the environmental pillar of sustainable development and the integrated calculation of the environmental, social and economic pillars.

The financial crisis in 2008/2009 revealed the interconnectedness of all economies and showed the economic and financial vulnerabilities of nations based on their cross-border relations. This topic is now discussed under the item on international trade statistics. It covers emerging policy needs for new statistics on international trade, including statistics on multinational enterprises and foreign direct investment, and indicates new initiatives in the measurement of global value chains and trade in value added.

It also expresses concern at the lack of coordination among the many task teams operating in this field and proposes the development of an overarching framework for international trade and economic globalization to ensure consistency in methodology, data compilation and data dissemination and the development of an appropriate mechanism for coordinating this process.

#### Regional perspectives and fundamental principles

Over the past five years, the Commission has reviewed the progress made in the area of official statistics in all five regions – Africa; Asia and the Pacific; Europe; Latin America and the Caribbean Countries; and Western Asia. In 2008, Africa had kicked off this regional theme and the cycle was completed in 2012 with Europe being presented, when the Commission decided to keep this important regional perspective. Time has therefore come to put spotlight on Africa again, featuring an exhibition as well as two seminars on the census and vital statistics and on agricultural statistics.

The Commission also intends to submit the 10 Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics to the Economic and Social Council and the General Assembly for endorsement, following a global survey on their implementation and the creation of a new preamble.

#### Big data and more

“In 2012, the Commission session was supplemented by a record number of 60 side events. It’s my understanding that this makes the Statistical Commission one of the largest and busiest events held at UN Headquarters,” said Sabine Warschburger, also explaining that a similar number of side events is expected this year.

One of the events is “Big Data for Policy, Development and Official Statistics”, arranged on 22 February and taking a closer look at the fundamental change to the nature of data caused by the arrival of the Internet, mobile devices and other technologies. In addition to delegates from National Statistical Offices, participants will include representatives from Google, Amazon Web Services, SAS, UN Global Pulse and OECD.

Other side events through learning centres and lunchtime seminars will focus on the newly revised Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics, the SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting, the implementation of the SEEA Central Framework and Trade and Business Registers and will take place on 25, 26 and 27 February.

The vast range of topics and the many side events being arranged, bear testament to the crucial role statistics play for nations worldwide. The Secretary-General has previously also stated, “statistics are a vital tool for economic and social development, including our efforts to achieve the Millennium Development Goals. For development to succeed, we need data collection and statistical analysis of poverty levels, access to education and the incidence of disease. Statistics are a central consideration in justifying almost every aspect of budgets and programmes that enable hungry children to be fed or that provide shelter and emergency health care for victims of natural disasters.”

For more information:

[44th Session of the UN Statistical Commission](#)  
[DESA’s Statistics Division](#)



## New ECOSOC President elected

*Ambassador Néstor Osorio of Colombia was elected to serve as President of the Economic and Social Council on 28 January. DESA's Under-Secretary-General Wu Hongbo thanked the outgoing President, Miloš Koterec and congratulated Mr. Osorio on his new role, stating that the Colombian's leadership came during a period of transition crucial for the future of the planet.*



For more information:

[UN Economic and Social Council \(ECOSOC\)](#)  
[President of ECOSOC, H.E. Mr. Néstor Osorio](#)  
[Statement by the President of ECOSOC, H.E. Mr. Néstor Osorio](#)  
[Statement by DESA's Under-Secretary-General Wu Hongbo at Handover Ceremony of ECOSOC Presidency](#)

Addressing the event at UN Headquarters in New York, Mr. Wu further stated, “As we chart a course towards sustainable development, the transition that lies ahead of us is not optional, but is inevitable. Our planet simply cannot sustain nine billion inhabitants aspiring for higher standards of living, if we remain entrenched in our unsustainable consumption.”

Citing that 2013 would be “a very important year” for the Council with regards to development issues, Mr. Wu said, “we are now moving from the collection of proposals and ideas, towards important negotiations. I am confident that His Excellency Mr. Osorio will use his leadership so that ECOSOC takes full advantage of these opportunities.”

