

CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Approved

Meeting of the 2018/2019 Bureau
Washington D.C., 28 February – 1 March 2019

Item 3(a) of the Provisional
Agenda

**STEERING GROUP ON GENDER STATISTICS: REPORT AND RENEWAL OF
TERMS OF REFERENCE**

Note by the Secretariat

*This note provides a report on the work carried out since 2015 by the UNECE Steering Group on Gender Statistics and its task forces. The updated terms of reference for the Steering Group are presented in document 6 Add.1. **The Bureau review and approved the report and the terms of reference of the Steering Group for the coming five years.***

I. BACKGROUND

1. The Steering Group on Gender Statistics was created by the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) in 2005¹. The Group's objective is to provide direction to the CES work on gender statistics, advance methodological development, support capacity development and collaboration between users and producers of gender statistics, and provide a mechanism for following up on the implementation of CES guidance. The Bureau has regularly reviewed the Group's work and its terms of reference have been updated to reflect the developments in gender statistics, most recently in 2015.

2. The Steering Group currently includes representatives from Australia, Canada, Georgia, Ireland, Italy, Republic of Moldova, Serbia, Sweden, Switzerland, the United Kingdom, the United States of America, UN Women, Eurostat, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE), CIS-Stat and the OECD Development Centre. The Group is currently chaired by Serbia.

3. The UNECE Secretariat maintains a wiki site with public information about the Steering Group and a workspace restricted to members.²

II. PROGRESS ACHIEVED

4. Since the mandate of the Steering Group was last renewed in February 2015, the Steering Group has been active in the areas of methodological development, exchange of experience, and capacity development.

¹ CES/BUR.2005/31.

² <https://statswiki.unece.org/x/1YLdBg>

A. Methodological work

5. Based on the Steering Group's proposal, two new Task Forces have been set up and several members of the Steering Group are or have been members of these groups. The Steering Group has also initiated two in-depth reviews by the Bureau on gender-related topics.

(i) *Measuring intra-household power and decision-making*

6. The Task Force on measuring intra-household power and decision-making was established by the Bureau in February 2017, with the aim of making an inventory of indicators and sources on this topic and providing recommendations to statistical offices on measuring the gendered dimensions of intra-household power and decision-making.

7. The Task Force is chaired by Status of Women Canada and consists of representatives from Armenia, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada (both Statistics Canada and Status of Women Canada), Colombia, Italy, Kazakhstan, Lithuania, Mexico, Mongolia, Montenegro, the Philippines, Russian Federation, Serbia, Turkey, EIGE and OECD. The group is also benefitting from input from ILO, UNFPA and UNICEF.

8. The Task Force has identified seven dimensions of intra-household power and decision-making, each with several sub-dimensions, and is proposing indicators for each of these sub-dimensions along with possible survey questions. The Task Force is also making recommendations about data sources, data collection and quality, and analysis and interpretation of results.

9. The Task Force is progressing well with its work. Members of the group met in Belgrade, Serbia, in December 2017 and in Geneva, Switzerland, in September 2018, and a third meeting will take place in Geneva in March 2019. The Task Force was on track to complete its work in early 2019, but a valuable opportunity arose in Canada to conduct qualitative testing of some of the proposed questions for three of the dimensions, so the Task Force will incorporate the results of this pilot into its final report and present the completed work to the Bureau in October 2019.

(ii) *Communication of gender statistics*

10. The Task Force on communicating gender statistics was established in February 2018 in response to calls from participants in the 2017 Work Session on gender statistics. The aim of the Task Force is to develop guidance for national statistical offices (NSOs) on communicating gender statistics, focusing on both communication with policymakers and communication with the public. The Steering Group identified this as a key area for development and helped to formulate the Task Force's terms of reference.

11. The Task Force is chaired by Ireland and includes experts representing Albania, Australia, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Chile, Czechia, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Mexico, the Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Slovenia, South Africa, Turkey, the United Kingdom (Equality and Human Rights Commission), CIS-Stat, Council of Europe, Data2X, Eurostat, OECD and UNICEF, and one independent expert.

12. The Task Force will produce a series of six electronic guidance notes on key issues in the communication of gender statistics, as well as an online searchable repository of good practice examples. The group will hold its first meeting on the margins of the 2019 Work Session on gender statistics, and will also present interim results at the same Work Session. The group will present its final products to the Bureau in 2020.

(iii) Gaps in gender statistics

13. In February 2017 the Steering Group proposed to the CES Bureau to carry out an in-depth review on gender statistics, in light of the new needs arising from the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and given that the topic had not been revisited since 2007. The proposal was accepted, and Mexico prepared an in-depth review paper which formed the basis of discussions by the Bureau during its October 2017 meeting.

14. The review paper, along with additional commentary, was then discussed by participants in the 2017 Work Session on gender statistics who welcomed its contribution to the increasing visibility of gender statistics.

