



UNITED NATIONS  
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE  
CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

22 May 2024

### Workshop & Expert Meeting on Statistics for SDGs

15 – 17 October 2024, Tirana, Albania

## CALL FOR CONTRIBUTIONS

*The 8<sup>th</sup> UNECE Expert Meeting on Statistics for SDGs will take place from 16 to 17 October 2024 in Tirana, Albania, as an in-person meeting, following a Workshop on Statistics for SDGs on 15 October. Simultaneous interpretation in English and Russian will be provided for the Workshop and Expert Meeting. Updates and all documents will be posted on the meeting website: [8th Expert Meeting on Statistics for Sustainable Development Goals & Workshop | UNECE](#)*

*All countries and organizations are invited to offer contributions related to the topics proposed in section III in the form of presentations, posters and papers. **If you are interested in contributing a paper, poster or presentation please [provide an abstract](#) by 17 June.***

*An invitation letter to the meeting will be shared in due course.*

### I. Background

The 2024 Workshop & Expert Meeting on Statistics for SDGs will take place in Tirana, Albania, on **15 – 17 October 2024**. It will be held with simultaneous interpretation in English and Russian.

The Workshop and Expert Meeting are aimed at experts from national statistical offices, international organizations and other stakeholders involved in the production, communication and coordination of the reporting of statistics for SDGs. The meeting will serve as a platform to share experiences, good practices and lessons learned; to showcase innovative solutions to the challenges faced; and to identify priorities for future methodological and capacity-development work in this area. The target audience of the meeting are the SDG focal points in the national statistical offices and international organizations, and other professionals working with statistics for SDGs.

The event is organized by the [UNECE Steering Group on Statistics for SDGs](#), co-chaired by Poland and Sweden, comprising sixteen countries, Eurostat, OECD, CIS-Stat, EEA and UNECE.

### II. Contributions

**All countries and organizations are invited to offer contributions related to the topics proposed in section III in the form of presentations, posters or papers.** Presentations and posters may be accompanied by a written paper, but it is not mandatory. You may also offer a written contribution only without a presentation.

If you are interested in contributing a paper, poster and/or presentation **please fill [this form](#) by 17 June**, describing the planned content of your contribution and explaining how it relates to the topics described in this note in an abstract (approx. 200 words). The organizers will contact the authors and inform them whether their contribution has been selected.

If you are preparing a paper, the full text should be submitted by 20 September. Presentation slides and posters should be submitted by 8 October.

The contributions are expected to describe national/international experience, practice, challenges or solutions related to one of the session topics listed below. They should aim to be forward-looking with the goal of providing information that is useful for others: e.g. highlighting findings or experiences that could offer valuable lessons learned; and/or showing how these experiences will inform future approaches.

**The written papers should be maximum 6 pages long and submitted in English.** Figures or tables should be accompanied by titles, and all abbreviations should be explained when used for the first time. References can be included in footnotes or at the end.

Papers should be prepared using the template available on the Expert Meeting webpage.

Posters must be printed by the presenter and brought to the meeting venue.

The following deadlines apply:

- Abstract submission – **17 June 2024**
- Deadline for papers – **20 September 2024**
- Deadline for presentations – **8 October 2024.**

### III. Explanatory notes on the Workshop & Expert Meeting sessions

#### Workshop Sessions

##### **SDG indicator availability**

*Organized by Monika Gorzelak (Poland) and Ana Carmen Saura Vinuesa (Spain)*

According to the latest SDG progress report by the UNECE Statistical Division “Sustainable development in the UNECE Region: Facing a Headwind in 2024”<sup>1</sup>, almost a third of SDG targets cannot be assessed for the region due to remaining data gaps. For four goals (SDG 5, SDG 11, SDG 12, SDG 13), measurement can be conducted with respect to only half or even fewer targets. For 71 of 231 unique global indicators, country data are not available to track progress for the UNECE.

This long-term challenge of insufficient data for SDG monitoring raises a few major questions that this workshop session on SDG indicator availability will seek to address. Two of them are: ‘What still can be done to accelerate progress in closing SDG data gaps – here and now? Can we learn from other countries experience to increase the SDG indicators coverage?’ In response to that, the session, firstly, will welcome and showcase practical examples of **improving indicator availability** by NSOs and other representatives of the statistical systems, e.g. through applying environmental accounts, geospatial data or other new sources and methods for enhancing SDG data coverage.

Secondly, the session will focus on the concept of indicator availability and its practical implications for assessing national SDG indicator availability to track progress towards Agenda 2030. To that end, two new products developed by the UNECE Steering Group on Statistics for SDGs will be launched during the session:

- Addendum on Indicator Availability to the Road Map 2.0
- 2024 Self-Assessment Tool for Indicator Availability<sup>2</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> [https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/SDG-Report\\_2024\\_webUNOG.pdf](https://unece.org/sites/default/files/2024-02/SDG-Report_2024_webUNOG.pdf)

<sup>2</sup> [unece.org/statistics/documents/2024/03/2024-self-assessment-tool-sdg-indicator-availability](https://unece.org/statistics/documents/2024/03/2024-self-assessment-tool-sdg-indicator-availability)

The introduction of the availability guidelines and tool will be followed by their practical demonstration and examples of their various applications in the third part of the session devoted to working with the [Self-Assessment Tool](#).

### **Lessons learned from providing statistics for SDGs**

*Organized by Renata Bielak (Poland)*

What's the impact of the SDGs on the official statistics and what's the official statistics contribution to the global goals? The halfway point towards the 2030 Agenda, marked in 2023, is a perfect time to consider lessons learned from providing statistics for the SDGs. The CES Bureau selected this topic for an upcoming in-depth review.

