

UNITED NATIONS ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

Workshop on Communicating Official Statistics and Measuring Gender-in-Trade
Astana, Kazakhstan, 19-21 October 2022

30 November 2022

REPORT OF THE WORKSHOP

I. Organization and attendance

1. The Workshop on Communicating Official Statistics and Measuring Gender-in-Trade was organized by the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) with the Bureau of National Statistics of Kazakhstan (BNS), as part of [the United Nations Development Account project ‘Data and statistics for more gender-responsive trade policies in Africa, the Caucasus and Central Asia’](#).
2. The target participant groups were staff of the BNS and users of official statistics in Kazakhstan. They included BNS leadership; BNS staff working across statistical domains; BNS staff working in communications and public relations; data users from government ministries; and data users from the media. A representative from the UN Women national office also participated. There were 77 participants, of whom 51 were women.
3. UNECE Statistical Division staff – Andres Vikat and Kristen Jeffers – and invited experts Connie Graziadei from Canada, Sara Demofonti from Italy, and Tengiz Tsekvava from Georgia delivered various parts of the workshop.

II. Purpose

4. The Covid-19 pandemic has highlighted the importance of official statistics for decision making and has increased demand from all parts of society for timely and reliable data and statistics. To meet this heightened demand, National Statistical Offices (NSOs) have made innovative use of traditional data sources and turned to new sources. As demand for information that crosses statistical domains increases so does the need for conceptual frameworks and methodological approaches that consider all relevant data sources, technical capacity around data linking, and interagency cooperation.
5. Gender-in-trade is one area of statistical production where innovative approaches are needed for addressing data gaps. Trade and gender equality are linked in many ways, yet most trade and economic statistics are not collected with a gender perspective in mind, and therefore preclude the possibility of even simple sex-disaggregation. The workshop was designed to strengthen the capacity of Kazakhstan to collate data and statistics for more gender-responsive trade policies. It was part of the United Nations Development Account project that the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) and UNECE are carrying out in this area.
6. With new methods, sources, and users come new challenges around data dissemination and communication—statistics are valuable only if they

are easily accessed and if data users find them relevant and easy to understand. In this changing environment, statistical organizations must learn to communicate more effectively and directly with data users and improve statistical literacy across all audiences. NSOs are increasingly recognizing that communication is a two-way process, not limited only to dissemination. The [Global Assessment of the National Statistical System of Kazakhstan](#) published in 2017 identified a need for more proactive and effective engagement with certain user groups and activities to increase statistical literacy among users from the media.

7. The workshop aimed to enhance the capacity of BNS staff to communicate about official statistics with various types of users and enhance technical capacity to collate data and statistics and formulate plans to improve the availability of data for gender-in-trade and other cross-cutting topics. Other objectives included to guide the BNS in the preparation of a draft communication strategy and to enhance the capacity of users to identify, use and interpret official statistics.

III. Summary of proceedings

8. The workshop consisted of five parts over three days:
- a) improving statistical literacy among users in government
 - b) journalistic use of official statistics
 - c) developing the capacity to present, disseminate and communicate official statistics to users
 - d) compiling statistical information across statistical domains to measure gender-in-trade
 - e) developing a communication strategy for the BNS

9. The first part of the workshop targeted users of official statistics from government. The session included a presentation on the principles and good practices of producer-user interaction by invited expert Connie Graziadei. To improve statistical literacy among data users, a UNECE presentation on labour force indicators covered key concepts, data sources, and interpretation. The presentation drew attention to the gender dimensions of labour force participation and its measurement. The BNS had the opportunity to inform participants about their dissemination and communication tools and channels, including the new BNS website.

10. The second part of the workshop was geared towards data users from the media. Presentations from UNECE covered basic skills and essential concepts for understanding official statistics and key population indicators. Invited expert Connie Graziadei presented the principles and good practices of producer-user interaction, tailored to this specific audience. The BNS presented the tools and resources available from the BNS to support journalists in their work.

11. The first and second parts of the workshop concluded with facilitated dialogues between data producers and users during which participants expressed their views on barriers to access and understanding of statistics from the BNS and shared suggestions for addressing their data needs.

