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Item 3(c) of the Provisional Agenda

# PROGRESS REPORT OF THE TASK FORCE ON MEASUREMENT OF THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITIONS OF MIGRANTS

**Note prepared by the Task Force**

*This document contains a progress report and plans on remaining activities of the Task Force on Measurement of the Socio-economic Conditions of Migrants which still require some time to complete. The outline of the report being prepared by the Task Force is presented in Annex 1.* ***The Bureau extended the mandate of the Task Force for one year.***

## I. BACKGROUND

1. Growing international migration has prompted the need for robust statistical information to better understand the phenomenon of the socio-economic conditions of migrants and the impact of international migration on sending and receiving countries. To better meet this need, the CES Bureau established a Task Force (TF) on socio-economic conditions of migrants in November 2010 to undertake methodological work in this area, in particular, on measurement of the conditions that would allow longitudinal analysis of migrant groups.

2. The TF has set some sub-objectives to its methodological work in line with the terms of reference of the TF:

a) Measurement on the different dimensions of the socio-economic conditions of migrants

- Identify the dimensions that are most relevant to the understanding of migrant situations, especially the longitudinal aspect of socio-economic conditions;
- Identify and develop indicators for each of the dimensions.

b) Improvement of the availability, quality and comparability of data on migrant socio-economic conditions

- Outline the types of data needed to produce the proposed indicators;
- Review existing sources for their suitability to develop indicators;
- Provide guidelines and share experiences in the production of indicators using existing census, surveys and administrative data sources.

3. The Task Force includes members from 13 countries (Australia, Canada, Denmark, Estonia, Ireland, Italy, the Netherlands, Norway, Palestine, Spain, Turkey, the United Kingdom and the United States) and 4 international organizations (OECD, European Union Agency for Fundamental Rights, Eurostat and UNECE). Tina Chui from Statistics Canada is the Chair of the Task Force.

## II. FINDINGS AND PROGRESS OF WORK

### A. Socio-economic conditions

#### Identifying the most relevant dimensions

4. To date, the TF has identified several dimensions that are most relevant for understanding the conditions of migrants. There are many areas of interest that can be included as socio-economic conditions of migrants. In order to identify the conditions that are most relevant to understanding migrant groups and to keep the project within manageable scope, some evaluation criteria for inclusion were established.

5. Based on the evaluation criteria, the TF identified five socio-economic dimensions. They are: demography, education, labour market, economic well-being, and social and civic participation. Key issues or research questions that warrant statistical information in each of the dimensions were then identified.

#### Identifying and developing indicators for the dimensions

6. The TF has proposed indicators to measure the selected dimensions that are most relevant to the understanding of migrant situations. For each dimension, several indicators were identified. The final report will provide examples of the use of selected key indicators from a longitudinal perspective.

7. Existing indicators seldom adopt a longitudinal perspective. The “snapshot” approach, using cross-sectional data, yields important insights on the conditions of migrants; it does not, however, allow for the study of how and the process through which migrants settled in their new home. Therefore, the TF has paid particular attention to the longitudinal perspective.

### B. Improvement of the availability, quality and comparability of data

#### Outlining the types of data needed for the indicators

8. Data sources for the indicators have also been reviewed, particularly from a longitudinal perspective. The TF has also prepared metadata to identify different data sources that collect information on the socio-economic conditions of migrants – particularly education characteristics. These include censuses, labour force surveys or other household surveys, or administrative databases.

**Reviewing existing sources for their suitability for the indicators**

*Migrant groups*

9. The scope of the migrant population is as complex as socio-economic characteristics. There are many types of migrants. This is evident from previous international work to measure migrants and those known as hard-to-count migrant groups (e.g. Task Force on the analysis of international migration estimates using different length of stay, Task Force on Improving Migration and Migrant Data Using Household Surveys and Other Sources (also known as Suitland Working Group), 2008 UNECE survey on international migration statistics).

10. Furthermore, certain socio-economic characteristics are group-specific. For example, language acquisition or credential recognition is relevant to migrants, but may not be relevant to their offspring born in the destination country. In order to limit the scope of the project, the socio-economic indicators of two major migrant groups – the foreign-born and second generation descendants – were explored.

