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## Economic Commission for Europe

### Conference of European Statisticians

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Item 7 of the provisional agenda

#### Statistics for Sustainable Development Goals

## Progress report on the United Nations Economic Commission for Europe regional platform on statistics for Sustainable Development Goals<sup>1</sup>

### Note by the Secretariat

#### *Summary*

The sixty-seventh plenary session of the Conference of European Statisticians supported developing a regional platform on statistics for SDGs based on a proposal by the Secretariat together with a task team composed of Denmark (lead), Canada, Poland, the Russian Federation, Sweden and the United Kingdom. As of April 2020, all three components of the platform have been released: the Knowledge Hub on SDGs in December 2019, the Dashboard for SDG Indicators in March 2020 and the Database on SDG Indicators in April 2020. The document summarizes progress with developing the platform, identifies some issues and proposes next steps.

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<sup>1</sup> This document was scheduled for publication after the standard publication date owing to circumstances beyond the submitter's control.



## **I. Background**

1. At its October 2019 meeting, the Conference of European Statisticians (CES) Bureau supported further work on the UNECE Regional Platform on Statistics for SDGs, and requested the Secretariat to continue the work based on the available resources and taking advantage of solutions developed at the global level. The Secretariat is working on this together with a Task Team composed of Denmark (lead), Canada, Poland, Russian Federation, Sweden and the United Kingdom.
2. The present report describes the activities that the Secretariat and the Task Team carry out towards developing the UNECE regional platform on statistics for SDGs, with focus on activities since October 2019. Previous documents on this matter include (a) the proposal to launch the work to the 2019 CES plenary session (ECE/CES/2019/8/Add.1) and (b) the progress report to the October 2019 meeting of the CES Bureau (ECE/CES/BUR/2019/OCT/11).

## **II. Main features of the regional platform**

3. The UNECE regional platform on statistics for SDGs consists of:
  - Knowledge Hub on SDGs
  - Dashboard of SDG Indicators for the UNECE region
  - Database of SDG Indicators for the UNECE region (based on the UNECE statistical database)
4. The purpose of the platform is to communicate developments on measuring SDGs in the UNECE region, provide easy access to up-to-date indicators on implementing SDGs, and to disseminate data and metadata.
5. The regional platform serves a broad range of audiences interested in SDGs. The Knowledge Hub and the Database are primarily designed for statisticians and other professionals interested in methodologies, comparability of indicators, and analyses. The Dashboard is for the public and for policymakers who would have an easy way to see where their country stands among other countries of the region with respect to the implementation of SDGs.

## **III. Progress of work**

### **A. Knowledge Hub**

6. The wealth of information on regional and national activities, methodological guidance, such as the CES Road map on statistics for SDGs, the tools to support countries in its implementation, and links to national activities have been made available through the Knowledge Hub in an enhanced user-friendly manner. The Knowledge Hub further consolidates information on the legislative, institutional, functional and practical dimensions of producing the statistics for SDGs. Recent addition includes contact information of focal points on statistics for SDGs in UNECE countries. The Knowledge Hub is prominently linked to the Dashboard of SDG indicators through the Data tile on its entry page.

Figure 1  
Interface of the Knowledge Hub on SDGs



7. The Knowledge Hub was launched on 2 December 2019. UNECE Secretariat will continuously update and complement it with new material.

## B. Dashboard

8. The Dashboard is designed as the main source for quickly accessible information on the UNECE countries' progress in implementing SDGs. Among various global data sources on SDGs, its main advantages include (a) providing an easy and attractive way to compare countries; (b) providing an easy and attractive way to examine data by sex; (c) maintaining focus on UNECE countries without the need to select manually from long country lists; (d) relying on official data sources.

9. To determine the substantive scope of the Dashboard, the UNECE Secretariat in summer 2019 examined the regional SDG activities by Eurostat, CIS-Stat and OECD as well as the SDG indicators selected for the UNECE monitoring framework for the ICPD Programme of Action beyond 2014. After review of all indicators, 73 indicators were selected from the global list based on relevance for the region and data availability. The full list of selected indicators is presented in the annex.

10. All the selected indicators belong to tier 1 or 2 in the global list, that is, among the indicators that are conceptually clear and for which a methodology is available. Many of the selected indicators consist of a set of sub-indicators, such as receipt of different kinds of social benefits (indicator 1.3.1), ICT skills (4.4.1) or different kinds of effects of disasters (11.5.1).

11. All the presented data is sourced from the Global SDG indicators database maintained by the United Nations Statistics Division.

12. The Secretariat requested a broad range of colleagues and country experts to review and test the Dashboard's functionality in November-December 2019. Based on the feedback, a great number of small adjustments were made to the design of the Dashboard in January-February 2020. The work benefitted from the in-kind contribution of Switzerland in the form of advisory services from a company that specialises on data visualisation.

