

**UNITED NATIONS STATISTICAL COMMISSION and
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE**

**EUROPEAN COMMISSION STATISTICAL
OFFICE OF THE EUROPEAN
COMMUNITIES (EUROSTAT)**

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE (ILO)

Joint ECE/ILO/Eurostat Seminar on the Quality of Work
(Geneva, 11-13 May 2005)

INFORMATION NOTICE FOR PARTICIPANTS

The meeting will be held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva, on 11-13 May 2005.
The meeting will start at 9:30 a.m. on Wednesday, 11 May 2005

I. PURPOSE OF THE MEETING

The Joint ECE/ILO/Eurostat Seminar on the Quality of Work following the recommendations of the second UNECE- Eurostat-ILO Seminar on Measurement of the Quality of Employment (May 2002, Geneva) and the provisions made in the programme of work as adopted by the Conference of European Statisticians at its 52nd plenary session (respective documents CES/SEM.48/2 and CES/2003/3/Add.4).

The Seminar will have the following major objectives:

1. Review the work of the international agencies and national governmental agencies in the ECE region in measuring qualitative aspects of work on the basis of statistical indicators.
2. Review the indicators of quality of work developed by the ILO, EUROSTAT, OECD and national statistical agencies.
3. Review methods used to analyse the levels and trends of the quality of work and related statistics.
4. Discuss possible ways of joining national and international efforts in measuring quality of work.

Expected outcomes of the meeting are the identification of different approaches to measuring dimensions of quality of work and decent work, thereby enhancing both national and international efforts in measuring qualitative side of labour.

For additional background information, please see the Annex 1 attached below.

II. AGENDA OF THE MEETING

The following substantive topics will be discussed:

1. Quality of work and decent work: review of conceptual frameworks and methods of data collection:
 - a) Conceptual frameworks and measurement of quality of work and decent work
 - b) Indicators
 - c) Methods
2. Access to labour market, social exclusion, long-term unemployment, youth employment

3. Inadequate employment situations:
 - a) Type of contracts and excessive hours
 - b) Labour market flexibility and job security

The annotated agenda will be posted as soon as it will be available, on the web page of the meeting at the following address <http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2005.05.labour.htm>

III. PARTICIPATION, ACCREDITATION AND REGISTRATION

Representatives of all Member States of the United Nations and of interested intergovernmental organizations are welcome to participate in the meeting. Participants representing non-governmental organizations in a consultative status with the United Nations Economic and Social Council may also attend. All participants must be accredited by the competent authorities of their country or international organization.

All participants attending the meeting are requested to have a valid passport and, if required, a visa. Applications for visas should be made as soon as possible to the Embassy of Switzerland in the country in which the participants reside, with a reference to the Joint ECE/ILO/Eurostat Seminar on the Quality of Work. If necessary, the UNECE secretariat can provide a letter to facilitate obtaining a visa. This can be requested from the UNECE secretariat (fax: ++41 22 917 0040 or e-mail: linda.hooper@unece.org).

The statistical offices and international organizations are asked **to inform the UNECE secretariat before 28 January 2005** whether their organization intends to participate at the meeting and/or submit a contribution on the topics mentioned above. Please indicate the topic to which the paper will refer as well as *participant(s) name(s) and their contact data*.

Participants are requested to fill in the attached **Conference registration form** and send it to the UNECE secretariat by fax (+41 22 917 0040) **by 11 April 2005** at the latest so that it may be processed well in advance of the meeting. The information will be used to register participants with the UN Security Section and to obtain ID badges from Security offices.

In order to enter the Palais des Nations where the meeting is being held, all participants need to obtain a security pass (ID badge). For this purpose, please present yourself with your passport at the Villa Les Feuillantines (shown on the attached map) by 8:30 a.m. at the latest on Wednesday, 11 May 2005. The Security Identification Office is open Monday to Friday from 8.00 a.m. to 5.00 p.m. (non-stop). For identification and security reasons, delegates are requested to wear their security badges at all times while inside the Palais des Nations.