The newly elected ECOSOC President also took the stage underscoring the important work for the Council moving forward. “Maintaining an intense commitment to the Rio+20 follow-up work is surely a crucial part of walking the talk we had in Rio. Another involves remaking the Council a more effective body – a major and constructive actor on the global stage,” Ambassador Osorio said, also outlining concrete proposals for reform.

“The ECOSOC plays a crucial role in the pursuit of our goal of making the world a better place. So today I will address the task that has been entrusted to me with the utmost commitment and spirit of cooperation and respect. I am sure I will count on the full support of all of you with the goal of continuing working together to build a better future and prosperity for future generations,” he concluded.

# Global Dialogue on Development

## Commission to focus on empowering people

*The Fifty-First Session of the Commission for Social Development (CSocD) will be convened in New York on 6-15 February under the priority theme “Promoting empowerment of people in achieving poverty eradication, social integration and full employment and decent work for all”*



CSocD is a functional commission of the UN Economic and Social Council (ECOSOC). Since the World Summit for Social Development took place in Copenhagen in 1995, the Commission has been the key UN body in charge of the follow-up and implementation of the Copenhagen Declaration and Programme of Action. As a result of the Summit, the mandate of the

Commission was reviewed and its membership expanded from 32 to 46 members in 1996.

Meeting once a year in New York, the Commission has addressed key social development themes as part of its follow-up to the Copenhagen Summit and the Programme of Work contains all documentation of the Commission for each of its sessions since the Summit.

This year, the event will feature a high-level panel discussion on 6 February, focusing on the priority theme and aiming to deepen knowledge and understanding of the link between empowerment and other critical elements of social policy to reduce poverty, promote social integration and full employment and decent work for all.

Panel discussions will also be arranged with events focusing on aging on 7 February; on the emerging issue of the social dimension of the global development agenda beyond 2015 on 11 February; and reviewing the implementation of the World Programme of Action for Youth on 11 February.

The Special Rapporteur on Disability, Mr. Shuaib Chalklen, will also give a presentation during the evening session on 8 February.

For more information:

[Fifty-First Session of the Commission for Social Development](#)

## Google+ Hangout on sustainable development

*Key outcomes of Rio+20 and the way forward will be discussed on 12 February in the first of a series of Google+ Hangouts*

The Rio+20 UN Conference on Sustainable Development in June last year resulted in a focused political outcome document, which launched clear and ambitious processes for the UN System, Member States and the Major Groups to collectively achieve the Future We Want.



As part of the ongoing follow-up of the conference, DESA's Division for Sustainable Development will host a Google+ Hangout on Tuesday, 12 February at 12 PM EST, featuring key experts on Rio+20 and sustainable development from the UN system and civil society. The first in a series of Google+ Hangouts will highlight the major outcomes of Rio+20 and the key follow-up processes launched at the conference.

Panellists for the first “Sustainable Development in Action” Google+ Hangout include Nikhil Seth, Director of DESA's Division for Sustainable Development; Elizabeth Thompson, Executive Coordinator for the Rio+20 conference; Kimo Goree, Vice-President of the International Institute for Sustainable Development Reporting Services (IISD); and Jacob Scherr, Director of global strategy and advocacy for the National Resources Defense Council (NRDC).

The Google+ Hangout will also feature a 20-minute live Q&A session with the panellists. Tweet your questions for panellists to [@SustDev](#) using #SDinAction or post them on the [Sustainable Development Knowledge Platform Facebook page](#) or [register](#) for one of our [Sustainable Development Action Networks](#) to join the conversation there.

The Hangout will be hosted at the UN Google+ account at [gplus.to/unitednations](http://gplus.to/unitednations)

For more information:

<http://bit.ly/RioHangout>

## 140 Member States expected at UN Statistical Commission

*The 44th session of the Statistical Commission will take place at UN Headquarters in New York on 26 February – 1 March*

The United Nations Statistical Commission, established in 1947, brings together Chief Statisticians from Member States from around the world. This year, representatives from about 140 countries are expected to gather in New York. The highest decision making body for international statistical activities and a Functional Commission of the UN Economic and Social Council, it oversees the work of DESA's Statistics Division.

13 agenda items will be discussed including the implementation of the fundamental principles of official statistics; environmental-economic accounting; environment statistics; national accounts; international comparison programme; international trade and regional statistical development in Africa. An additional 16 items will be presented for information, including education, employment, integrated economic statistics as well as development indicators.

