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Group of Experts on Gender Statistics

Work Session on Gender Statistics

Geneva, 12-14 March 2012

Item 11 of the provisional agenda

Adoption of the report

Report of the Work Session on Gender Statistics

Note by the secretariat

Summary

The Conference of European Statisticians, at its fifty-ninth plenary session in June 2011, approved the activities undertaken under the UNECE Statistical Programme 2011, and endorsed the list of meetings planned to be organized from June 2011 to June 2012, as provided in document ECE/CES/81 (Report of the fifty-ninth plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians, paragraph 61). This list included a Work Session on Gender Statistics, which was held in Geneva on 12-14 March 2012.

The present document is the report of that Work Session, and is provided to inform the Conference of European Statisticians of the organization and outcomes of that Work Session.

I. Introduction

1. The Work Session on Gender Statistics was held on 12-14 March 2012 in Geneva. It was attended by participants from Algeria, Armenia, Austria, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Belgium, Czech Republic, Denmark, Egypt, Estonia, Finland, Georgia, Hungary, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jordan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Lebanon, Lithuania, Mexico, Morocco, Montenegro, Netherlands, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Serbia, Slovakia, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Tajikistan, Tunisia, Ukraine, United Kingdom, United States of America and Uzbekistan. The European Commission was represented by the Statistical Office of the European Union (Eurostat),

MEDSTAT III Programme and the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE). The Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CISSTAT), the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), the Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO), the International Labour Organization (ILO), the United Nations Research Institute for Social Development (UNRISD) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN ECLAC) were also represented. Experts from the Palestinian Central Bureau of Statistics, Make Mothers Matter (MMM) International, Institute of Women's Studies and from Birzeit University participated at the invitation of the secretariat.

II. Organization of the meeting

2. Ms. Marcella Jones-Puthoff (United States) was elected as Chair of the meeting and Ms. Katja Branger (Switzerland) was elected as Vice-Chair.

3. The following substantive topics were discussed:

- (a) Revisiting the gender pay gap;
- (b) Time use surveys;
- (c) Measuring violence against women;
- (d) Health and lifestyles;
- (e) Gender analysis of census data;
- (f) Gender perspective in migration statistics;
- (g) Indicators of gender equality;
- (h) Information session:
 - (i) UNECE databases;
 - (ii) Global review of gender statistics;
- (i) Future work.

4. The following participants acted as Discussants: for sub-session (a) Ms. Francesca Francavilla (OECD), for sub-session (b) Ms. Judit Lakatos (Hungary), for sub-session (c) Ms. Cristina Freguja (Italy), for sub-session (d) Ms. Anna Rita Manca (EIGE), for sub-session (e) Ms. Annemette Lindhardt Olsen (Denmark), for sub-session (f) Ms. Marion van den Brakel (Netherlands) and for sub-session (g) Ms. Helen Cahill (Ireland).

5. The discussion at the meeting was based on invited and supporting papers. The papers are available on the UNECE website at the following address:

<http://www.unece.org/stats/documents/2012.03.gender.html>

III. Summary of the discussion

A. Revisiting the gender pay gap

6. The discussion was based on the invited paper by Austria and supporting papers from Israel, the Russian Federation, Switzerland, Egypt and Jordan.

7. The gender pay gap (GPG) in Austria is among the highest in the European Union. The Austrian paper explained this in part by the diffident distribution of working women and men across sector, occupation, age and length of employment. After controlling for all the observable explanatory variables, two thirds of the Austrian unadjusted GPG remained explained.

8. The paper from Israel concentrated on promotion of employees, showing a disadvantageous situation of women: percentage of women reporting promotion was lower than the percentage of men; women were over-represented in jobs with low wage mobility; women's careers were more frequently disturbed following childbirth. On the other hand, research revealed that at similar income levels, women are promoted more frequently than men, probably due to a relatively high rate of academic degree holders among women. It also revealed that women are more frequently promoted compared to men who work exactly the same number of hours per week.

9. The presentation of Russian Federation described data from sample survey of wages and salaries by occupation groups and age conducted in 2009. According to the survey women prevailed in areas like health and social work activities, education and services. GPG exists in all aggregated occupational groups and it ranged from 57 per cent for mid-skill workers up to 86 per cent for unskilled workers.

10. The analysis of GPG by explanatory factors in the Greater Zurich Region in Switzerland could explain two thirds of the GPG (compared to one third in Austria). While GPG in the region remained stable over the last decade, its explained part (wage discrimination) declined by 10%. It was cautioned that the unexplained GPG should not be automatically interpreted as wage discrimination.