There are two gates that can be used by participants to enter the UN premises: the pedestrian passage at Place des Nations (tram 13, buses 5 and 8, stop Nations) and the Pregny Gate (Avenue de la Paix 14, buses 8 and 18, stop Appia). For security reasons, the Police can at any time temporarily close the Place des Nations gate. Participants may contact the Security Operations and Control Centre at 022 917 2902 to obtain the latest information relating to the security situation at the gates.

The plan of the UN premises at Geneva is also attached to this Information Notice in Annex 2.

IV. DOCUMENTATION, METHODS OF WORK AND OFFICIAL LANGUAGES

The working languages of the meeting will be English and Russian. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided. The documentation will be in English only. The following deadlines and requirements apply:

- Participants in the seminar who would like to submit a supporting paper should inform the UNECE secretariat of their intention by sending an email message (linda.hooper@unece.org) **by 28 January 2005** at the latest. The message should include a short abstract (approximately half a page) of the paper.

- The full versions of papers, *not exceeding 10 pages in length (including tables, references, annexes, etc.)*, should be sent to the UNECE secretariat by **31 March 2005** at the latest. They can be submitted in English only. However, authors are invited to submit translations of their summaries or papers in Russian which will be made available on the seminars's website.
- Papers should be submitted in MS Word format (via e-mail, diskette or CD-ROM) to Ms. Linda Hooper (linda.hooper@unece.org)
- Since documents will not be translated, authors of supporting papers are encouraged to submit their papers in English or at least provide an abstract in English.

The Group preparing the Seminar has asked selected countries to prepare invited papers and appointed discussants to lead the discussion on individual agenda items. The Discussants are indicated in the Explanatory Notes to the Agenda below. For each substantive item on the agenda, the discussants will invite 2-3 speakers to write an **invited paper** and to present them at the Seminar. All other participants are welcome to submit a **supporting paper** to any topic of the agenda. The supporting papers will be distributed to the delegates via the Seminar's website.

The UNECE secretariat will make sure that all invited and supporting papers will be made available on the UNECE web site at the following address: <http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2005.05.labour.htm>

Authors of invited papers will have about 20 minutes per paper for the presentation. Authors of supporting papers may be given (time permitting) about 5 minutes to highlight main issues raised in their papers. Presenters may use PowerPoint presentations, Adobe Acrobat full screen presentations or A4/letter transparencies. UNECE Secretariat cannot provide translation of the presentations.

- PowerPoint and Adobe presentations should be sent to the UNECE Secretariat by **4 May 2005** at the latest, so that these can be installed on the computer for presentation at the seminar.
- The UNECE Secretariat will post the presentations on the website after the meeting. Therefore, the files should follow strict naming conventions; NName.ppt or NName.pdf, where NN is the number of the paper and name is the name of the author.

All invited and supporting papers along with their summaries will be made available on the UNECE web site at the following address:

<http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2005.05.labour.htm>

Delegates are encouraged to download the papers from the website and bring their own copies to the meeting. Documents posted on the website before the meeting will not be distributed in the conference room.

V. ACCOMMODATION

Participants are requested to make their own hotel reservations. The ECE secretariat in Geneva is not in a position to provide such services to delegates. Participants are advised to book hotel accommodation well in advance of the meeting, since Geneva is quite busy with international meetings. In order to assist them in organizing their accommodation, the UNECE secretariat provides a list of hotels on its website <http://www.unece.org/stats/geneva.e.htm> (follow the link "Hotels in Geneva"). If difficulties are encountered, participants may contact their Permanent Mission in Geneva for assistance.

VI. INFORMATION AND CORRESPONDANCE

All queries concerning the meeting should be addressed to:

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ANNEX 1

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The traditional focus of data collection and statistics in the labour sphere has mainly been on employment and unemployment. There is a growing awareness that this is insufficient. The volume of employment generated by an economy at any point in time does not tell us much about the nature and quality of work. Better and more comprehensive measurement of the qualitative content of work, or simply *quality of work*, will allow for a more detailed assessment of the mechanisms by which economic growth translates into higher standards of human welfare, and how these in turn lay the ground for faster economic and social development. Work can be characterized in terms of multiple dimensions of quality of employment and the latter can easily converge with the ILO dimensions of *decent work*.

