

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Workshop on Harmonization of Poverty Statistics to Measure SDG 1 and 10

30 November 2021, 10:00-13:30 CET

Group of Experts on Measuring Poverty and Inequality

1-2 December 2021, 15:00-18:00 CET

Online meetings

INVITATION TO REGISTER AND CALL FOR ABSTRACTS

Submit abstract: by Friday, 29 October (see Annex 1)

Register and submit slides: by Friday, 19 November

Meeting website

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) is organising the meeting of the [*Group of Experts on Measuring Poverty and Inequality*](#) (1-2 December 2021) under the auspices of the Conference of European Statisticians. The meeting is preceded by the [*Workshop on Harmonization of Poverty Statistics to Measure SDG 1 and 10*](#) (30 November 2021).

2. The meetings are taking place in online format as follows:

| Workshop on Harmonization of Poverty Statistics to Measure SDG 1 and 10 | |
|---|-------------------------------|
| 30 November (Tuesday) | 10:00-13:30 CET (Geneva time) |
| Group of Experts on Measuring Poverty and Inequality | |
| 1 December (Wednesday) | 15:00-18:30 CET (Geneva time) |
| 2 December (Thursday) | 15:00-18:30 CET (Geneva time) |

II. PARTICIPATION

3. The principal target audience is statisticians, researchers and analysts from national statistical offices (NSOs), ministries and other government agencies, international organizations and academia, who produce or use poverty statistics.
4. Only registered participants will be able to connect to the meeting. To register please complete [the online registration form](#) by **Friday, 19 November**. Connection links and instructions for joining the events will be sent out by email approximately one week before the meeting.
5. The working languages of the meeting are English and Russian. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in these languages.

III. CONTRIBUTIONS

6. The meetings provide a forum for countries to share experiences and methodological developments in the production of poverty statistics. In this context, the *UNECE Steering Group on Measuring Poverty and Inequality* is launching the present call for contributions in response to the countries needs on measuring poverty and inequality. The agenda will be prepared taking into account the interest expressed, and the offered contributions.
7. The events will consist of short presentations (7-8 minutes) followed by facilitated discussions. Written papers are optional. You are welcome to signal your wish to give a **presentation** during the events by **submitting an abstract** of approximately 330 words outlining your proposed contribution according to the topics listed in the next section. Abstracts should be submitted by e-mail to vania.etropolska@un.org using the attached template, **by Friday, 29 October**. The abstracts could be in either English or Russian languages. They will be made available on the [meetings website: https://unece.org/statistics/events/poverty2021](https://unece.org/statistics/events/poverty2021).
8. Contributors are reminded that the success of the meetings depends upon the ability to translate materials in time. Therefore, it is important to strictly adhere to the deadline for slides submission: **Friday, 19 November** to vania.etropolska@un.org.

IV. WORKSHOP ON HARMONIZATION OF POVERTY STATISTICS TO MEASURE SDG 1 AND 10

9. The Workshop on 30 November focuses on experience in the countries of Eastern Europe, Caucasus and Central Asia. Representatives from all countries and international organizations are welcome to participate.
10. Countries that took place in the July 2020 UNECE study on gathering practices of national statistical offices in adapting their household surveys to the Covid-19 crisis with respect to poverty measurement (see [English](#), [Russian](#)) are invited to share updates using the same questionnaire in [English](#) or [Russian](#). The results will be used as information during the Workshop's discussions.
11. In this context, countries are invited to share information on the following topics:

Data collection on poverty during the pandemic

12. The pandemic has significantly affected the work of the statistical offices. Participants are invited to present a brief update on their experiences on data collection on poverty during the pandemic. They are also welcome to share experience on challenges with survey taking during

the pandemic, e.g. restrictions to physical access, increased non-response, necessity to readjust to remote work and prepare instructions for interviewers to work in the new conditions, additional costs, etc. Particular attention will be dedicated to changes that may have possibly taken place with respect to data sources, including the use of new surveys or survey modules, and the collection methods, i.e. use of administrative data and transition to electronic data transmission.

2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development: SDG 1 and SDG 10

13. Close coordination between countries and exchange of experience remain an important tool for strengthening national statistics on poverty and inequality in support of SDGs 1 and 10. Countries are welcome to share their latest updates and advances on measuring the two goals. Are the measurement tools developed for the SDG framework sufficient to illustrate the impact of the pandemic?

V. GROUP OF EXPERTS ON MEASURING POVERTY AND INEQUALITY

14. The topics listed below reflect the proposals and comments made at the 2020 meeting of the UNECE Group of Experts on Measuring Poverty and Inequality as well as the more recent discussions within the Steering Group.

A. Survey response in the pandemic context

15. The high demand for data on poverty during the pandemic has significantly affected the work of the statistical offices. The participants are invited to contribute with experiences on any new activities undertaken or planned to evaluate the poverty-related impact of the crisis on the population. Such experience could include special surveys or studies designed for the pandemic context or adopting new methods on current surveys, including remote techniques, adding new questions, etc.