A great number of side events will also be arranged, including on “Big Data for Policy Development and Official Statistics”, taking a closer look at the fundamental change to the nature of data caused by the arrival of the Internet, mobile devices and other technologies.

For more information:

[UN Statistical Commission](#)

Feature story: [Getting the data right for global development \[LINK TO BE INCLUDED\]](#)

## Turkey to host 10th Session of UN Forum on Forests

*For the first time, Turkey will host a multilateral meeting on forests, with 193 Member States participating, in Istanbul from 8-19 April following the signing on 24 January of an agreement between Turkish Government and United Nations representatives*



As host country, Turkey will provide resources for holding the upcoming tenth session of the United Nations Forum on Forests and for the participation of delegations from developing countries. Signing the agreement were

Wu Hongbo, Under-Secretary-General for Economic and Social Affairs, and Yasar Halit Çevik, Permanent Representative of Turkey to the United Nations.

Mr. Wu described Turkey's support for the Forum as “generous”, saying that the Government's offer to host the Forum represented

its “strong political commitment to international cooperation”. The upcoming session of the Forum was very important to the ongoing discussions on the post-2015 United Nations development agenda, he noted.

Mr. Çevik said that his country felt “honoured to host the tenth Forum in Istanbul”, pointing out that it would be the first time that it had held a session outside United Nations Headquarters. “I would like to reiterate once again Turkey's commitment to sustainable forest management and raising awareness on the importance of forests in economic life and poverty eradication,” he added.

The United Nations Forum on Forests is the only intergovernmental body that provides a global platform for policy development and cooperation on forests. The main theme of the April session — “Forests and economic development” — will advance actions for mobilizing finance for forests. Through the Forum, countries have agreed to reduce deforestation, prevent forest degradation, promote sustainable livelihoods and reduce poverty for all forest-dependent peoples.

Jan McAlpine, Director of the United Nations Forum on Forests Secretariat, said: “Turkey has stepped up as a leader by hosting an historic global meeting which will catalyse political and financial support for sustainable forest management”.

Forests presently cover 4 billion hectares, nearly 31 per cent, of the global land area. Approximately 60 million people are employed by forest-based industries, and the sector contributes \$468 billion annually to global gross domestic product.

For more information:

[UN Forum on Forests Secretariat](#)

## General Assembly creates group to work on sustainable development goals

*On 22 January, the UN General Assembly established a working group to focus on the design of a set of sustainable development goals (SDGs) to promote global prosperity, reduce poverty and advance social equity and environmental protection*



The 30-member working group, consisting of countries from all regions, will prepare a report containing a proposal on the SDGs that the 193-member Assembly will consider and act on at its 68th session, which begins in September.

The working group is a direct result of the commitment made by governments at the Rio+20 Conference in June to establish a set of action-oriented, concise and easy to communicate goals to help advance sustainable development. The Rio+20 outcome document, entitled “The Future We Want”

also calls for the goals to be integrated into the UN's development agenda beyond 2015.

The SDGs seek to guide countries in achieving targeted outcomes within a specific time period, such as on universal access to sustainable energy and clean water for all, and will build on the anti-poverty targets known as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) after their 2015 deadline.

The MDGs have been instrumental in driving down poverty rates and increasing access to education, healthcare, water and sanitation, but progress has not been uniform and the UN is currently ramping up efforts to help countries achieve the goals by the target date.

“The Future We Want has broadened the scope for global action for people and the planet,” said DESA's Under-Secretary-General Wu Hongbo. “Sustainable development goals that build on the successes of the Millennium Development Goals, and that apply to all countries can provide a tremendous boost to efforts to implement sustainable development and help us address issues ranging from reducing poverty and creating jobs to the pressing issues of meeting economic, social and environmental aspirations of all people.”

Assembly President Vuk Jeremic said he would engage closely with Member States to ensure that the process to create the SDGs becomes a top priority and that the work of the newly established group is at the centre of the Assembly's attention.

“This is a moment for us to imagine the future, and to decide on new ways to address global challenges – to truly define the ‘world we want,’ and the UN we need to make such a vision a reality,” Mr. Jeremic said.

