2024 Workplan of the Steering Group for Statistics on SDGs

Objective of the Steering Group**:** The Steering Group guides and coordinates the CES work on statistics for SDGs. Its mission is to be a key resource providing guidance to countries on statistical follow-up to the 2030 Agenda through numerous vehicles, including meetings, workshops, guidelines, tools, websites and international collaboration. The Steering Group aims to play a pioneering role by identifying emerging issues and strategic topics for the future.

The Bureau of the Conference of European Statisticians approved the updated Terms of Reference of the Steering Group and extended its mandate until 2027.

The workplan does not only include outputs that the Steering Group has already decided on, but also serves to collect ideas for future projects, which arose from meetings and teleconferences of the Steering Group or from the Expert Meeting on Statistics for SDGs. Workplan items are either standing/annually recurring or have been assigned a priority (High, Medium, Low). Workplan items without any concrete plans for outputs in the medium-term are greyed out.

The workplan will be updated at least annually (after the Expert Meeting on Statistics for SDGs) on the public website of the Steering Group.

Co-chairs: Sara Frankl (Sweden) and Renata Bielak (Poland)

Standing or annually recurring workplan items

SG01 Expert Meeting on Statistics on SDGs

The 2023 Expert Meeting on Statistics on SDGs took place in April 2023 and follow up work is currently ongoing.

The next Expert Meeting was tentatively scheduled for the week of 8-12 April 2024 in Geneva. Due to prohibitive costs of accommodation in Geneva during this week, the Expert Meeting will need to be rescheduled.

The expert meeting is planned to only include a limited number of presentations and to focus on open discussions and an interactive nature.

SG02 Promote products of the SG and its Task Teams

The Steering Group is committed to promote all its outputs through different communication channels to improve visibility and increase the benefit of the Steering Group's work to the global statistical community.

SG03 Updates to the UNECE Knowledge Hub for Statistics on SDGs

The Steering Group is committed to invest into keeping information provided on the knowledge hub up to date where necessary and appropriate. The Steering Group will annually reflect on which materials require updating.

For the period June 2023 – May 2024 the following has been decided:

- *Annual update of the table to measure countries' progress in implementing the recommendations in the Road Map 2.0:*

The table has been revised in February 2023, and its first inputs have been provided by countries. An overview of the responses has been provided in the 2023 Expert Meeting through an online questionnaire. The next update is scheduled for February/March 2024.

In addition, the Steering Group considers the following outputs for the period 2023-2024:

- *Review of the country case studies for the second edition of the Road Map for Statistics on SDGs. A specific focus on will be set on the use of non-traditional data sources.*
- *The Secretariat will make changes to the UNECE knowledge hub to improve the visibility of the Communication-related work under the Steering Group and its Task Teams.*

SG04 Coordination of Steering Group Task Teams

The Steering Group currently has three Task Teams:

- *Task Team on Data Transmission*
- *Task Team on Capacity Development*
- *Task Team on Communication*

Task Teams are typically co-chaired by Steering Group members, but membership is not limited to the Steering Group. Task Teams operate largely independent of the Steering Group, but the Steering Group approves Terms of References/Statement of Purpose documents for its Task Teams before their creation, receives and discusses regular updates provided by the Task Team co-chairs, reviews and endorses the Task Team outputs.

Final outputs of the Task Team on Data Transmission and the Task Team on Capacity Building are expected to be reviewed for approval in in late 2023. The Task Team on Capacity Building may present its final output during the 2024 Expert Meeting on Statistics for SDGs. The Task Team on Communication, re-established in late 2022, provided an update of their work during the Annual Meeting of the Steering Group in October 2023.

Other workplan items

SG05 SDG Training course concept for Early-Career Statisticians in NSOs

The idea for this workplan item was discussed in the 2022 Annual Meeting of the Steering Group. The Steering Group sees great value in developing training material for new staff inside the national statistical offices to give an overview of the role of NSOs for the Sustainable Development Goals. The Steering Group considers developing a joint concept for use of NSOs as the basis for their training material (priority: High). The second edition of the Road Map on Statistics for SDGs will be used as the basis of the concept, selecting appropriate topics for the audience.

The work on the item will be undertaken by the Task Team on Communication.

SG06 Contact points with policymakers

The 2023 Expert Meeting included a session on shrinking resources and partnerships with policy makers.

The Steering Group plans to organize webinars with policymakers, for example on Voluntary National Reviews (priority: High) and considers undertaking interviews with policy makers (priority: Medium).

SG08 SDG indicator availability

As part of the March 2023 update to the table of progress (see above), the Steering Group requested countries to provide information on the number of indicators of the global indicator framework for SDGs their country is producing.

The Steering Group will discuss issues around what it means for an indicator to be considered (nationally) available. This includes discussions on criteria for national relevance, and use of proxy indicators. In addition, the group will reconsider the way that information on indicator availability is requested through the annual survey to update the table of progress.

The Steering Group will update the 2017 self-assessment tool and undertake a pilot test by some group members. The insights from this pilot will be used as an input to an addendum chapter for the Road Map on Indicator Availability and related issues. The addendum to the Road Map as well as the update to the self-assessment tool were extensively discussed at the Annual Steering Group Meeting in October 2023.

SG09 Work on non-traditional data sources for SDG statistics

The 2023 Expert Meeting included a session on the use of non-traditional data sources and a session on data disaggregation. Both provided useful information on this topic.

In addition, the use of non-traditional data sources for SDG indicators was included as a dimension of the country progress table.

The Steering Group will discuss the issue of validating and publishing externally produced indicators, in particular by international agencies based on geospatial data.

SG10 Taxonomy

The Steering Group will organize a webinar on the Taxonomy for SDG indicators developed by Norway as a side event to the 55th session of the UN Statistical Commission (priority: Medium).

SG11 UNECE regional webinar on the 2025 Comprehensive Review

The Steering Group will organize a regional webinar on the 2025 Comprehensive Review. The comprehensive review is undertaken by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on SDG Indicators. It will start in late 2023, with a global consultation planned for the second quarter of 2024. The regional webinar is planned for the first quarter of 2023.