*Longitudinal data and analysis*

11. An obvious reason for the lack of longitudinal approaches to understanding migrant population stems from the lack of appropriate data sources. The TF has reviewed existing longitudinal data, shared the experience on longitudinal data collection, and looked at alternate methods to develop longitudinal data, as well as put forward indicators that are fit for longitudinal analysis.

12. Studying migrant characteristics in a receiving country from a longitudinal perspective is particularly fitting. Existing discourse on migrant settlement and integration often adopt a continuum model, i.e., migrants become more established and integrated as length of stay in receiving country increases.

13. Longitudinal data provide information to track how migrants settle, both socially and economically, in new communities, not simply if they do. Such information is invaluable to researchers and policy-makers when creating settlement programs or identifying critical stages of migrant settlement to their new home.

14. Another important facet of the longitudinal perspective is that it allows for better identification of causal relations. This helps to determine why various actions may have been taken or why certain outcomes were reached. These processes can only be understood using cross-sectional data by asking retrospective questions. For example, in order to determine why migrants settled in a particular area, longitudinal data could be used to answer the question by noting the change in variables over time. On the other hand, to obtain an answer using cross-sectional data, a question such as “why did you move?” would be needed.

**Preparing guidelines and sharing experiences in the production of indicators**

15. The report is planned to share practices and provide guidelines to countries intending to produce statistics on socio-economic conditions of migrants using existing data sources, particularly from a longitudinal perspective. The Task Force is currently working on the guidelines and on identifying good practices in the production of indicators in this area.

## III. PROPOSAL

16. The report of the Task Force was planned to be submitted to the CES plenary session in 2014. However, the work on the guidelines and on collecting good practices requires more time. Furthermore, the CES plenary session in 2014 will take place in April instead of June which shortens the time available for preparing the document by three months.

17. Therefore the Task Force is proposing a revised timetable for completion of its work in 2014:

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| November 2013 – January 2014 | Compiling of the full draft report |
| February-April 2014 | Identification of suitable analytical examples for inclusion in the report |
| May-July 2014 | Editing and finalizing the report |
| September 2014 | Submission to the Bureau for their October meeting |
| January-February 2015 | Electronic consultation among CES members |
| April 2015 | Submission to the CES plenary session for endorsement in June 2015 |

18. The outline of the report is presented in Annex 1. Since the report will include examples using actual data from the national statistical offices of TF member countries, more time will be needed to allow for collection of these practical examples.

# ANNEX 1
# OUTLINE OF THE FINAL REPORT

## Measurement of Socio-economic Conditions of Migrants

**1. Introduction**
1.1. Methodological objectives

**2. Migrant groups of interest**
2.1. Relevant initiatives : UN 1998, UNECE Taskforce on hard-to-count migrant groups
2.2. Choice : foreign-born and their descendants
2.3. Definition and operationalization
2.4. Possible refinement to further distinguish migrant groups of interest (e.g. category of admission/reasons of migration)

**3. Conceptual framework**
3.1. Summary of relevant initiatives – in terms of dimensions and indicators: Zaragoza (Eurostat), OECD Report, Country reports
3.2. Focus on a longitudinal perspective – another angle to study the socio-economic conditions of migrants
- What is a longitudinal perspective?
- Why is it relevant to use this approach with the migrant groups?
- Data sources and limitations

**4. Key dimensions and indicators**
**4.1. Demographic dimension**
4.1.1. Description and relevance of this dimension
4.1.2. List of possible indicators (from existing work and possible new ones)
4.1.3. Example of longitudinal analysis – Knowledge of host country language(s)
4.1.3.1. With cross-sectional data sources
4.1.3.2. With longitudinal data sources
**4.2. Education dimension**
4.2.1. Description and relevance of this dimension
4.2.2. List of possible indicators (from existing work and possible new ones)
4.2.3. Example of longitudinal analysis - Highest educational attainment
4.2.3.1. With cross-sectional data sources
4.2.3.2. With longitudinal data sources
**4.3. Labour market dimension**
4.3.1. Description and relevance of this dimension
4.3.2. List of possible indicators (from existing work and possible new ones)
4.3.3. Example of longitudinal analysis - Employment rate
4.3.3.1. With cross-sectional data sources
4.3.3.2. With longitudinal data sources

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