In December, the Assembly passed a resolution outlining a series of steps to implement other aspects of the Rio+20 outcome document, including preparations for the establishment of a new high-level political forum, advancing action on the 10-year programme for promoting more sustainable patterns of consumption and production, and implementing steps to develop a sustainable development financing strategy.

Source: UN News

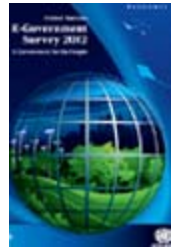
For more information:

[Open Working Group on Sustainable Development Goals](#)

## E-government helps countries increase efficiency

*As a global hub for innovation in public governance, DESA's Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) promotes knowledge-sharing of innovative approaches and practices in public management, particularly in the area of e-government*

The need to develop the information, communication and technology (ICT) sector to be able to meet the MDGs by 2015 is underscored worldwide. ICTs can help reform government in such a way that existing institutional arrangements can be restructured and new innovative plans can flourish, paving the way for a collaborative, effective, inclusive, transparent and accountable government, critical for sustainable development.



Every two years, DPADM publishes the UN E-Government Survey, providing a tool that enables decision-makers to identify their areas of strength and challenges. The survey assesses the e-government readiness of the 193 UN Member States according to a quantitative composite index of e-readiness based on website assessment, telecommunication infrastructure, and human resource endowment.

Based on the findings of the UN E-Government 2012 Survey, Tanzania ranks 139 out of 193 Member States in e-government development and is one of the leading top five countries in Eastern Africa.

“We have to change to fit in the fast-growing world of information and technology. E-government is a milestone in our development strategies,” said President Ali Mohamed Shein in his speech to launch an e-government centre at Mazizini, Zanzibar municipality, in Tanzania.

President Shein said that the e-government programme is to improve communications, economic growth, employment creation and quality of lives. He told the gathering comprising Zanzibaris and delegates from the Chinese Embassy in the country that e-government is aimed at increasing efficiency in government through the use of information and communication technology.

President Shein thanked China's ZTE, Helios-Tech of Israel, Microsoft from USA, and local companies Salem Construction Limited and Kemmisy Investment Limited for supporting the programme, which includes the installation of the fibre optic cable, construction of centres and establishing connections.

Mr. Mohammed Ame, Head of the e-government project facilitation team, said the plan for the e-government project started in 2006, but the ground work lasted only one-year.



“We have to celebrate the success. The project is important in many aspects including improving internet and phone communications,” he said. “The fibre optic cable will enable us to easily access e-health, e-education, e-tourism and other programmes,” he added.

For more information:  
[UN E-Government Surveys](#)

## Trends and Analysis

### World Youth Report calls for participation of young people

*As part of the preparations for the 2013 UN World Youth Report (WYR) on Youth Migration and Development, the UN Focal Point on Youth launched a four-week online discussion platform on 23 January*



Newly available estimates of international migrants by age produced by the Population Division of DESA indicated that by mid-2010, globally, there were 27 million international migrants aged 15 to 24, constituting about one-eighth of the global migrant stock of 214 million.

While considerable attention is given to the issue of migration and its potential economic and social impacts on origin, transit and destination countries, to date, very little attention has been given to understanding the livelihood struggles and opportunities that migration presents for young migrants themselves.

The forum therefore aims at bringing together young people, who have experienced or been affected by migration, to share their personal stories and perspectives.

“We need to listen to what youth have to say about their migration experiences or how migration affects their human development. The World Youth Report which is expected to be launched on International Youth Day, 12 August 2013, will offer youth, youth-led organizations, policymakers and the general public, youthful perspectives that could influence the development potential of migration for young people while mitigating risks. The report will highlight the “voices of youth” on the opportunities and challenges migration presents in origin, transit, and destination countries under various types of migration – regular, involuntary and undocumented. This is particularly relevant in the lead up to the 2nd UN High Level Dialogue on Migration and Development in October 2013,” said Daniela Bas, Director of the Division for Social Policy and Development of DESA.

To highlight some of these concerns, challenges and successes, the UN World Youth Report 2013 will attempt to offer a multidimensional account and perspective on youth migrant life experiences. Besides the e-consultation, the UN Focal Point on Youth has been organizing a number of interactive activities such as an online survey and a Google+ Hangout with young people and experts.