Of particular interest are the combinations and the patterns that emerge among demographic and socio-economic groups. Some of these relationships are generally accepted. Poor health and unsafe working conditions increase absenteeism and reduce labour productivity. Employment insecurity and short tenure are related to accident rates, and poor working conditions are related to high job turnover.¹ Higher rates of trade union membership are associated with higher labour productivity², and greater participation in decision-making at the workplace is associated with greater job satisfaction.³ Systematic gender differences have been observed on many dimensions.

Comprehensive data on quality of work could usefully inform analysts, observers and policy-makers about many other relationships. This is not, however, simply a matter of pointing out causal relations. Policy is about making informed decisions with a reasonable assessment of likely results and their magnitude, including the inevitable ripples of indirect and unintended consequences. Better knowledge of these linkages would help provide a broader set of options for policy analysts and policy-makers.

The international community: work in progress

The above remit has urged the international community to pay growing attention to various qualitative aspects of job, work and employment, which are critically interrelated and interdependent. Moreover, globalisation has brought into the spotlight the verity that while the population may enjoy better job opportunities, the availability of a job does not necessarily mean basic income, when workers have limited or no access to social protection and are deprived of opportunities to voice their aspirations and values to defend their rights at work. In other words, there is a growing awareness among both data producers and data users that developments in the labour market should be gauged against and analysed on the basis of a comprehensive set of indicators reflecting qualitative and quantitative aspects of the world of work.

A significant amount of empirical studies, research and practical work have been carried out in recent years with the objective of providing a framework to quantify, where possible, the qualitative elements of work based on a comprehensive set of quality-sensitive indicators. A brief review of the developmental work in progress by the ILO, EUROSTAT, and the OECD is given below.

ILO

¹ Bohle, P., Quinlan, M. & Mayhew, C. "The health and safety effects of job insecurity: An evaluation of the evidence", in *The Economic and Labour Relations Review*, Vol. 12, No. 1, June 2001.

² Freeman, R. and Medoff, J.L. *What do unions do?* Basic Books, New York, 1984.

³ Hamermesh, D. *The changing distribution of job satisfaction*, NBER working paper No. 7332, September, 1999.

The promotion of *decent work* for all persons everywhere and striving towards reducing its deficits became the pivotal pylon and organisational framework of the International Labour Organisation (ILO) in 1999 after it introduced and described decent work as “*opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity*”.⁴ This definition of decent work includes the following six dimensions: (i) opportunity for work; (ii) productive work; (iii) freedom of choice of employment; (iv) equity in work; (v) security at work; and (vi) dignity at work.

However, in order to know what progress a country has made towards achieving decent work or to determine to what extent countries differ in terms of creating, their working population a work environment which encompasses these six dimensions, a set of explicitly defined statistical indicators is required. It should be noted that from the very onset of the developmental work on these indicators, it was predetermined that they should allow for both quantitative and qualitative measurement of progress made towards decent work goals.

Based on the above brief description of decent work, a core set of thirty decent work statistical indicators has been proposed⁵. The ILO core set of Decent Work statistical indicators should not be considered as something final and complete. While some of the indicators already exist, others need to be developed from existing data sources, such as household level sample surveys. Some experimental work has already been carried out in a number of countries, in Europe and elsewhere.

In the ILO, work is also underway to develop qualitative indicators of employment. Qualitative indicators, while numerical, address things that are intrinsically more qualitative in nature and are based on such methods as the coding of legislation, court records and other textual sources or on other assessments of the effective application of labour law. Among the four fundamental rights at work, for instance, freedom of association and collective bargaining rights seem to particularly lend themselves to qualitative approaches.

EUROSTAT

Quality of work and employment has within a short time become a major subject of discussion, on of which has been at the top of the European political agenda since the Lisbon, Nice and Stockholm summits. Its promotion is a guiding principle in the modernisation of the European social model, as initiated in the Social Policy Agenda and it is a key element in promoting employment in a competitive and inclusive knowledge economy⁶.

In 2001, the Commission of the European Communities developed a number of quality work indicators, to help in refining policies in ways that would further benefit Europe's workforce as well as its economy. The Commission identified the following two broad dimensions of quality in work, recognising that quality is a multifaceted concept:

⁴ ILO, *Decent Work: Report of the Director General, International Labour Conference, 87th Session*. Geneva 1999.

