

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

For decision

Meeting of the 2014/2015 Bureau
Geneva (Switzerland), 21-22 October 2014

Item 9 (c) of the Provisional
Agenda

**REPORT OF THE EXPERT GROUP
ON MEASURING QUALITY OF EMPLOYMENT**

Note prepared by the Secretariat

*The Expert Group on Measuring Quality of Employment (EGMQE) has completed the final draft of the Statistical Framework for Measuring Quality of Employment, presented in document ECE/CES/BUR/2014/OCT/22/Add.1. **The Bureau is invited to comment on the framework and to decide whether it can be circulated to all CES members for electronic consultation with a view of presenting it to the CES 2015 plenary session for endorsement.***

I. BACKGROUND

1. In February 2012, the CES Bureau established an Expert Group on Measuring Quality of Employment (EGMQE) with the following objectives:

- a) Revise the conceptual structure of measuring quality of employment as outlined in the *Report on Potential Indicators for Measurement of Quality of Employment*.
- b) Revise the set of indicators of quality of employment in order to reflect the issues that were raised at the CES plenary session in 2010 and in country reports.
- c) Develop *indicator sheets* with operational definitions and guidelines for the compilation of quality of employment indicators.

2. The final draft of the *Statistical Framework for Measuring Quality of Employment* is attached to this report, in accordance with the time plan set out in the terms of reference for the Expert Group. The draft statistical framework includes the revised conceptual structure of measuring quality of employment, a revised set of proposed indicators, explanatory text for the seven dimensions of quality of employment, and detailed indicator sheets for the proposed indicators. These have been reviewed for clarity and consistency and updated to reflect current international standards and recommendations.

II. PROGRESS OF WORK

3. The EGMQE was constituted in early 2012 with the following members: Germany (Chair), Azerbaijan, Australia, Canada, Finland, France, Israel, Italy, Luxembourg, Mexico, Republic of Moldova, Netherlands, Switzerland, Eurostat, Eurofound, ILO, OECD, Women in

Informal Economy: Globalizing and Organizing (WIEGO) and UNECE. In September 2013, Poland and the United Kingdom joined the group. The group worked through exchange of e-mails and teleconferences and held two meetings. A designated wiki page was established for exchange of all relevant material. The progress of work is described in more detail in the following paragraphs.

4. The EGMQE met in Wiesbaden on 22-23 November 2012 to discuss a first revision of the conceptual structure of measuring quality of employment, agree on a revised list of statistical indicators for dimensions 1-4, and prepare detailed operational definitions and guidelines for the compilation of the indicators, so-called *indicator sheets*. The indicator sheets were drafted by one leading author and reviewed by several other members of the group, based on a common template agreed at this meeting.

5. At the Seventh International Meeting on Measuring Quality of Employment (11-13 September 2013, Geneva), a revised conceptual structure for measuring quality of employment and the indicators and indicator sheets for measuring dimensions 1-4 were discussed. With some minor changes and suggestions for improvements, the meeting agreed on a draft statistical framework, prepared by the EGMQE. The draft framework addressed the issues raised at the CES plenary session in 2010 by focusing on measurement issues and tools and avoiding any value judgements. The draft framework was presented as a room document at the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) on 2-11 October 2013 to inform the participating countries and invite comments and suggestions.

6. The EGMQE submitted a progress report to the Bureau in autumn 2013 covering the first four dimensions. The Bureau supported the work of the EGMQE and encouraged finalisation of the list of indicators for all seven dimensions of the framework.

7. The EGMQE identified dimension 7 (employment-related relationships and work motivation) as an area in need of further development and formed a sub-group of volunteers to come up with a revised proposal for this dimension. The work started from the list endorsed by the CES in 2010 and took into account the conclusions from the Expert Group meeting in September 2013. To benefit from international empirical research, on 3 December 2013, the sub-group met with Prof. Francis Green of the Institute of Education, University of London, who has extensive experience with analyses from the European Working Conditions Survey (EWCS) and related surveys. The main objective was to ensure that the indicators chosen were those with the greatest impact on the well-being of the worker. The discussions largely confirmed the selection of indicators and at the same time showed a need to include additional indicators on work intensity and organizational involvement of the worker.

8. Since September 2013, extensive efforts were undertaken to develop indicator sheets for dimensions 5-7 and to review existing indicator sheets for dimensions 1-4. The revision procedure involved multiple rounds of review and harmonisation and ensured all indicator sheets were thoroughly reviewed by several members of the EGMQE.

