

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Meeting of the 2015/2016 Bureau  
Geneva (Switzerland), 21-22 October 2015



Item 4 (b) of the Provisional  
Agenda

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE TASK FORCE ON MEASURING  
LABOUR MOBILITY**

**Note by the Secretariat**

*As a follow-up to the in-depth review on labour mobility and globalisation, the Conference of European Statisticians decided in June 2015 to establish a Task Force on Measuring Labour Mobility, and asked the CES Bureau to decide on the next steps in October 2015. The Bureau approved the terms of reference for the Task Force.*

**I. BACKGROUND**

1. Labour mobility is a topic of growing policy interest and concern. However, measurement of labour mobility is challenging as it cuts across several statistical domains. Harmonization of concepts and improved data availability are required to provide an adequate answer to the policy needs and changing economic realities surrounding labour mobility.

2. The CES Bureau reviewed in-depth labour mobility and globalisation in February 2015, based on a paper by Statistics Austria. The plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) further discussed the topic in June 2015 to get input from all CES members.

3. The review identified three main challenges in measuring labour mobility: (a) improving data comparability and coordination of work; (b) enhancing accessibility of existing information; and (c) filling data gaps.

4. Measurement of labour mobility is a cross-cutting issue, touching upon economic and social statistics. The different statistical areas consider labour mobility from different viewpoints. For example, migration statistics do not cover non-migrant foreign workers, they are better at measuring long-term than short-term migration, and often do not include the purpose of the move; tourism statistics measure short-term moves but not workers; and labour market statistics are often missing mobility information. Improvement of statistics on labour mobility requires coordination across several statistical domains and data collection systems, at both national and international levels.

5. The CES plenary session in June 2015 took the following decision:

*“67. The Conference endorsed the outcome of the in-depth review on labour mobility and globalization and supported establishing a Task Force on Measuring Labour Mobility and Globalization. Work should be undertaken in close cooperation with the International Labour Organization’s Expert Group on this topic.*

68. *The following countries and organizations expressed interest in participating in the Task Force: Austria, Poland, Turkey, Eurostat, OECD and the World Trade Organization.*”

6. The Task Force will work in close cooperation with the International Labour Organization’s (ILO) Working Group on Labour Migration Statistics. This Working Group is developing internationally agreed standard measures, concepts and definitions of international labour migration, and aims to improve harmonization of labour migration data. The work of the Task Force presented in these terms of reference is intended to complement the work of the ILO Working Group.

## **II. MANDATE**

7. The work of the Task Force is conducted within the framework of CES and its Bureau. The Task Force will be created for a period from October 2015 to April 2018.

8. The Steering Group on National Accounts and the Steering Group on Migration Statistics will be consulted during the work to ensure alignment with both work areas.

## **III. OBJECTIVE**

9. The objective of the Task Force is to develop practical guidance on the compilation of labour mobility statistics and review countries’ practices in this area.

10. The Task Force will review as case studies the current work in the measurement of labour mobility in at least three countries using information gathered across different statistical domains. For each country, this would include the list of available data sources, the ways how labour migration is measured, as well as investigating the comparability of national accounts and social statistics on labour mobility.

## **IV. PLANNED ACTIVITIES AND OUTPUTS**

11. The task force would deliver the following outputs:

- (a) Practical guidance on the compilation of labour mobility statistics, incorporating perspectives of different statistical domains;
- (b) Guidance on the definitions, methods and data sources used to measure labour mobility in different statistical domains, and other measurement and data accessibility issues;
- (c) Country case studies on the measurement of labour mobility.

12. An additional outcome of the work of the Task Force should be improved national coordination across statistical domains, particularly with regards to the measurement of labour mobility.

13. The Task Force will carry out the following activities for selected countries:

- (a) Review definitions used to measure labour mobility in different statistical domains. This would include an assessment of the comparability of national accounts and social statistics data on labour mobility;
- (b) Review of data sources available for the measurement of labour mobility, including the extent to which different sources of data are accessible across statistical domains;

- (c) Describe any ex-post statistical modelling methodologies used for producing labour mobility statistics;
- (d) Evaluate the current practices and feasibility of labour mobility data exchange between countries;
- (e) Identify current constraints towards improving data comparability and coordination of work, enhancing accessibility of existing information, and filling data gaps;
- (f) Review country case studies to describe good practices in communication between statistical agencies responsible for collecting data on labour mobility, as well as producing the related statistics.

## V. TIMETABLE

14. The activities of the Task Force are planned for the period from October 2015 to April 2018, according to the following tentative schedule:

Oct-Dec 2015	Form the Task Force and draft a work plan with activities, timing and division of work
Jan-Dec 2016	In-depth review of the current state of labour mobility statistics in selected countries
Jan-Apr 2017	Draft practical guidelines based on the review and good practices
May-Sep 2017	Finalize draft guidelines on how to improve the measurement of labour mobility
Oct 2017	Review of the full draft guidelines by the CES Bureau
Oct-Dec 2017	Revise the guidelines to take into account comments by the CES Bureau
Feb-Apr 2018	Electronic consultation among all countries in CES
Apr 2018	Expected endorsement by the CES plenary session

## VI. METHOD OF WORK

15. The Task Force will primarily work via email, wiki workspace and telephone conferences. Face-to-face meetings of the Task Force could be arranged in conjunction with other international events.

## VII. MEMBERSHIP

16. Since this is a cross-cutting topic, the Task Force should include both economic and social statisticians, which will be critical for the success of the work.

17. The following countries and international organizations have expressed interest in participating in the Task Force: Armenia, Austria, Germany, Italy, Mexico, Norway, Turkey, Eurostat, OECD, ILO, World Trade Organization and United Nations Statistics Division. Other countries and organizations will be invited to join the task force.

18. UNECE will act as Secretariat to the Task Force.

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