⁵ Anker, R., Chernyshev, I., Egger, Ph., Mehran, F. and Ritter, J., *Measuring Decent Work with Statistical Indicators*. Policy Integration Department, Statistical Development and Analysis, Working Paper No. 2. International Labour Office, Geneva, October 2002.

⁶ *Employment and social policies: A framework for investing in quality*, Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Commission of the European Communities, COM(2001)313 final, Brussels, 20.6.2001.

Job characteristics: objective and intrinsic characteristics, including: job satisfaction, remuneration, non-pay rewards, working time, skills and training and prospects for career advancement, job content, match between jobs characteristics and workers characteristics.

The work and wider labour market context: gender equality, health and safety, flexibility and security, access to jobs, work-life balance, social dialogue and worker environment, diversity and non-discrimination. The Commission proposed a set of indicators covering 10 main elements of quality within the above two broad dimensions. In its report released in November 2003, the Commission of the European Communities focused on the assessment of quality in work in the European Union and its recent evolution on the basis of available data and in particular the agreed quality indicators⁷.

OECD

The OECD has also carried out major work in developing indicators to describe qualitative aspects of work. Recent issues of the annual OECD Employment Outlook have focused on issues such as job insecurity, employment protection legislation, balancing work and family life, and gender. Statistical indicators were developed in each area.

National statistical agencies

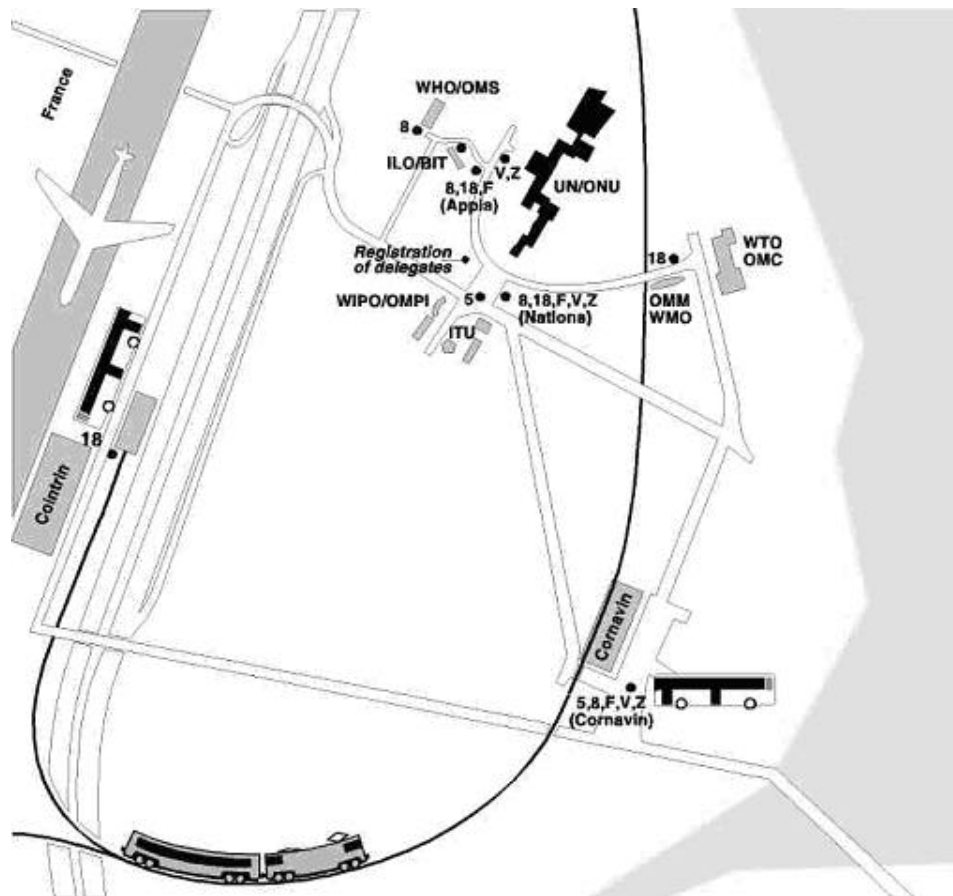
An increasing number of national statistical agencies have developed their own indicators of the quality of work. In some cases they have produced reports comparing the performance of their country with that of others. Such indicators have also been used to compare different regions in a given country. Job security has been a key indicators used by several countries. The terms *quality of life* and its *alter ego* “*quality of work*” have been increasingly quoted and used as a special issue of cross-regional (internal) and cross-country (external) comparisons.