12. An entire day was dedicated to the third part of the workshop, which focused on the communication of official statistics and targeted BNS staff.

The UNECE publication [Strategic Communication Framework for Statistical Institutions](#) (2021) served as the basis for this part of the workshop, which was presented by invited expert Connie Graziadei. Building on the previous day's session with journalists, the presentation also covered key considerations for the BNS as it focuses on improving its relationship with journalists and the media, including real-world examples from other NSOs. As a first step towards the development of a communication strategy for the BNS, staff identified the most important components and worked in small groups to discuss objectives, target audiences, communication channels, and potential issues.

13. A presentation by invited expert Sara Demofonti provided guidance on how to apply the Strategic Communication Framework in practice, using the domain of gender statistics in Italy as a case study. The presentation described how the Italian National Institute of Statistics approaches dissemination and communication and shared several illustrative examples of the communication of gender data in Italy. The BNS also presented recent and future work on the communication of gender statistics in Kazakhstan.

14. An interactive session on gender-in-trade statistics brought together data users from the Centre for Trade Policy Development and BNS staff working in trade and business statistics to explore the conceptual and practical aspects of measuring the gender aspects of trade. The session included presentations by invited expert Tengiz Tsekvava on methodology and calculation of statistical indicators; international experience and country case studies, with a particular emphasis on the gender-in-trade pilot work in Georgia as a proposed model for the work in Kazakhstan; and initial assessment of data sources for the gender-in-trade statistics work in Kazakhstan and preliminary outcomes.

15. The final part of the workshop was devoted to the development of a draft communications strategy for the BNS. Based on discussions during the previous days and input BNS leadership, invited expert Connie Graziadei developed an outline for the communications strategy. BNS senior staff worked together to populate this outline, discussing strategic considerations such as mission, vision, and a new logo. During this session, BNS also discussed the development of a crisis management process.

16. The timetable and slides used in presentations are available on the [workshop website](#).

IV. Conclusions

17. The outcomes of the workshop included

- a) a draft Communication Strategy for the BNS
- b) enhanced technical capacity to collate data and statistics and formulate plans to improve the availability of data for gender-in-trade
- c) improved use of official statistics in support of evidence-based policymaking and policy monitoring.

18. Data users gained awareness of how official statistics and services available from the BNS can support their work. They welcomed the opportunity to discuss their statistical needs directly with BNS staff,

providing concrete suggestions around required indicators and disaggregation and the formats, channels, and frequency for dissemination and communication.

19. During the discussion, users in government and media raised issues such as the need for more frequently updated data, difficulty accessing data or statistics that are spread across multiple databases or resources, a desire for more-user friendly formats such as infographics, and the importance of communicating with data users through various channels including social media. Some participants from government described specific indicators they desired for their work, for examples those related to gender-in-trade, climate and environment, and early marriage. Journalists suggested a dedicated media portal on the new BNS website. Data users across both groups were positive about the workshop, indicating that it was very useful to learn more about the resources available to support their work. BNS staff were engaged and eager to learn, showing openness to feedback offered to improve their services to all users.

20. BNS staff directly and immediately applied knowledge gained during the workshop in the development of a draft communication strategy. Guided by the UNECE Strategic Communication Framework for Statistical Institutions, examples of best practices presented during the workshop, and the insight and experiences of expert presenters, BNS staff developed a draft strategy that specified objectives and identified audiences, communication channels and content types. BNS staff also discussed the development of a crisis management plan.

21. The exchange with BNS staff at the workshop provided valuable information about the data availability and technical capacity for measuring the gender aspects of trade in Kazakhstan. The available data indicate strong potential for studying gender-in-trade in Kazakhstan. BNS staff showed strong commitment to ongoing participation in the UNDA project “Data and statistics for more gender-responsive trade policies”. The work begun during the workshop towards data linking and the calculation of gender-in-trade indicators will continue in the final months of 2022.

22. Participants evaluated the workshop very highly, indicating the content covered was useful for their work. Participants suggested the following topics for future workshops: SDGs and gender disaggregation; use of privately-held data for official statistics; national accounts, inflation, and other macroeconomic indicators; and data collection and processing in other countries. Data user participants suggested future training on how to access relevant statistics and data on the BNS website.