(iv) Measuring gender identity

15. In February 2018 the Steering Group proposed to the CES Bureau to conduct an in-depth review on the measurement of gender identity. This topic was identified by participants in the November-December 2017 Work Session on gender statistics, and one which the Steering Group believed to be of pressing importance given the challenges and the potential for proliferation of approaches among countries. The in-depth review paper has been prepared by Canada and the United Kingdom (one of the Canadian team being also the Canadian representative on the Steering Group), and is being presented to the February 2019 meeting of the CES Bureau.

B. Exchange of experience in gender statistics

(i) Work Sessions on gender statistics

16. The Work Sessions on gender statistics bring together gender focal points from national statistical offices across the UNECE region, giving the opportunity to share methods, challenges and solutions, ideas and research findings on a range of gender-relevant topics in statistics. Thanks to the enthusiastic involvement of Steering Group members, the Work Sessions have attracted increasing numbers of participants over recent years (reaching 82 in 2017). Steering Group members, acting as session organizers, play a key role in securing relevant contributions for their sessions, leading discussion and formulating conclusions and proposals for follow-up work. The Steering Group has aimed to modernize and enliven the format of the Work Sessions with the introduction of panel debates and keynote speakers.

17. At the June 2016 Work Session, participants requested that the Work Sessions should become more frequent in view of the increasing importance being attached to gender statistics. It was decided that the meetings would take place approximately every 1.5 years.

18. The Steering Group meets during each Work Session to discuss proposals for future work. The Steering Group chair presents these proposals to the Work Session.

C. Capacity development

19. Since 2015, the Steering Group supported the UNECE Secretariat in conducting capacity development workshops on gender statistics as follows:

- Regional workshops for countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia:
 - Dissemination and training (Chisinau, November 2015)
 - 2030 Agenda, dissemination and communication (Vilnius, May 2016)
 - Valuing unpaid work, 2030 Agenda, dissemination and communication (Belgrade, November 2017)
- National workshops:
 - Republic of Moldova: Developing entrepreneurship statistics by gender, (Chisinau, June 2015)
 - Armenia: Workshop for users of gender statistics (Yerevan, November 2015)
 - Kazakhstan: Dissemination, communication and use of gender statistics (Astana, May 2017)
 - Armenia: Strategic consultation on the development of gender statistics (Yerevan, October 2017)
 - Kyrgyzstan: Dissemination, communication and use of gender statistics (Bishkek, May 2018)

20. The Steering Group contributed to the design of the workshops. Specific training sessions were delivered by the Steering Group members from Georgia, Italy, Republic of Moldova, Sweden, Switzerland, and CIS-Stat.

21. In addition to the above events, the materials developed under the guidance of the Steering Group — the UNECE Toolkit for training users of gender statistics, launched in 2016, and the manual *Developing gender statistics: a practical tool* — have been and continue to be used at national and international levels. Most recently the toolkit was used as the basis for training at a regional workshop for the countries of Asia Pacific in Chiba, Japan, in November 2018.

III. FORTHCOMING ACTIVITIES

22. Members of the Steering Group have identified topics for the forthcoming Work Session on gender statistics (Neuchâtel, Switzerland, 15-17 May 2019). Selected Steering Group members have volunteered to act as session organizers. The Steering Group representative of Switzerland, as host of the event, is playing a key role in organizing both logistics and content of the meeting.

23. The two ongoing Task Forces (Measuring intra-household power and decision-making; Communication of gender statistics) will present progress reports and findings at the Work Session and each will also have its own side meeting. The in-depth review on measuring gender identity will form the basis of a session at the meeting, led by two members of the Steering Group.

24. A sub-regional capacity development workshop for countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia will take place immediately prior to the Work Session (13-14 May). The workshop will cover topics identified as high priority by gender focal points from NSOs across the sub-region, and will include a session on measuring women's representation in local government in cooperation with UN Women.

25. The Steering Group will continue to work primarily via email discussion and use of the wiki platform, along with face-to face meetings on the margins of the Work Sessions on Gender Statistics.

IV. PROPOSAL

26. With the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development now serving as the principal guiding framework both for development activities and for statistical activities, gender equality and women's empowerment are occupying an increasingly important place among global policy concerns. The specific Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) on gender equality and the empowerment of women and girls (Goal 5), as well as the inclusion of gender concerns throughout the Agenda, is creating growing demand for high-quality gender statistics that are regularly produced and that provide solid evidence on the status of women and men.

27. As the field of gender statistics grows broader and gains a higher profile, initiatives are proliferating in the international arena. This makes the role of the Steering Group more important than ever, to ensure that duplication is avoided and that efforts in the UNECE region are focused where they are most needed. It is particularly important therefore that the international organizations—CIS-Stat, Eurostat, EIGE, OECD and UN Women—continue to play an active role in the Steering Group. The Secretariat also communicates regularly with the gender statistics team at UNSD to ensure coordination of regional activities with those taking place at the global level.

28. **The Bureau is invited to comment on the work done and approve the terms of reference for the Steering Group on Gender Statistics for the next five years, presented in document 6 Add.1.**