The session will offer an opportunity to both share success stories and discuss long-term challenges in the development of SDGs statistics. The discussion will highlight countries' experience and insights gained from the following:

- a) SDGs measurement challenges,
- b) coordination, collaboration and partnerships for SDGs,
- c) communication of SDGs statistics,
- d) statistics for SDGs in a multi-crisis era,
- e) innovations in official statistics in response to SDGs.

The focus of the session is to identify significant outcomes, triggered by the 2030 Agenda, that have affected the statistical capacity development and will be relevant for statistical systems in the future. Deliverables from the session will contribute to the in-depth review carried out by the CES Bureau in February 2025.

### **Expert Meeting Sessions**

#### **Managing relations with policy makers**

*Organized by Mary Smyth-McCarthy (Ireland)*

Monitoring progress towards SDG targets requires close collaboration between NSOs (National Statistics Offices) and policy-makers (usually Ministries). Managing relations with policy makers can be very country specific, depending on the national SDG infrastructure. In some cases, this relationship can centre on specific issues e.g. the development of the Statistical Annex for the VNR (Voluntary National Review), or the NSO acting as a focal point for data collection. In other cases, a partnership between the NSO and the policy-maker is a central part of the national SDG framework.

Regardless of the SDG structures at national level, developing relations between NSOs and the policy-makers is important to advance the SDGs and influence evidence-based policy decisions. SDG challenges faced cannot always be done by the statistical office alone. Examples of where support is needed from policy-makers are: partnerships with data producers beyond the national statistical system with various agencies and civil society organizations; quality assurance for SDG indicators and data coming from other parts of the statistical system and from outside the system; dealing with "non-statistical" indicators, etc.

It is important for NSOs to share their experiences of managing relations with policy-makers, so that other countries can learn from these experiences for capacity-development. Lessons learned can also be integrated into other aspects of the statistical system, beyond SDGs.

This call for papers would welcome examples of 'Managing relations with policy makers', including the following:

- Guidelines on developing relations with policy-makers
- NSOs examples of good practice and opportunities through engagement with policy-makers
- Challenges encountered by NSOs collaborating with policy-makers
- Statistical innovations through developing relations with policy-makers
- Examples of policy decisions influenced by NSOs.

### **Mainstreaming SDGs into other related frameworks**

*Organized by Cara Williams (Canada) and Bo Hoogerwerf (Netherlands)*

The 2030 agenda is an expansive global agenda that encompasses society, the economy and the environment. Monitoring the agenda requires a wide variety of high quality data and the corresponding skills to process it. Investments have been made to close the gap between statistics and policy to make the data more usable for decision making.

There are other frameworks that cover many of the same domains as the SDGs. Frameworks with internationally agreed standards and relevance for measuring well-being, sustainability, the environment, biodiversity etc.. Most indicator frameworks are already large and complex. In addition, frameworks that cover similar domains often do not use the same set of indicators. The frameworks can also differ depending on a national, regional and international focus. This increases the complexity for the user but also for National Statistical Offices. Convergence of a single framework and a common language can maximize the use and value of data.

The 2030 agenda can also benefit from other frameworks. Global initiatives like the SDGs can be limited when there is a lack of consensus from policy makers. Other frameworks can be used to identify and review possible gaps. In addition, other frameworks can provide information about the coherency of the indicators. It can also allow for closer connections to accounting systems to increase coherence. By aligning the SDGs with other related frameworks and maybe even integrate, the quality of the framework and indicators can be increased as well.

The session will look at how countries are addressing the various frameworks that cover many of the same domains. What are the challenges and opportunities that countries face when prioritizing or integrating these frameworks? What lessons and best practices can be shared for countries that have successfully integrated the SDG framework to other frameworks?

### **The future of the SDGs reporting (from summary measurements to communication)**

*Organized by Övünç Uysal (European Environment Agency)*

The monitoring framework for the SDGs was crafted to encapsulate all aspects of sustainable development goals and targets, aimed to be a progressive agenda in maintaining their inclusive nature and keeping the 2030 Agenda discussion vibrant. As we have passed the midpoint of the SDGs Agenda, the world is experiencing multiple crises simultaneously, prompting the emergence of new initiatives in response to the contemporary challenges. The future of SDGs reporting should be expected to face and if possible, overcome these challenges and questions:

- There are emerging legal and institutional mechanisms waiting to be incorporated into the sustainable development monitoring agenda. A few of most prominent ones are greening the financial flows, Corporate Sustainability Reporting and ESGs, Biodiversity Frameworks (Nature

Restoration Law) and similar global frameworks. These promising initiatives, along with the further inclusion of the corresponding measurements like geospatial indicators in the SDGs reporting are fostering a robust platform for discussion.

- In the last years, extensive discussions on the new summary measurement needs and gaps have unfolded under initiatives such as Beyond GDP, SNA 2025 revision or EU inclusive and well-being. These include new measurement needs from accounting frameworks (e.g. natural capital, social accounting), new potential indices and dashboard proposals. What contributions can we expect from these initiatives to the future of SDG monitoring?
- How can we eliminate conflicting measures with other reporting bodies in the future, especially reconcile with the conflicting measures outside of NSOs?
- Under the sustainable development umbrella, revised indicators, new surveys, and initiatives for potential emerging data sources, including digitalization and AI are abundant, which are significant to the SDGs reporting. What should we expect from them in the future, especially in the Beyond SDGs era?

International organizations, NSOs and NGOs are welcome to contribute to the discussions in this session on shaping the future of SDGs monitoring and reporting.

## IV. Contact information

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