To ensure that the World Youth Report is based on the perspectives of those young people, DESA is inviting the participation of young individuals aged between 15 to 35 years and representatives of youth-led organizations, to share their perspectives and experiences on youth and migration.

Efforts will also be made to target young people who have no or limited access to the Internet or online platforms to facilitate their participation in the consultative process, mainly through youth migrant networks and other relevant youth organizations.

More information:

[E-consultation in preparation for UN World Youth Report 2013](#)

### Enhancing cooperation on international migration

*DESA’s Population Division will be organizing the Eleventh Annual Coordination Meeting on International Migration in New York on 21-22 February*

The meeting is being held in response to a General Assembly resolution from 2004, which requests the Secretary-General to continue convening meetings to coordinate international migration activities.



The meeting has four main objectives. First, in response to recent General Assembly resolutions, the meeting will review preparations for the second High-level Dialogue on International Migration and Development, which will be organized by the General Assembly on 3 and 4 October 2013. Second, the meeting will discuss how the Global Forum on Migration and Development, which was created as a result of the first High-level Dialogue held in 2006, has advanced the global dialogue on international migration and development. Third, the meeting will be briefed on recent contributions to the migration evidence base. Fourth, the meeting will allow international organizations to exchange information on current migration activities and to present new initiatives.

By bringing together entities of the UN system, other relevant intergovernmental organizations and civil society, the coordination meeting provides a unique opportunity to enhance interagency coherence and cooperation on migration in maximizing the benefits and addressing the negative impacts of migration for development.

The outcomes of the meeting will contribute to the report of the Secretary-General on international migration and development to be prepared for the 2013 High-level Dialogue.

For more information:

[Eleventh Coordination Meeting on International Migration](#)

## Big data offers real time information

*Seminar on “Big Data for Policy, Development and Official Statistics” will be held on 22 February in New York ahead of the opening of the UN Statistical Commission*



The arrival of the Internet, mobile devices and other technologies has caused a fundamental change to the nature of data. Big Data has important, distinct qualities that differentiate it from “traditional” institutional data, in particular its timeliness. If governments wanted to, they could already let Big Data play a role in providing information on topics that are currently under the purview of national statistical offices (NSOs).

Traditionally, data processing for analytic purposes followed a fairly static blueprint, with modest amounts of structured data created with stable data models, loaded into an enterprise data warehouse. Non-expert users could then perform basic data visualization and limited analytics via front-end business intelligence tools. With recent developments, data are no longer centralized, highly structured and easily manageable, but are highly distributed, loosely structured and increasingly large in volume. The volume, type and the speed at which new data is created has thus changed and it is also generated by a range of sources, including mobile devices, Internet transactions, networked devices and sensors, social networking and media.

National Statistical Offices have started to explore how best to harness this phenomenon of Big Data in their mission to supply quality statistics for improving economic performance, social well-being and environmental sustainability. The attraction lies in the sheer amount of data which could be available in, or near, real time. Potentially, Big Data could be used as intelligence to better solve emergency situations and it also presents an opportunity for the official statistical community to better meet its mission of disseminating timely and quality statistics.

Should NSOs change their business operations to take on the opportunities of using Big Data for official government purposes? What will be the consequences of using Big Data for policy and development and how secure is a cloud environment for storing confidential data? These and other questions will be addressed during this seminar gathering participants from NSOs, UN Global Pulse and OECD, and corporations including representatives from Google, Amazon Web Services, and SAS.

In order for Big Data to truly gain mainstream adoption and achieve its full potential for official statistical purposes, it is critical that the statistical community does not ignore Big Data, but recognizes the use of it as part of their information management model, prepares an inventory of the state of play and formulates the implications for official statistics.

For more information:

[Big Data for Policy, Development and Official Statistics](#)

## 150 experts gather for forest financing meeting

*The UN Forum on Forests held the second meeting of the ad hoc expert group on forest financing (AHEG2) on 14-18 January in Vienna, Austria*



More than 150 experts from 75 countries and 23 regional and international organizations and processes, as well as major groups and independent experts attended the event.

