



UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC
AND
SOCIAL COUNCIL



Distr.
LIMITED

E/CN.3/L.59
7 May 1962
ENGLISH
ORIGINAL: FRENCH

STATISTICAL COMMISSION
Twelfth session
Agenda item 20

PRIORITIES OF THE COMMISSION'S WORK PROGRAMME

France: draft resolution

The Statistical Commission,

Considering that as statistical research develops the number of inquiries grows, and particularly the number sent to industrial, commercial and craft enterprises and establishments, and that this proliferation makes it necessary to co-ordinate such statistical inquiries in order to avoid troubling the units concerned too often, and particularly to avoid asking them the same question several times in different questionnaires,

Considering, however, that it is difficult in practice to adhere **strictly** to the sound principle of avoiding duplication because it is often necessary to include in the questionnaire for a new inquiry certain questions of a secondary nature which may have been asked already in other inquiries, the reason being that it is necessary:

to identify the units answering the questionnaire unambiguously,
to be able, by comparing information of different kinds, to check the validity of the new data which are the actual object of the inquiry and thus to avoid any gross errors, such as, for example, errors in units of measure,
to make it possible, in presenting the results of the new inquiry, to cross-tabulate the new characteristics with characteristics which have already been established statistically, in order to study certain correlations (individual data on those characteristics are essential for that purpose),

Considering that such duplication of questions, which is technically almost inevitable, cannot but irritate the units concerned, which do not always understand the need for it, and may thereby prejudice the success of certain inquiries,

Considering that in order to avoid such duplication completely it would be necessary to collate the data obtained for a single unit from different inquiries, which is a very difficult and very onerous operation when powerful electronic equipment is not available, and particularly when the inquiries in question have been carried out by different bodies,

Requests the Secretary-General:

1. To invite the official statistical organizations of those Member States which seem to him to have had some experience in this field to inform him:

(a) what measures of any kind they have taken or contemplate taking in order to find a solution, even a partial or inadequate one, to these problems;

(b) whether they have had any experience in collating, with the aid of electronic equipment, statistical data obtained for the same "population" of statistical units in the course of different inquiries;

(c) and, more generally, what measures have been taken or are contemplated to simplify the statistical questionnaires sent to enterprises or to reduce the number of them, in view of the fact that the task of answering such questionnaires may impose a considerable burden on the enterprises;

2. To report to the thirteenth session on the results of this inquiry.
