

UNITED NATIONS
ECONOMIC COMMISSION FOR EUROPE
CONFERENCE OF EUROPEAN STATISTICIANS
Workshop on harmonisation of poverty statistics
Budva, Montenegro, 25 September 2017

CONCEPT NOTE

The Workshop will be held at Hotel Mediteran, Budva, Montenegro
on 25 September 2017

I. TIME AND VENUE

1. The United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) is organising the *Workshop on harmonisation of poverty statistics* in cooperation with Rosstat and CISSTAT, with financial support from the Russian Federation and the United Nations Development Account. The Workshop will be held at Hotel Mediteran, Budva, Montenegro, on Monday, 25 September from 9:30 am to 5.30 pm. The Workshop is followed by the *UNECE Expert meeting on measuring poverty and inequality* on 26-27 September.

II. BACKGROUND

2. The call for internationally comparable poverty measures is especially strong in the context of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This is therefore an appropriate time to promote synergies and cooperation within the statistical community and encourage countries to make efforts toward harmonisation of poverty statistics and aligning them to the monitoring needs for SDGs.

3. At present, countries use a variety of approaches involving different data sources, sampling methods, classifications and definitions. The degree of harmonization by applying international standards also varies. To assess progress, it is necessary to achieve measures that are comparable across countries by applying universal definitions and harmonized methodologies. A good balance should be found between national specificities and cross-country comparability.

4. Since 2016, UNECE is implementing the project "Harmonized poverty indicators for monitoring sustainable development in CIS countries" together with Rosstat and CISSTAT. The objective is to strengthen statistical capacity in CIS countries for producing comparable and reliable poverty indicators, including those necessary for monitoring SDGs. At the *High-level seminar on poverty harmonisation of poverty statistics* (Sochi, Russian Federation, 31 October – 2 November 2016), statistical offices of CIS countries decided to develop a model set of survey questions to harmonize their data collection on poverty, and to hold a

workshop on poverty measurement for CIS experts in 2017 back-to-back with the UNECE region-wide expert meeting on measuring poverty and inequality.

5. In June-July 2017, UNECE conducted an electronic consultation on the draft model set of survey questions. Based on the consultation, the questions and the related report will be modified and presented for discussion at the Workshop.

III. PURPOSE

6. The purpose of the Workshop is to exchange experience and build statistical capacity for harmonisation of poverty measures, with focus on CIS countries. It will identify the main directions for further steps towards harmonizing poverty statistics.

7. The target audience are statisticians and analysts from national statistical offices.

IV. PROGRAMME

Comparable statistics for poverty monitoring

8. This agenda item will address contain presentations and discussion on how to improve cross-country comparability and respond to the needs of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. International organizations will present experience with the harmonization of data sources and data collection; country representatives would highlight their most recent steps for monitoring SDG1 (poverty reduction).

Harmonising data collection relevant to poverty in household surveys

9. Under this agenda item, the workshop will focus on the implementation of the project "Harmonized poverty indicators for monitoring sustainable development in CIS countries", including group discussions on specific issues.

10. First, UNECE will provide an overview of the accomplished and planned work. This will be followed by the presentation by the UNECE consultant, Mr Rafkat Hasanov, on the following points:

- a) Finalization of the report on the analysis of household survey questionnaires
- b) Draft model set of survey questions and its revision in response to the electronic consultation

11. Based on the presented material, participants will be invited to discuss challenges of implementing the model questions in their national surveys.

12. Specific technical aspects of the questions will be addressed **in group discussions**. The groups are formed based on participants' areas of expertise and the key issues on which consensus would have to be built or strengthened.

13. Representatives of each group will be invited to a panel where they will summarise the outcome of the discussion in their respective group and respond to questions and comments from participants.

Conclusions and way forward

14. The session will discuss the way forward to improve comparability and agree on next steps in implementing the model set of survey questions. Countries will be invited to pilot test the model set of questions.

V. PREPARATION

15. Participants are invited to review the reports containing the analysis of the household survey questionnaires and the model survey questions in advance of the meeting. The documents will be posted on the Workshop website at

<http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2017.9.poverty.workshop.html>.

16. Participants are encouraged to download the materials from the website and bring their own copies to the Workshop. Documents posted on the website before the Workshop will not be distributed in the meeting room.

VI. LANGUAGES

17. The working languages of the Workshop are English and Russian. Simultaneous interpretation will be provided in these languages.

VII. REGISTRATION AND LOGISTICS

18. For information on registration, visa, accommodation and logistics, please refer to sections V-VIII of [the information note](#) of the *Expert meeting on measuring poverty and inequality*, available at <http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2017.9.poverty.seminar.html>.