11. In Egypt, women's work was undervalued, and labour market had expectation of lower productivity by women. Women usually had lower skills and expected lower wages than men. GPG was of considerable size even in public sector, though it remained lower than in the private sector. Private sector was reluctant to recruit women due to high cost associated with maternity and motherhood envisaged by Egyptian labour laws.

12. The Jordanian paper highlighted occupation and gender segregation by education level and sector of work as challenges in determining GPG. Pay discrimination was higher in private sector than in public, which was not entirely due to differentials in working hours. Excluding of informal employment (mainly domestic workers) in low-skilled occupations could even yield a negative GPG.

13. The subsequent discussion highlighted the influence of the definition (mean or median), coverage (overtime, different forms of additional pay, apprentices, part-time employment), gross or net earnings, reference period (annual earnings or hourly wage) on the measurement of GPG. Consideration of the confounding factors is important for understanding the situation. For example, the high percentage of women in part-time employment in Austria, Germany and the Netherlands could be the main reason for the high unadjusted GPG in those countries. On the other hand, a low unadjusted GPG does not necessarily reflect small differences between women and men. In Italy, the low gap is explained by the labour market structure by sex. A difference in the productivity of women and men not captured by research could be another explanatory variable for GPG.

14. Further efforts to improve international comparability were proposed, such as presenting systematically the breakdown of GPG by occupation and sector and studying horizontal and vertical segregation of GPG. The EU Structure of Earnings Surveys provide accurate and harmonised data for all EU Member States, but they

exclude the public sector. It was also pointed out that factors such as labour force entry age, accumulated years of experience, duration of labour force participation in one's lifetime and continuity of work life have not been considered in most of the work and discussion on this topic.

15. In Denmark, the Ministry of Education is encouraging young women to pursue degree in majors where men are dominant, which is expected to contribute to the reduction of GPG. In the Netherlands, it was observed that the increase of the number of women in a sector was linked to the decrease of wages in that sector. Possible reason for that could be poor bargaining of wages by women or lower qualification. It was mentioned that preference of women was to balance family life with work as children remain the main responsibility of women and jobs providing that balance are paid lower on average. A few countries pointed out that in a number of cases GPG was a result of women's behaviour in the labour market, which could be affected by the family, culture or traditions.

16. Most participants felt that the median is the preferred basis for measuring GPG, but the measure based on the mean is more frequently available. It was felt that much further work is necessary to understand better the determinants of GPG and to arrive at internationally agreed methods of adjustment of this measure.

B. Time use surveys

17. The discussion was based on the invited paper by Spain, supporting papers by the Republic of Moldova and Serbia and a presentation by UNECE.

18. The paper by Spain provided an example of applying time use data for estimating the total non-market production of Spanish households and its share in the country's GDP. Partial results from Moldovan time use survey gave a gender perspective of time allocation to various activities by the means of average time spent of the activities, participation rates, life cycle time allocations. Gender analysis with time use data in Serbia focused on differences in time use according to employment status, week or weekend day, and type of settlement.

19. The spectrum of possible uses of time use surveys was complemented by the presentation of the on-going work of the UNECE Task Force on Time Use Surveys, which has nearly completed the development of a review of the extensive range of areas where time use data can inform policy. The Task Force has identified the three key areas of unpaid work and non-market production, monitoring well-being, and gender equality as those where information from time use surveys is necessary for informed policymaking, and for which other data sources are not adequate. This provides the core rationale for conducting time use surveys regularly.

20. In spite of their great analytic value, it remains difficult to raise the significant funding they require. Recent surveys in the Republic of Moldova and Serbia were carried out as special programmes and supported by several external donors. Experience from a few other countries showed that networks of users, including the private sector, constitute potential mechanisms to draw interest to time use surveys and secure their funding. Budget constraints and long intervals between surveys have led to efforts towards implementing a light version of time use survey. Whereas such light surveys can help provide important information, they are not envisaged to replace full-scale surveys.

21. Further harmonisation of methods and outputs is necessary to narrow down the divergence observed in current practices and thereby improve comparability across countries and over time. Divergences in coding religious activities and

different learning methods were highlighted. Different specifications of time slots in the diary also have an effect on the results. Response rates to time use surveys were found to resemble those to other surveys, reflecting an overall trend of a decrease.

C. Measuring violence against women

22. The discussion was based on the invited paper by Estonia, a supporting paper from the Republic of Moldova and a presentation on the UNECE survey module for measuring the UN indicators on violence against women.