Experts heard several presentations on the findings of the 2012 Advisory Group on Finance study on forest financing, the Organization-Led Initiative Co-Chairs Summary, the Facilitative Process meetings on forest financing, the study on the impacts of the price of carbon on forest financing, and private sector financing for forests as well as other relevant input including the background studies on forests and economic development. Two key note speakers also provided their views on the feasible and realistic strategies on forest financing.

These presentations and related interactive discussions led to identification of some actions and measures that should be taken to mobilize financing for forests at all levels and from all sources.

AHEG2 participants highlighted the fact that new global trends such as increased urbanization, as well as ongoing deliberations on the post 2015 UN development agenda and the sustainable development goals have affected the discussion on forest financing. They also discussed data, geographic and thematic gaps in regard to financing forests, as well as the means to address these gaps. Regarding data, participants highlighted the need to broaden the basis for data collection from multiple sources, as well as ensuring systematic efforts at all levels to generate accurate, consistent and reliable data.

Actions necessary to improve an enabling environment, capacity development activities, involvement of various stakeholders in mobilizing financing for forests were also discussed, as well as measures to increase financing for forests at all levels. Moreover, various options and measures for mobilizing forest financing at the national, regional and international levels were addressed.

The role of national forest programmes, as an effective policy tool for such purpose, as well as other options such as development of national forest financing strategies, and establishment of national forest funds were highlighted.

The pros and cons of establishing a voluntary global fund to finance sustainable forest management were also deliberated. A number of additional ideas were suggested such as “identifying brokering intermediary institutions” to mobilize funding for

forests or having an umbrella structure to coordinate the existing multilateral funds related to forests.

The Co-Chairs prepared a summary of the meeting in which they also provided a set of proposals and options on forest financing. Experts attending AHEG2 adopted the report of the meeting and took note of the Co-Chairs Summary which is annexed to the AHEG2 report.

For more information:

[Second Meeting of the Ad Hoc Expert Group on Forest Financing \(AHEG2\)](#)



## Capacity development

### Cutting edge issues on global geospatial information

*The Second High Level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM) will take place in Doha, Qatar on 4-6 February*



The event will be convened at the Qatar National Convention Centre by the Secretariat of the United Nations Committee of Experts on Global Geospatial Information Management (UN-GGIM), in collaboration with the Government of Qatar.

It will bring together government representatives from UN Member States as well as interested stakeholders from non-governmental organizations, academia and the private sector to address and discuss critical and cutting-edge issues on global geospatial information management. The Forum also seeks to promote greater usage of growing sources of geospatial information and best practices.

Preceded by An 'Exchange Forum with the Geospatial Industry' on Sunday, 3 February, the High Level Forum starts on Monday, 4 February, with an Opening Ceremony and Ministerial Segment, followed by five technical sessions over the next three days.

Bringing all stakeholders together, the Forum will address current critical matters such as: the importance of and drivers for building a sustainable national geospatial information system; future trends in geospatial information, including growing the information base and promoting its greater use; developing an effective global geodetic reference framework and leveraging location-based services; geospatial information and sustainable development (Rio+20); and challenges in developing core global reference datasets. Each of the sessions will consist of a keynote presentation, panel presentations and discussion with the audience.

For more information:

[United Nations Initiative on Global Geospatial Information Management](#)

### Preparing to evaluate the Millennium Development Goals

*The 22nd and 23rd Meetings of Inter-agency and Expert Group on MDG Indicators (IAEG-MDGs) will be organized back to back on 20 and 21 February in New York*

During the meetings, the outcomes of the debates on the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) at the 67th session of the UN General Assembly as well as those of the Rio+20 Conference, will be reviewed. Participants will also discuss how to prepare the 2013 global MDG report and the work towards the final evaluation of the MDGs in 2015. The meeting will be preceded by a half-day meeting by the Task Team on Lessons Learned from MDG Monitoring on 19 February.

