

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Meeting of the 2016/2017 Bureau  
Geneva (Switzerland), 14-15 February 2017

Approved

Item III (h) of the Provisional  
Agenda

**TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR THE TASK FORCE ON MEASURING INTRA-  
HOUSEHOLD POWER AND DECISION-MAKING**

**Note by the Steering Group on Gender Statistics<sup>1</sup>**

*In February 2015, the Bureau approved the mandate of the Steering Group on Gender Statistics that includes developing a plan for taking forward methodological work on measuring the gendered power and decision-making relationships within a household. The Steering Group has prepared terms of reference for a Task Force on Measuring Intra-Household Power and Decision-Making, which contains such a plan. These terms of reference should be considered in line with the “business case” for undertaking methodological work presented in document ECE/CES/BUR/2017/FEB/11/Add.1. **The Bureau is invited to review and approve the proposed terms of reference.***

**I. BACKGROUND**

1. All the major international policy frameworks<sup>2</sup> on gender equality, women’s empowerment, and on development more broadly, recognize the importance of power and decision-making for enabling women to become equal actors in society, with equal access to resources and equal possibilities to fulfil their potential. The Beijing Platform for Action, for example, has a section on Women in Power and Decision-making as one of its 12 areas of concern. Both the Beijing Platform for Action and the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD) Plan of Action explicitly recognize that “the power relations that prevent women from leading fulfilling lives operate at many levels of society, from the most personal to the highly public”. In the 2030 Agenda, governments committed to “ensure women's full and effective participation and equal opportunities for leadership at all levels of decision-making” (target 5.5) and to “recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through [...] the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family” (target 5.4).

2. Many national statistical offices produce statistics on ‘power and influence’ or ‘women in decision-making’ as part of their suite of gender statistics. But they are almost universally limited to power and influence in the public sphere of life – political, civic and economic influence – measuring women's representation in ministerial positions, parliaments and business management. While the policy frameworks make reference to power and decision-making in the private sphere of the household, statistical measures have largely overlooked this aspect.

<sup>1</sup> The Steering Group is composed of: Australia, Canada, Georgia, Italy, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland, United Kingdom (UK Equality and Rights Commission), USA, CIS-Stat, European Institute for Gender Equality, Eurostat, OECD Development Centre, UN Women

<sup>2</sup> These include, among others, the 1979 Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women; the 1994 Programme of Action of the International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD); the 1995 Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action; and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

3. Noting this gap that remains hidden in existing statistics based on assumptions of household-level equality and recognizing that unequal power within households can result in unequal access to resources, the Steering Group on Gender Statistics proposed developing a plan for new methodological work in this area in 2015. The CES Bureau approved this as part of the Steering Group's terms of reference.

4. A literature review and concept note were presented to the June 2016 Work Session on Gender Statistics, whose participants supported the plans. A business case further elaborates the rationale on which the present terms of reference are based (attached as document ECE/CES/BUR/2017/FEB/11/Add.1).

## **II. MANDATE**

5. The work of the Task Force will be conducted under the oversight of the Steering Group on Gender Statistics. The Task Force will report to the CES Bureau. It will be created for a period from February 2017 to June 2019.

## **III. OBJECTIVE**

6. The objective of the Task Force is to make an inventory of indicators and sources and provide recommendations to statistical offices on measuring the gendered dimensions of intra-household power and decision-making.

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

7. The Task Force will carry out the following activities:

- (a) Compile an inventory of existing indicators, including information about the statistical surveys in which they are included;
- (b) Evaluate the existing indicators in terms of conceptual validity, coverage, frequency, quality and standardization across sources and UNECE countries;
- (c) Identify aspects of the topic for which there are currently no adequate indicators;
- (d) Make proposals for methodological work to fill gaps where indicators do not exist or are poorly defined or where data availability is limited: such as by developing and testing new survey questions, or by conducting research to investigate how better to pose questions to collect valid data;
- (e) Define headline and supporting indicators;
- (f) Evaluate the prospect of the production of these indicators as official statistics;
- (g) Analyze intra-household power and decision-making in selected countries, using available indicators;
- (h) Draft recommendations for statistical offices based on findings from activities a-g.

8. The Task Force will build upon previous efforts in the development of internationally comparable indicators on gender issues. It should take account of the ongoing work on measuring gender equality in reproductive decision-making by the United Nations Population Fund in relation to relevant indicators<sup>3</sup> for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

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<sup>3</sup> Especially indicator 5.6.1 "Proportion of women aged 15-49 years who make their own informed decisions regarding sexual relations, contraceptive use and reproductive health care" and indicator 5.6.2 "Number of countries with laws and regulations that guarantee women aged 15-49 years access to sexual and reproductive health care, information and education".

9. The output will be a final report that will include results of all the above activities.

## **V. TIMETABLE**

10. The activities of the Task Force will take place between February 2017 and June 2019, according to the following tentative schedule:

Feb-Apr 2017	Form Task Force and draft work plan with activities, timing and division of work
May-Jul 2017	Compile inventory of existing indicators and sources
Aug-Nov 2017	Preliminary evaluation of indicators in inventory and gaps; preparation of interim report to Steering Group
Nov 2017	Presentation of interim report at Work Session on Gender Statistics
Dec 2017-Mar 2018	Systematic evaluation of indicators in inventory and gaps
Apr-Jun 2018	Analysis of existing indicators for selected countries
Jul-Oct 2018	Draft recommendations, including proposals for filling gaps, and definition of headline and supporting indicators
Nov – Dec 2018	Consolidate and finalize draft recommendations
Jan 2019	Submit draft recommendations to CES Bureau
Feb-May 2019	Electronic consultation among CES countries; revise according to input from Bureau and from consultation; finalize and edit
Jun 2019	Present final report to CES plenary session for endorsement

## **VI. METHOD OF WORK**

11. The Task Force will work via email, wiki workspace, and telephone or web conferences. Face-to-face meetings may be convened on the basis of need, specific tasks to be accomplished and available resources.

## **VII. MEMBERSHIP**

12. The following countries and international organizations have expressed interest in participating in the Task Force: Canada, Italy, Lithuania, Serbia and the European Institute for Gender Equality. Other countries and organizations will be invited to join the Task Force after the terms of reference are approved by the Bureau.

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

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