23. Estonia presented its experience with an intimate partner abuse module, which was conducted as a part of a security survey in 2008-2009. The paper emphasised the importance of measuring intimate partner violence against both men and women. Thus, the questions were formulated in a way that both men and women can answer them. Special attention was paid to interviewer training, because the creation of confident and friendly atmosphere and safety are extremely important issues in such kind of survey.

24. The UNECE survey module on violence against women is designed to measure the core set of United Nations indicators on this topic. The module considers the violence by partners as well as by other than partners and its questions focus on specific easily recognizable behavioural acts. The module has been tested as a stand-alone survey in Armenia, Georgia, Mexico and the Republic of Moldova. Special attention needs to be paid to the psychological training of interviews, to creating a comfortable and safe environment for the interview and to the prevention of traumatising victims of violence with the interview. Issues of ethics and confidentiality are of special importance. The survey should also have a "safe name". In the discussion, the development of this survey module to measure a clearly defined set of indicators was considered as an excellent example of an international effort in statistics.

25. The presentation of Republic of Moldova on the Survey on Violence against Women concentrated on methodological and procedural aspect of the survey. The study combined quantitative and qualitative research methods. The quantitative part was based on the UNECE module. The questionnaire was adjusted according to national interest and was complemented by the section on attitudes and knowledge about violence and gender stereotypes. This section was placed in the end of the questionnaire and no difference was revealed between victims' and non-victims' answers to these questions.

26. The question of studying violence against men was discussed. Some participants believe that it is not possible to study violence against both men and women in one survey. Furthermore, the opinion was expressed that men may be more exposed to psychological violence than women. The difficulty of differentiation of psychological abuse was noted, because it appears to be supplement to all types of violence.

D. Health and lifestyles

27. The discussion was based on the paper by the United Kingdom dealing with issues of measuring sex, gender and gender identity. Speaker explained that some 'trans people' (transsexual people, polygender people and other) could not be counted as female or male in statistical surveys, which is why further work on

questions about sex, gender and gender identity is needed. The paper described the process and results of the testing of survey questions on gender identity.

28. The discussant pointed out that collecting data on gender reassignment is very sensitive area. In developing and testing the questions is especially important that questions can be understood and answered by all people.

29. The subsequent discussion emphasized that demand for new categories in the questions about sex and gender comes from public, which means that some people claim that they cannot categorise themselves according to options provided. The size of such population group is not known and the estimates vary greatly. Participants recognised the need to study the possibilities for sensitizing statistical data collection to the needs of 'trans people'. It was highlighted that the issue is much broader than the collection of statistical data, involving civil registration instructions and documents such as identity card or driver's license.

E. Gender analysis of census data

30. The discussion was based on the invited paper by the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-Stat), supporting papers by Finland, Montenegro and Egypt and a presentation by UNECE on the 2010 round of population censuses. The 2010 round population censuses provide opportunities for thorough gender analyses, making use of the large number of sex-disaggregated variables in the censuses.

31. The papers dealt with trends in gender differences, geographic comparisons and cross-sectional analysis of selected topics. These topics include population structure and change, fertility, childbearing and family structures. The topics also covered the educational structure of population, including literacy, knowledge of foreign languages, school dropout and preschool enrolments as well as the link of the latter to women's participation in the labour market. Labour market participation, income (sources of income, main source, regularity), disability, dwelling and housing conditions, distance from home to workplace and to relatives were also addressed.

32. Participants in the meeting expressed concerns about the way some of the topics were handled in the enumeration stage. Several participants noted that questions on income in a census are not satisfactory and lead to unreliable figures, with high non-response rates. At the same time, the American Current Population Survey satisfactorily collects data on income with a set of ten questions. In the CES recommendations, income is deemed a non-core census topic.

33. The meeting recognised that census data allow a large range of gender analyses of economic activities, linking the distributions of working age population in types of occupation and in branches of activities, including those of low wages that lead, to some extent, to gender pay gap. The meeting cautioned, however, against the risks of low data quality when international standards are not applied.

34. Including disability questions in census questionnaires was deemed sensitive. The CES recommendations provide guidance on how to include disability questions in a census.

35. An increasing number of countries are moving towards register-based censuses. The experience of Finland showed how linking register-based census with administrative sources enabled various gender analyses. This also presented some challenges inherent to the mode of information recording in the registers, such as missing information on immigrants' education background before coming in the

country, record of children's custody as living at the mother's address while this could be a shared custody between both parents, and missing inference rules for identification of same sex partners.