For more information:

[Calendar of Events of DESA's Statistics Division Millennium Development Goals \(MDGs\)](#)



## Publications and Websites

### Technical reports

#### UN Task Team Thematic Think Pieces

Under its extended mandate from September 2012, the UN System Task Team established a new working group to provide analytical thinking and inputs on a renewed global partnership for development in the post-2015 development agenda. A set of think pieces has been prepared by various UN agencies, focusing on specific issues of relevance to the global partnership as well as on lessons learnt from MDG-8 and an overview of the various actors involved. A synthesis report of the papers will be published in March 2013. The papers can be accessed at: <http://bit.ly/UCPFIt>

For more information:

[Preparing for the development agenda beyond 2015](#)

### Statistical compilations

#### Monthly Bulletin of Statistics and MBS Online



The Monthly Bulletin of Statistics presents current economic and social statistics for more than 200 countries and territories of the world. It contains over 50 tables of monthly and/or bimonthly, quarterly and annual data on a variety of subjects illustrating important economic trends and developments, including population, prices, employment and earnings, energy, manufacturing, transport, construction, international merchandise trade and finance.

Vol. LXVI – No. 12, December 2012

In addition to the regular recurrent monthly tables, this issue includes the following quarterly and bimonthly tables: Retail price indices relating to living expenditures of United Nations officials; Earnings in non-agricultural activities, by sex; Fuel imports of developed economies; External trade conversion factors; Manufactured goods exports; and Selected series of world statistics.

For more information: [Monthly Bulletin of Statistics Online](#)

#### MDG Gender Chart 2012

The MDG Gender Chart 2012 was just released online. Co-produced by the Statistics Division and UN-Women every two years, the chart depicts the situation of women and girls in developing regions, as reflected in a number of MDG indicators. It

is prepared with inputs from members of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on MDGs indicators.

The chart reveals that although there has been some progress in a number of the gender dimensions, more needs to be done, in every country and at every level, to achieve the pivotal third MDG and to reduce persisting levels of inequality based on sex, wealth, location, ethnicity and other markers of disadvantage.

For more information: [MDG Gender Chart 2012](#)

### Outreach material

#### Youth Flash Newsletter

The January issue is now available featuring the story Connecting Youth to the Global Development Agenda, youth in action and more. The newsletter is published by DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development Focal Point on Youth to keep the public informed about the work of the UN on youth issues. It is prepared with input from UN offices, agencies, and from youth organizations around the world.

View full issue: [Youth Flash Newsletter](#)

#### Enable Newsletter

Prepared by the Secretariat for the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (SCRPD) within DESA's Division for Social Policy and Development, the January issue is now available highlighting the Status of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), as well as the latest updates on coming events, publications and more. The newsletter features input from UN offices, agencies, funds and programmes, and civil society.

Read full issue: [United Nations ENABLE Newsletter](#)

#### DESA NGO News

Featuring information on the Post-2015 Development Agenda, highlighting the importance of NGOs submitting quadrennial reports on time, as well as the people's survey "My World", the January edition is now available. The online monthly newsletter is published by DESA's NGO Branch, providing the most up-to-date information on news and upcoming events of interest to civil society at UN headquarters in New York, Geneva and elsewhere.

Read full issue: [DESA NGO News](#)

## Message Stick

Published by The United Nations Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues (UNPFII), the newsletter includes information on the International Expert Group Meeting: Indigenous Youth: Identity, Challenges and Hope on 29- 31 January, as well as the upcoming 12th Session of the Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues taking place on 20- 31 May.

Download: [Message Stick](#)

## Discussion papers

### Monthly Briefing on the World Economic Situation and Prospects No. 50

Published by DESA's Development Policy and Analysis Division, the January issue states that the world economic prospects for 2013 is only slightly improving. While a full-blown fiscal cliff has been averted, significant uncertainties remain about the debt ceiling and fiscal sustainability in the long run. The report also calls for more forceful and concerted policy actions at both national and international levels to mitigate all the major risks.

Download: [Monthly Briefing on the World Economic Situation and Prospects No. 50](#)

### Monthly Briefing on the World Economic Situation and Prospects No. 49

Published by DESA's Development Policy and Analysis Division, the November/December issue highlights the fiscal cliff looming for the United States, the economic situation in Japan that continues to deteriorate and the mild strengthening of economic activity in China.

Download: [Monthly Briefing on the World Economic Situation and Prospects No. 49](#)

# Comings and Goings

## Comings



John R. Wilmoth was appointed Director of the Population Division effective 2 January 2013. With a distinguished academic background, Mr. Wilmoth has served as Professor of Demography at the University of California at Berkeley and has previously also worked for the Population Division as Chief of its Mortality Section from 2005 to 2007.

