

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Approved

Meeting of the 2019/2020 Bureau
Aguascalientes (Mexico), 25-26 February 2020

Item 3(c) of the Provisional
Agenda

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE TASK FORCE ON
STATISTICS ON CHILDREN, ADOLESCENTS AND YOUTH**

Prepared by UNICEF, UNFPA, Eurostat and UNECE

*This document proposes terms of reference for the Task Force on statistics on children, adolescents and youth prepared by United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA), Eurostat and UNECE. **The Bureau reviewed and approved the terms of reference.***

I. BACKGROUND

1. The 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) has been ratified by 196 countries. CRC obliges international organizations, governments, and other stakeholders, to ensure that no child is left out of progress, that every child is supported to fulfil their rights and potential of development, has a supportive family environment, access to justice and is protected from violence, abuse and exploitation. Child protection systems exist to safeguard all children and their families from deprivations of their rights, preventing and responding to violence, exploitation and abuse of children. The laws, policies, regulations and services that are constitutive of child protection systems, will not function – or at least not function properly – without quality, reliable and comparable data.

2. The UNICEF 2019 Report on the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) highlights that the lack of data is a major challenge to assess status and progress towards achieving SDGs. Even in high-income countries, where a larger share of indicators show that progress is more on track than in any other region, some indicators are missing as in other regions of the world. Data gaps in middle and high-income countries exist across sectors: on health and nutrition, quality education, and violence, abuse and exploitation. This is due to a combination of factors; some global SDG indicators measure issues that largely do not occur in the UNECE region (e.g., female genital mutilation/cutting) or simply data is not collected even though the issues exist (e.g., child marriage). In some instances, it occurs that data is collected but in a way that is not internationally comparable (e.g. violence against children).

3. The lack of standards and the weak or inconsistent use of standards and internationally agreed definitions and recommendations in several statistical areas hinder comparability and exacerbate data gaps for all groups but especially for children and young people. Examples of these are to be found in the areas of violence against children and adolescents (including lack of standards); children and adolescents living in institutions (hard to sample); children with disabilities (lack of consistent application of existing standards). In each of those areas, there is expressed demand and political will to have data and indicators.

II. MANDATE

4. The Task Force on statistics on children, adolescents and youth reports to the CES through its Bureau. It will be created for a period from March 2020 to June 2022.

III. OBJECTIVE

5. The objective of the Task Force is to prepare guidance to improve the availability, quality and comparability of statistics on children, adolescents and youth towards more harmonized and rationalized definitions, methodologies and approaches across the countries participating in the Conference of European Statisticians.

IV. PLANNED ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS

6. The Task Force will carry out the following activities concerning statistics on children, adolescents and youth:

a) Review data gaps, sources and collection mechanisms across countries in the UNECE region regarding indicators and disaggregations, in particular in the areas of education, health, violence, care of children without parental care, and disabilities. This review will include the local definitions and use of age-based groups (children, adolescents, youth);

b) Review the use of standards and recommendations, definitions, recommendations and methodologies that are internationally agreed;

c) Develop a set of recommendations for a harmonized and rationalized improvement of the availability, quality and comparability of statistics on children, adolescents and youth.

V. TIMETABLE

7. The activities of the Task Force are planned for the period from March 2020 to June 2022, according to the following tentative schedule:

March-April 2020	Formation of the Task Force and drafting of a work plan with activities, timing and division of work
May-September 2020	Reviewing data gaps, sources and collection mechanisms across countries in the UNECE region (activity <i>a</i>)
May-December 2020	Reviewing the use of standards and recommendations, definitions, recommendations and methodologies that are internationally agreed (activity <i>b</i>)
January-October 2021	Developing a set of recommendations for a harmonized and rationalized improvement of the availability, quality and comparability of statistics on children, adolescents and youth (activity <i>c</i>)
October 2021	Progress report to the CES Bureau
November-December 2021	Editing of the consolidated guidance
January-February 2022	Reviewing the full draft guidance by the CES Bureau
March 2022	Revision based on the comments by the CES Bureau

April-May 2022	Electronic consultation among all CES members
June 2022	Expected endorsement by the CES plenary session

VI. METHODS OF WORK

8. The Task Force is expected to work mainly through e-mail and telephone conferences. A face-to-face meeting of the Task Force would be planned to discuss final results. In addition, informal meetings could be organized on the occasion of events attended by the majority of the Task Force members.

VII. MEMBERSHIP

9. The following countries and organizations have expressed interest in participating in the Task Force: Austria, Armenia, Canada, Poland, Eurostat, OECD, UNICEF and UNFPA. The membership is open to additional countries or organizations. The secretariat will be provided by UNECE with support from UNICEF and UNFPA.

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