36. It was underlined that gender analysis should aim at understanding the mechanisms behind the observed gender differences. The meeting noted that in spite of the various possibilities opened to conducting gender analysis with census data, statistical offices have limited mandates for such analyses. Nevertheless, during the preparation of phase on the censuses, statisticians set the ground for deep analysis. In some countries, the thorough studies are assigned to research centres with a comprehensive list of variables to cover.

37. Participants in the meeting also insist that although observed gender segregations may be the consequence of direct choices of women, these choices are rarely well informed and are rooted in societal behaviours that they lean since their childhood.

38. Homeless population forms a group of concerns to public authorities. Countries proceed differently to count this subgroup. Although the CES recommends the use of several questions, it was acknowledged that the measurement of homeless population needs further improvement.

39. The CES recommendations for the 2010 round censuses introduced some changes that may affect the gender analysis of the concerned topics and limit comparisons over time. Several of the changes pertain to optional topics. UNECE has been advising countries on the implementation of the recommendations.

F. Gender perspective in migration statistics

40. The discussion was based on papers by Norway and the Republic of Moldova. The paper by Norway gave an overview of the key data sources and the ways how Statistics Norway identifies and classifies immigrants in the available sources of data. The paper then explored some areas of migration research where gender perspectives are useful and relevant.

41. The paper by the Republic of Moldova presented the Extended Migration Profile, a new tool for enhancing existing methods of migration data collection. Taking into account the importance of mainstreaming gender into migration statistics and of mainstreaming migration into other policies, a set of key variables has been included in the tool, presented in a broad development context. The paper explored gender perspectives in the context of the implementation of the profile, which will allow for a more in-depth study of migration processes and their impact on the country's demographic and socio-economic development and on the attainment of gender balance in many aspects of life in society.

42. In the discussion, there was a general feeling that migrations are a growing phenomenon, with an international dimension and consequences both in sending countries and on migrants and populations in host countries. Consequently, migration is drawing the interest of authorities in learning more on migrants.

43. Ways to produce the required information range from defining and identifying who migrants are, to making use of available data or setting up appropriate instrument to gather data, to drawing the characteristics of migrants. This includes adopting a gender perspective in all steps.

44. Both the Norwegian study and the Moldovan Extended Migration Profile rely on registers, which include some socio-demographic characteristics of migrants, but

offer little information of their living conditions, education, employment status, security or social integration. This limitation can be compensated by linking registers to other social benefits centre files. However, these files cover only the clients of the centres. Sources for more comprehensive information on migrants are sample surveys.

45. Initiatives to survey migrants are driven by contexts and particular interests. Italy run an immigrants survey and a survey among Moldovans, as they represent an important proportion of immigrants in various places in the country. The objective was to study the living conditions of the immigrants. Morocco was planning a survey at three entry points to the country, with a view to collect data on the intention of incoming travellers. The EU Medstat programme was planning a similar survey that would cover seven Mediterranean countries.

46. Another interest in studying immigrants is to understand the extent of their integration in the host country. Switzerland has plan to elaborate a set of indicators to measure the degree of integration of population with foreign background, including gender perspective, with a view to see whether there is a policy need in this areas. The meeting mentioned there are probable links between the reasons for migration and the degree of integration in the host country. Identified reasons for migration include labour, education, family, displacement (asylum and refugees), and cultural exchange.

47. Migrants' studies are also interested in emigrations, which affect the sending countries. It was noted emigration affects both men and women, and has as consequences a growing proportion skip-generation families and concerns about elderly care. Patterns of Moldovan emigration suggest that female emigrants often work in household services in Italy, while their male counterpart often leave for work in construction sector in Russia. Other countries experienced brain drain among their youth or increased proportions immigrants in low wages employments. The sending countries, in return, benefit from their emigrants remittances, which contribute to their development.

48. For comprehensive statistics on migrants, especially on emigrants, data exchange with countries of destinations give prospects for good data as the registration of departure is usually not mandatory.

G. Indicators of gender equality

49. The discussion was based on five papers by the UNECE Task Force on Indicators of Gender Equality (led by Italy), Lithuania, Eurostat, the European Institute for Gender Equality (EIGE) and the Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia of the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO).

50. The UNECE Task Force on Indicators of Gender Equality presented conceptual framework and approach for identification of the key indicators for monitoring gender equality in the UNECE region. It identified the following six domains as those of primary policy concern for gender equality in the UNECE region: poverty, education and training, health, gender-based violence, economy, and power and decision-making. In each domain, headline and supporting indicators are distinguished. The speaker outlined that the work is aligned with the global minimum set of gender indicators proposed by the United Nations Advisory Group on Gender Statistics Database and Indicators. The report of the Task Force will be finalized by the end of the year and will then be circulated to member countries for comments.