The following countries (the list is far from being exhaustive) have recently come up with comprehensive studies which, in our view, are quite representative of the many efforts undertaken by national agencies in the ECE region to set up an established set of national indicators for measuring qualitative dimensions of the world of work in order to both gauge national performance and carry out international comparisons. They are Canada (quality of work), Denmark (decent work), Finland (quality of work surveys), France (quality of work), Ireland (quality of work), the United Kingdom (regional indicators of labour market flexibility), the United States (quality of work life). Also, the following countries have been involved in testing various quality of employment indicators closely related with the ILO Decent Work Agenda: Azerbaijan, Moldova, Kazakhstan and Ukraine.

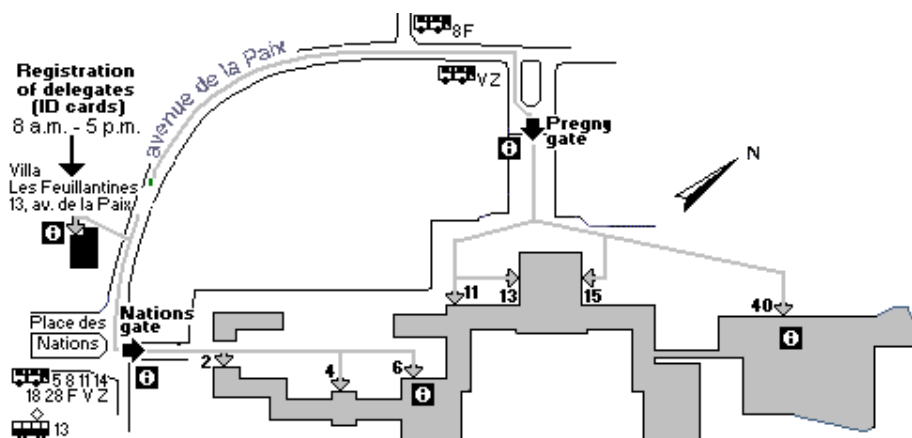
⁷ *Employment and social policies: A framework for investing in quality*, Communication from the Commission to the Council, the European Parliament, the Economic and Social Committee and the Committee of the Regions, Commission of the European Communities, COM(2003)728 final, Brussels, 26.11.2003.

ANNEX 2

How to find the UN building in Geneva:



Where to obtain the entry pass (Security Identification Office, Villa les Feuillantines, 13 avenue de la Paix):



Entry for delegates with valid ground pass: “Place des Nations gate” and “Pregny gate”

Entry for visitors: “Pregny gate” only

Note: a valid photo ID is needed to obtain the ground pass and to gain the entry to the UN premises.



UNITED NATIONS OFFICE AT GENEVA

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Conference Registration

Date

Please fax this completed form to the Host Secretariat and BRING THIS ORIGINAL with you to Geneva.
An additional form is required for spouses.

Title of the Conference

Joint ECE/ILO/Eurostat Seminar on the Quality of Work, Geneva, 11-13 May 2005

Delegation/Participant of Country, Organisation or Agency

Participant

Family Name

First Name

Mr.

Mrs

Ms

Date Of Birth

 / /

(DD/MM/YYYY)

Participation Category

Head of Delegation Members	<input type="checkbox"/>	Observer Organisation	<input type="checkbox"/>	Participating <u>From / Until</u>
Delegation Member	<input type="checkbox"/>	NGO (ECOSOC Accred.)	<input type="checkbox"/>	From <input type="text"/>
Observer Country	<input type="checkbox"/>	Other (Please specify below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Until <input type="text"/>
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