

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS

High-level Seminar on Harmonisation of Poverty Statistics in CIS Countries

INFORMATION NOTE FOR PARTICIPANTS

The Seminar will be held in Sochi (Russian Federation)
on 31 October – 2 November 2016

I. INTRODUCTION

1. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE), the Federal State Statistics Service of the Russian Federation (Rosstat) and the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CISSTAT) are jointly organizing a High-level Seminar on Harmonisation of Poverty Statistics in CIS Countries, to be held in Sochi (Russian Federation) on 31 October – 2 November 2016

2. The Seminar is organized in the framework of a two-year cooperation project on poverty statistics, with financial support from the Russian Federation. This is the second event under the project. The first workshop of the project was held on 11 July 2016 in Geneva, back-to-back with the UNECE Seminar on Poverty Measurement.

II. PURPOSE AND TARGET AUDIENCE

3. The purpose of the Seminar is to discuss among heads of national statistical agencies the challenges related to producing comparable and reliable poverty and inequality indicators for monitoring sustainable development in CIS countries. The objectives are the following:

- To assess the readiness of the CIS countries to monitor the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) related to poverty and inequality, and discuss the challenges to produce the required indicators;
- To review the new developments in measuring poverty, in particular the non-monetary aspects of poverty in the context of the SDGs monitoring;
- To agree upon a future course of action to improve harmonisation of poverty statistics across CIS countries, including development and testing of harmonized survey tools.

4. The target audience includes heads of national statistical organizations and senior statistical experts in measuring poverty and inequality.

III. AGENDA

5. The meeting will start on Monday, 31 October at 9.30 a.m. and close by 1 p.m. on Wednesday, 2 November.

6. The programme of the meeting will consist of the following substantive topics:

- Measuring poverty to review progress on Sustainable Development Goals
- Multidimensional poverty: what could be the options for CIS countries?
- Surveys for poverty measurement
- Improving comparability of survey questions

7. A concluding session will discuss directions for further work on harmonisation of poverty and inequality statistics in CIS countries.

8. The substantive topics are briefly described below.

Measuring poverty to review progress on Sustainable Development Goals

9. The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) were adopted in September 2015 by world leaders as part of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Two of the SDGs are directly linked to poverty: Goal 1 “End poverty in all its forms everywhere” and Goal 10 “Reduce inequality within and among countries”. Poverty-related issues are also present in several other goals. In March 2016, the United Nations Statistical Commission agreed on a set of indicators “as a practical starting point for proposed global indicators on measuring the goals and targets”. The agreed indicators require further methodological guidance and technical refinement.

10. The session will discuss the production of SDG poverty indicators from the following perspectives:

- What challenges do the national statistical offices face and how to meet them?
- How to coordinate this work in CIS countries?
- How to improve comparability of the indicators among CIS countries?

Multidimensional poverty: what could be the options for CIS countries?

11. Today the multidimensional nature of poverty is broadly recognized – poor health, job insecurity, social exclusion, malnutrition and lack of personal security are just some examples of relevant aspects of poverty that reach beyond people’s material conditions. Moreover, an integrated measure of multidimensional poverty has been included in the SDGs, to complement income poverty measures and show interconnected deprivations.

12. The session will discuss the possible way forward in measuring the above non-monetary aspects of poverty in the CIS countries and demonstrate their relevance for policy design and analysis. While these measures should be adapted to countries’ particular situations, it is important to ensure consistency with internationally tested methodology and comparability among countries where socio-economic situation is alike.

Surveys for poverty measurement

13. Comparable measures are needed to be able to assess progress in comparison with other countries of the region. It is also necessary to update the poverty measures as economic and social circumstances and statistical methodologies evolve. The session will identify steps for harmonizing data collection relevant to poverty in the CIS countries, and aligning the methods of calculating poverty indicators with the SDG monitoring needs of the region.
14. Household surveys are the main source of poverty data. In different CIS countries; however, survey programmes vary significantly across countries. The session will review them from the perspectives of survey methodology, sample size and population coverage, periodicity and data quality.

Improving comparability of survey questions

15. In this session, experts will focus on analysing the household survey questionnaires and identifying common questions in collecting poverty data, questions that are the same but asked in a different way or do not list the same categories, and questions that are unique for certain countries. The session would investigate the way forward to improve comparability by developing and testing a set of standardised survey questions for CIS countries.

IV. DOCUMENTATION AND METHOD OF WORK

16. The working languages of the meeting are Russian and English. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in these languages.
17. Participants are invited to submit an abstract for a presentation on one of the topics on the agenda.
18. The following submission requirements and deadlines apply:
 - Abstracts of up to 300 words by **5 September**.
 - Presentation slides (PowerPoint files) by **14 October**.
 - Please address all submissions by e-mail to Ms Vania Etropolska vania.etropolska@unece.org and social.stats@unece.org.
19. Meeting documents, presentations and their abstracts will be made available on the UNECE website at <http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2016.10.hls.html>.

V. PARTICIPATION, ACCREDITATION AND REGISTRATION

20. All participants must be accredited by the competent authorities of their country or international organization.
21. Participants should register online through the link: <https://www2.unece.org/uncdb/app/ext/meeting-registration?id=MmjZzf> by **5 September**. The online meeting registration guideline is available at: <https://www2.unece.org/wiki/display/OMR>.

22. All participants attending the Seminar are requested to have a valid passport and, if required, a visa. If you require a visa to enter the Russian Federation, please indicate this in the registration form and request an invitation letter from Rosstat (Mr. Ilya Matyushev: imatyushev@gks.ru and Ms. Kate Nikulina: nikulina_e@gks.ru). Rosstat will send you an invitation letter, which you will need to submit with your visa application. Applications for visas should be made as soon as possible to the Embassy of Russian Federation in the country in which the participant resides, with reference to the UNECE/Rosstat High-level Seminar on Harmonisation of Poverty Statistics in CIS Countries.

VI. TRAVEL AND ACCOMMODATION

23. Air travel and accommodation of the nominated participants will be organized and paid for by the organizers of the Seminar.

VII. INFORMATION AND CORRESPONDENCE

24. Should you have any questions regarding the information provided above, please contact:

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