51. Eurostat presented the dedicated area on the gender equality indicators launched on the website. The main objective of this website subsection is to extend the visibility of gender statistics available in the European Statistical System. Final set of indicators is divided in the following six domains: education, labour market, earnings and social inclusion, childcare and health. A new domain on harm could be added after the data from the 2013 survey on crime and micro data will be available. Eurostat will also consider inserting a link to the data of the Directorate-General for Justice.

52. The European Institute for Gender Equality presented the conceptual framework and proposed domains for the composite Gender Equality Index. Understanding gender equality as equal distribution of assets and equal dignity and integrity EIGE proposed to include following eight domains: work, money, power and participation, knowledge, time, harm, health and intersecting inequalities. In constructing the composite index, EIGE intends to test different types of weights and prepare specific country profiles to explain better the context around index. Some participants remained sceptical about the utility and feasibility of constructing a composite index.

53. The FAO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia presented elaborated core set of gender indicators for assessing the socio-economic status of agricultural and rural population. The set consists of 18 gender indicators on livelihood assets and livelihood strategies. Some participants emphasised the need for statistical measurement of the access to land ownership. It was also observed that even in countries with advanced statistical systems, data for not all the indicators proposed by the FAO Regional Office are available.

54. Lithuania presented work done in Statistics Lithuania on developing and producing data on gender statistics and indicators of gender equality. Another set of harmonised indicators with a gender dimension is developed in the EU Medstat programme for nine countries in the southern and eastern coast of the Mediterranean.

55. The discussant summarized presented papers and charted a table comparing the domains used in the concepts of UNECE Task Force, EIGE and Eurostat. Although some domains are not included in each concept, very high degree of comparability of frameworks is observed. In the discussion, the issue of terminology of the domains was raised. It was suggested that it should be structured consistently as “men and women” and not specifically women. In her closing remark, the discussant pointed out the importance of adequate coverage of policy issues. It was also mentioned that the dissemination and promotion of use of the indicators are very important aspects of statistical work that deserve more attention.

H. Information session

56. UNECE presented work progress with its Gender Statistics Database, the Database on Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Global Review of Gender Statistics. The United Nations Population Fund made available a presentation on its upcoming guide on gender analysis of census data.

57. The 2012 round of updating the Gender Statistics database is currently under way. Data collection was extended to include data on gender pay gap by educational attainment. New options to visualize data and obtain quick statistics were shown. Referring to the users’ demand for more timely data, UNECE proposed to collect data from countries on annual basis, which was supported by participants.

58. The gender component is also central to the new UNECE MDG Database. The database covers the indicators published by member countries officially as MDG indicators side by side with the international official estimates. The extensive representation of metadata in this Database improves understanding of the differences between the estimates published by international and national agencies.

59. The United Nations regional commissions are conducting the Global Review of Gender Statistics to obtain information on how gender perspectives are mainstreamed into national statistical systems and to help identify good practices and challenges to integrate gender into the production and use of statistics. The questionnaire addresses institutional arrangements, production, users' needs, assessment of mainstreaming and legal framework for gender statistics. By the time of the meeting, answers had been received from about half of UNECE member countries.

IV. Recommendations for future work

60. The meeting recommended organizing the next Work Session on Gender Statistics on 10-12 March 2014. The following topics were suggested for the Session:

- (a) Gender equality in the life course;
- (b) Experiences in collecting and using gender indicators for policymaking, including experiences with the indicators recommended by the UNECE Task Force on Indicators of Gender Equality;
- (c) Gender differences on sub-national level;
- (d) Gender segregation in education and employment and its relationship with the gender pay gap;
- (e) Gender analysis of census data: lessons learned from the 2010 round of censuses;
- (f) Well-being of men and women, including issues related to health and lifestyles;
- (g) Time use surveys;
- (h) Emerging issues in gender statistics.

61. The meeting envisages that further work could be undertaken to support member countries' data collection and communication of the indicators that the UNECE Task Force on Indicators of Gender Equality is currently developing. The Task Force is scheduled to present its report by the end of 2012. The Steering Group will then discuss any follow-up work based on the set of indicators and proposals contained in that report.

V. Adoption of the report

62. The meeting adopted parts I, II and IV of the report before it adjourned. Part III was finalised by the secretariat after the meeting.