16. The Covid-19 pandemic brought to the forefront the need for more timely and frequent poverty and inequality measures. Asked about the main pressures on data collection amplified by the pandemic, the lead statistical experts that took part in the UNECE online expert meeting on measuring poverty and inequality in 2020 did not hesitate to point out the issue of timeliness. In an attempt to address the demand for quickly providing critical information to government and the public, several statistical offices developed experimental statistics aiming to understand the impacts of Covid-19 on poverty and inequality. This session would provide the opportunity to discuss efforts to produce more timelier poverty measures and develop a set of best practices for these initiatives. A particular exchange on how statistical offices are responding to the increased demand for timely data, e.g. efforts to reduce periods for taking surveys, shorter intervals between surveys, along with others, would be most useful.

B. Assessing and improving survey methods, and use of alternative data sources

17. In many countries, surveys capture only 2/3 or less of the household income. Survey underestimation comes from measurement gap (income that is included but underestimated) and conceptual gap (certain incomes such as property income not included). How combining surveys with alternative data sources could help to examine different distributions estimates and inequality levels? In addition, surveys often suffer from nonresponse bias. How can survey data be combined with alternative data sources to correct for nonresponse bias?

C. Social policies and data

18. Effective social policy protects individuals and their families and helps them lead a fulfilling life in the long term. Countries but also at global and EU levels are constantly working on developing strategies on well-being, social inclusion, social protection or poverty reduction. Participants are welcome to share their experience in how they organize and produce data to support monitoring and implementation of these strategies and track progress towards their targets.

19. Continued efforts on estimating the extent to which social transfers (e.g. on access to services such as health, education, child and long-term care, lifelong learning, etc.) reduce the number of people in poverty or at risk of poverty could provide valuable insights for the development and assessment of social policies. The session will discuss methodologies and imputation challenges for incorporating these resources into the poverty measure. Countries are invited to present their national experience in producing estimates on social transfers, including on experimental basis, and accounting for them in the poverty measurement.

D. 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and going beyond averages

20. Poverty and inequality are at the heart of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. A number of challenges persist, such as lack of methodology for certain indicators, missing data disaggregation on key variables and absence of financial and technical support. Undoubtedly, the pandemic is changing the landscape of work and studies. It is therefore even more important to obtain a more precise picture of poverty and inequality, especially on certain groups of the society that are already in a vulnerable situation. Even assuming that the pandemic would be largely through in the next couple of years, its re-distributional impact in terms of income and wealth is likely to persist. To understand these changes more granular data is needed.

21. Covid-19 has also highlighted the role of digital technologies and applications, which are becoming a key variable in either reducing or amplifying inequality in our societies, e.g. by giving access to markets, jobs, training and learning. Although, the pandemic helped to accelerate the digital transformation, encouraged innovations and moved forward technological acceptance for some, others have been left behind. What data is needed to see who are those left behind and how policies can help them to keep up with technology developments?

22. Participants are welcome to share experience on efforts to improve data collection on vulnerable or disadvantaged groups, especially on those who may suffer disproportionately in the current crisis. These groups may include children, youth, elderly, disabled, ethnic or migrant minorities, etc. Further discussions in this direction could build on the recommendations of the new guide on *Poverty Measurement: Guide to Data Disaggregation*.

E. Wealth in poverty estimates

23. Large part of survey underestimation of income comes from capital income, e.g. property income, while at the same time capital income is the most unequally distributed.

24. At the same time, although income from assets and rentals (interest, dividends, rental income, etc.) are considered, assets themselves are not. Statistical offices often lack the required data but also there are no internationally established methodologies for integrating assets into the measurement of poverty.

25. Proposals for papers on conceptual and methodological approaches that integrate both income and wealth in the poverty measurement are welcome.

F. Subjective poverty

26. Subjective estimates could complement both monetary and non-monetary poverty measures and help create adequate policies in addressing the poverty phenomenon. Subjective measures reflect people's perceptions of their economic well-being with different life aspects, including health, financial situation, and jobs. Obtained estimates vary significantly due to different methods and cultural perceptions of well-being and poverty. The measures are also influenced by age, gender, and the region of respondent. Studies or examples of subjective measures of poverty considering economic aspects and beyond are welcome.

G. Longitudinal data

27. The longitudinal perspective is of great importance to understand the process of occurrence and persistence of poverty and inequality, and related disadvantages, like social exclusion and marginalization. Being in a difficult situation for one year is not the same as being in such for several years. Moreover, a child born to parents faces a higher risk of being in disadvantaged situation because these phenomena can spread through generations. This session will invite participants to discuss how to evaluate the impact of socio-economic factors, such as unemployment, education and single parenthood, on the entry into and exit from poverty and social exclusion.

VI. INFORMATION AND CORRESPONDENCE

28. UNECE Secretariat is available to respond to inquiries and provide additional information.

UNECE Secretariat

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