



Economic and Social Council

Distr.: General

8 June 2021

English only

Economic Commission for Europe

Conference of European Statisticians

Sixty-ninth plenary session

Geneva, 23-25 June 2021

Item 4 (a) of the provisional agenda

Coordination of international statistical work

in the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe region

Outcomes of the recent in-depth reviews carried out by the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians

Addendum

Outcome of the in-depth review of new forms of employment and quality of employment

Prepared by the Secretariat

Summary

This document provides information on the outcome of the in-depth review of new forms of employment and quality of employment that the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians carried out in February 2021. It also summarises the comments received during the electronic consultation in May 2021 among members of the Conference of European Statisticians.

The Conference will be invited to endorse the outcome of the in-depth review of new forms of employment and quality of employment on 25 June 2021 under item 4 (a).



I. Introduction

1. Each year, the Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) reviews selected statistical areas in depth. The purpose of the reviews is to improve coordination of statistical activities in the region of the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), identify gaps or duplication of work, and address emerging issues. These reviews focus on strategic issues and highlight concerns of statistical offices of both a conceptual and coordinating nature.
2. The Bureau carried out an in-depth review of new forms of employment and quality of employment in February 2021 based on a paper by Canada (document ECE/CES/2021/9).

II. In-depth review discussion and decisions by the Bureau

3. The following points were raised in the discussion at the CES Bureau meeting:
 - (a) The survey carried out as part of the in-depth review showed a growing need of statistics on new forms of employment. Policy makers are particularly interested in the changing labour market and the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on new forms of employment. On the other hand, there are challenges with data sources and response burden, and a need for internationally agreed concepts and definitions for national purposes and for improving international comparability.
 - (b) The CES Bureau decided to establish a Task Force on forms of employment with the aim to develop a conceptual framework to assist countries in producing relevant, coherent and internationally comparable statistics on forms of employment. The framework should provide a classification of form of employment to help NSOs in identifying and measuring emerging forms of employment. The framework should be aligned with the 2018 International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-18) and other statistical concepts and frameworks.
 - (c) New forms of employment have different social and economic implications in countries. The Task Force, therefore, should also consider relationships with social security schemes. Several initiatives on platform work and new forms of employment are ongoing, involving Eurostat, OECD, ILO and other organizations. The Task Force should take into account these initiatives and ensure close coordination and consistency in the recommendations.
 - (d) The terms of reference of the Task Force should be prepared by the countries/organisations that expressed interest in joining the work, in consultation with the Steering Group on Quality of Employment. The draft terms of reference should be circulated to the Bureau members for written consultation.
 - (e) CIS-Stat agreed to translate the in-depth review paper into Russian. Statistics Canada agreed to translate the in-depth review paper into French. The paper will then be published on the web in the UNECE statistical working papers series.
4. As an outcome of the review, the CES Bureau decided to establish a task force on new forms of employment with the aim to develop a conceptual framework that identifies and maps the relationships between ICSE-18 and other statistical concepts and frameworks, as outlined in the in-depth review paper by Statistics Canada.
5. The terms of reference of the task force should be prepared as soon as possible by the countries/organisations that expressed interest in joining the work, in consultation with

the Steering Group on Quality of Employment and taking into account the above comments. The draft terms of reference should be circulated to the Bureau members for written consultation.

6. CIS-Stat translated the in-depth review paper into Russian and Statistics Canada into French. The document will be published on the web in the UNECE statistical working papers series.

III. Comments received in the electronic consultation

7. The Secretariat conducted an electronic consultation in May 2021 to inform all CES members about the outcome of the in-depth review of new forms of employment and quality of employment, and give an opportunity to comment on the outcomes of the review.

8. CES members welcomed the thorough and comprehensive review document by Canada and supported establishing a Task Force to develop guidance on new forms of employment. The following nine countries and organizations provided the Secretariat with specific comments during the electronic consultation: France, Hungary, Mexico, Netherlands, Poland, Portugal, Serbia, Spain and UNSD.

9. France suggested to give priority to a conceptual framework that would cover all existing approaches, while referring to ICSE-18 (chapter VI, paragraph A) and multi-party work relationships (ICSE-18, chapter VI, paragraph B, point 3).

10. Hungary recently participated in the cognitive testing of the LFS Digital Platform Employment (DPE) Pilot Questionnaire as part of the work of the Eurostat DPE Task Force and offered to share their experiences in that regard.

11. Mexico welcomed the proposal to establish the Task Force to develop a conceptual framework for forms of employment that encompasses existing frameworks and address outstanding issues regarding, e.g. definitions of terms and concepts. The framework should address both strategic and implementation issues and reconsider the role of the LFS and its modules. Mexico provided additional comments on their national experiences.

12. Netherlands stressed the need for a framework covering new forms of employment with links to ICSE-18. From a policy perspective it is relevant to get a picture of the quality of new forms of employment. It is, therefore, important to look at the quality of different forms of employment as several of the existing frameworks do not include forms of employment.

13. Poland and Portugal provided updated information for the in-depth review document.

14. Serbia welcomed the work of the Task Force and provided details about the incorporation of questions on new forms of employment in the Serbian LFS.

15. Spain underlined the need to coordinate with the Eurostat Task Force on employment on digital platforms, in which also ILO and OECD participate.

16. UNSD supported giving priority to short-term deliverables, including developing a definition of gig work and evaluating and testing the nine new forms of employment identified by Eurofound in developing countries. The terms of reference should be circulated to groups related to national accounts, business and trade statistics and international classifications as this framework and its measurement will impact these areas. By prioritizing short-term deliverables, this work can contribute to the update programs on the 2008 SNA and international classifications.

17. The comments provided by countries and organizations in the electronic consultation will be taken into account by the Task Force in its work.

IV. Membership of Task Force on Forms of Employment

18. The following countries and organisations have expressed interest in participating in the Task Force: Australia, Canada (Chair), Colombia, Finland, France, Germany, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Mexico, Norway, Poland, Russian Federation, Singapore, Slovenia, Switzerland, United Kingdom, Eurofound, Eurostat, ILO, OECD and Women in Employment: Globalization and Organising (WIEGO). The Task Force is open to other countries and organisations that would like to contribute to its work.