9. In parallel to the work on the indicator sheets, changes were made to the statistical framework document. The framework was revised to further elaborate the description of the dimensions and sub-dimensions as well as the context information to be considered for interpretation of the indicators, based on recommendations of the Decent Work Indicators manual of the ILO. The document was also updated to reflect the Resolution on Work, Employment and Labour Underutilisation adopted by the 19th ICLS in 2013. Following an

electronic consultation with all EGMQE members in May-June 2014, the framework document was further revised to incorporate suggestions from members.

10. The EGMQE met on 10-11 September 2014 in Berlin to discuss the proposed statistical framework. The discussion focused on the revised framework document and the indicator sheets for dimensions 5-7. The review of dimension 1-4 was also discussed and final changes to the documents agreed unanimously. The EGMQE then prepared its final report to the Bureau meeting in October 2014, with a proposal to have the report circulated for global consultation and subsequently submitted to the CES plenary session in 2015 for endorsement as a *Statistical Framework for Measuring Quality of Employment*.

III. OVERVIEW OF THE FINAL DRAFT

11. The draft *Statistical Framework for Measuring Quality of Employment* introduces the statistical framework, specifies the objectives and structure of the framework and introduces a list of recommended indicators for measuring quality of employment. Annex 1 includes the list of indicators. Annex 2 includes the detailed indicator sheets for all of the indicators, which provide operational definitions and detailed guidelines for compiling the indicators. The framework offers a clear and coherent structure for measuring quality of employment in terms of seven dimensions and twelve sub-dimensions, which cover the main aspects of quality of employment. The dimensions and sub-dimensions are as follows:

- 1) Safety and ethics of employment
 - a. Safety at work
 - b. Child labour and forced labour
 - c. Fair treatment in employment
- 2) Income and benefits from employment
 - a. Income
 - b. Non-wage pecuniary benefits
- 3) Working time and work-life balance
 - a. Working hours
 - b. Working time arrangements
 - c. Work life balance
- 4) Security of employment and social protection
 - a. Security of employment
 - b. Social protection
- 5) Social dialogue
- 6) Skills development and training
- 7) Employment-related relationships and work motivation
 - a. Employment-related relationships
 - b. Work motivation

12. The framework acknowledges the other international efforts that have been undertaken in the area of measuring quality of employment. Both ILO and EU have developed indicators for related purposes. The ILO Decent Work initiative aims to improve quality of work in countries, based on four strategic objectives (employment creation, guaranteeing rights at work, extending social protection, and promoting social dialogue). Within EU, two sets of indicators are used. One set of indicators is maintained by the European Commission for monitoring labour market policies. Another set was developed and is used by the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions (Eurofound). Coordination with these initiatives was highlighted as essential by the Bureau.

13. However, in contrast to the indicator sets of ILO and EU, the proposed statistical framework is not linked to a particular policy agenda. The framework is considered a *statistical toolbox* that provides practical guidance to countries that wish to compile statistics on quality of employment. Despite the different objectives of other international frameworks, the EGMQE has reviewed the underlying concepts and variables used in other frameworks in order to ensure conceptual consistency to the extent possible.

14. The conceptual framework defines quality of employment from the point of view of the worker. It identifies the dimensions that, according to the Expert Group, need to be considered to describe the different aspects of employment that affect the work life and well-being of the individual worker. This may differ from the point of view of the employer or society as a whole. The framework acknowledges that the elements of quality of employment may be perceived differently by individual workers. The statistical framework does not imply any judgement on what should be considered “high quality” or “low quality” employment. Any value judgement is left to the users of the statistics.

15. For each dimension and sub-dimension, the framework proposes a number of statistical indicators that can be measured. The framework is intended to be applied flexibly according to the specific policy requirements and institutional background of countries. The guiding principles, dimensions and sub-dimensions of the framework may be updated from time to time but should remain relatively stable. The list of indicators, and in particular the indicator sheets, however, should be periodically reviewed in order to remain relevant in light of changes of employment types and patterns. To this end, a follow-up meeting in the 2016-2017 biennium should be considered.

IV. FURTHER STEPS AND PROPOSAL FOR DECISION BY THE BUREAU

16. An electronic consultation for the *Statistical Framework for Measuring Quality of Employment* with all CES members is proposed to take place from November to December 2014. Comments from CES members can then be incorporated in the final draft in spring 2015, in time for submission of the framework to the 2015 CES plenary session.

17. The Bureau is invited to:

- (a) comment on the final draft of the framework, and**
- (b) decide whether the draft can be circulated for electronic consultation to all CES members with a view of presenting it to the CES 2015 plenary session in June 2015 for endorsement.**

* * * * *