Mr. Wilmoth is the author or co-author of more than 50 scientific papers on various aspects of population dynamics, including trends in human longevity, the impact of population ageing on government transfer programmes, and the popular debate about world population growth.

Mr. Wilmoth was furthermore the lead consultant to the World Health Organization for the development of new maternal mortality estimates, used for the monitoring of MDG 5.

[Read the interview with Mr. Wilmoth](#)



Elia Yi Armstrong assumed the position as Chief of the Development Management Branch at DESA's Division for Public Administration and Development Management (DPADM) in January. Ms. Armstrong started her career in social services working with non-profit organizations and development NGOs before joining the

Canadian public service in 1993. She served the Treasury Board Secretariat and the Privy Council Office of the Government of Canada and was also seconded briefly to the Public Management Service of the OECD.

Prior to joining DPADM in the late 1990s, she was a short-term consultant to the Consulate-General of Canada in New York. At DPADM, Ms. Armstrong worked in the Public Administration Capacity Branch and the Office of the Director. She was seconded to the UN Ethics Office in 2006 and also served as the Director of the UNDP Ethics Office from July 2008 to April 2012.

Ms. Armstrong holds a B.S.W. (social work) from the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada and a MSc. from the University of London, London School of Economics. She also received her second degree MSc. in Social Policy, Planning and Participation in Developing Countries.

*The following staff members were also promoted in January:*

Sharon Spiegel, Chief of Branch, Financing for Development office

Haoyi Chen, Statistician, Statistics Division

Vyatcheslav Cherkasov, Sr. Governance & Public Admin. Officer, Division for Public Administration and Development Management

Zin Lin, Statistics Assistant, Statistics Division

Eric Olson, Senior Economic Affairs Officer, Office for ECOSOC Support and Coordination

## Goings

*The following staff members retired in January:*

Magaly Fernandez, Statistics Assistant, Statistics Division

Gerhard Heilig, Chief of Section, Population Division

Felice Llamas, Senior Social Affairs Officer, Division for Social Policy and Development

Armindo Miranda, Senior Population Affairs Officer, Population Division

Dolores Vicente, Secretary, Division for Social Policy and Development



# Calendar

## February

### The Second High Level Forum on Global Geospatial Information Management (GGIM)

Doha, Qatar on 4-6 February

<http://ggim.un.org/>

### 51<sup>st</sup> Session of the Commission for Social Development

New York, 6-15 February

<http://social.un.org/index/CommissionforSocialDevelopment/Sessions/2013.aspx>

### Google+ Hangout on sustainable development

12 February, 12 pm EST

<http://bit.ly/RioHangout>

### Meetings of IAEG-MDG

New York, 20-21 February

[http://unstats.un.org/unsd/newsletter/globalstat\\_unsd\\_calendar.htm#20-21Feb2013](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/newsletter/globalstat_unsd_calendar.htm#20-21Feb2013)

### Eleventh Annual Coordination Meeting on International Migration

New York, 21-22 February

<http://www.un.org/esa/population/meetings/eleventhcoord2013/eleventhcoord2013.htm>

### Seminar on “Big Data for Policy, Development and Official Statistics”

New York, 22 February

[http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/statcom\\_2013/seminars/Big\\_Data/default.html](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/statcom_2013/seminars/Big_Data/default.html)

### 44th session of the Statistical Commission

New York, 26 February – 1 March

[http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/commission\\_44th\\_session.htm](http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/commission_44th_session.htm)

## March

### Committee for Development Policy, fifteenth session

New York, 18 - 22 March

<http://www.un.org/en/development/desa/policy/cdp/index.shtml>

### Youth ECOSOC 2013 - "Shaping tomorrow's innovators: Leveraging science, technology, innovation and culture for today's youth"

New York, 27 March

<http://www.un.org/en/ecosoc/youth2013/>

DESA News is an insider's look at the United Nations in the area of economic and social development policy. The newsletter is produced by the Communications and Information Management Service of the United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs in collaboration with DESA Divisions. DESA News is issued every month. Please click [here](#) to send inquiries.