Figure 2  
Interface of the Dashboard for SDGs



13. The Dashboard was launched on 13 March 2020. Based on the data presented in the Dashboard, UNECE Statistical Division prepared a report *Towards achieving the Sustainable Development Goals in the UNECE region: a statistical portrait of progress and challenges* presented at the Regional Forum on Sustainable Development (Geneva, 19 March 2020).

### C. Database

14. The data disseminated through the Dashboard can be studied in more detail in the UNECE Database on SDG Indicators where they are organized in PC-Axis cubes. A user can construct a table by selecting one or more indicators, countries, calendar years and categories of variables for which breakdowns are available. The Database was launched in April 2020.

## IV. Next steps

### A. Improving metadata

15. Preparing the UNECE regional SDG report revealed challenges in comparability over time and across countries, which could not be resolved using the available documentation. Additional explanations from the custodian agencies responsible for SDG indicators were required. There is therefore a need to improve the metadata relevant for comparability over time and across countries, to help users understand the statistics displayed in the UNECE Dashboard and Database.

16. Based on the experience with establishing the Dashboard and the Database and with writing the regional report, UNECE explores how to make more metadata available and how to enhance its dissemination, in coordination with the United Nations Statistics Division.

### B. Data collection from national sources

17. The UNECE Secretariat explored the possibilities to obtain national data for global SDG indicators from the websites of countries. Out of the 56 UNECE member states, 35 have (some) SDG data available on the web. However, the countries often use national proxy indicators instead of global indicators, data formats vary and download options are limited. In spring 2020, only four countries provide the possibility to automate data downloads. Under

these circumstances, the Secretariat cannot currently expand its SDG data collection to national platforms.

18. A task team on data transmission (under the CES Steering Group on Statistics for SDGs) is working to develop guidance to countries aiming to harmonize the dissemination of SDG indicators on national reporting platforms (or other websites) to facilitate their downloading (e.g. using API or SDMX). A few countries are also piloting SDMX for transfer of SDG indicators. The Secretariat is following the related developments at international level and working together with the CES Task Team to see how and when the inclusion of national data on global SDG indicators in the UNECE statistical database would become possible.

## **V. Input requested from the CES plenary session**

19. The CES plenary session is invited to comment on the work on developing the UNECE regional platform on statistics for SDGs and provide advice on further steps in this area.

## Annex

### **The global Sustainable Development Goals Indicators selected for the UNECE Dashboard and Database**

- 1.1.1 Proportion of population below the international poverty line
- 1.2.1 Proportion of population living below the national poverty line
- 1.3.1 Proportion of population covered by social protection floors/systems
- 1.5.1 Number of deaths and missing persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population
- 2.2.1 Prevalence of stunting among children under 5 years of age
- 2.2.2 Prevalence of [wasting/overweight] among children under 5 years of age
- 3.1.1 Maternal mortality ratio
- 3.2.1 Under-five mortality rate
- 3.2.2 Neonatal mortality rate
- 3.3.1 Number of new HIV infections per 1,000 uninfected population
- 3.3.2 Tuberculosis incidence
- 3.4.1 Mortality rate attributed to cardiovascular disease, cancer, diabetes or chronic respiratory disease
- 3.4.2 Suicide mortality rate
- 3.5.2 Harmful use of alcohol
- 3.6.1 Death rate due to road traffic injuries
- 3.7.1 Proportion of women of reproductive age (aged 15-49 years) who have their need for family planning satisfied with modern methods
- 3.7.2 Adolescent birth rate
- 3.8.1 Coverage of essential health services
- 3.9.1 Mortality rate attributed to household and ambient air pollution
- 3.a.1 Age-standardized prevalence of current tobacco use among persons aged 15 years and older
- 4.1.1 Proportion of children and young at the end of lower secondary achieving at least a minimum proficiency level in (i) reading and (ii) mathematics, by sex
- 4.4.1 Proportion of youth and adults with [information and communications technology (ICT)] skill
- 4.5.1 Gender parity index for participation rate in formal and non-formal education and training
- 5.2.1 Proportion of ever-partnered women and girls aged 15 years and older subjected to physical, sexual or psychological violence by a current or former intimate partner in the previous 12 months
- 5.4.1 Time spent on unpaid domestic and care work
- 5.5.1 Proportion of seats held by women in [national parliaments/ local governments]
- 5.5.2 Proportion of women in [managerial positions/ senior and middle management positions]
- 6.3.1 Proportion of safely treated domestic wastewater flows
- 6.3.2 Proportion of bodies of water with good ambient water quality

- 6.4.2 Level of water stress: freshwater withdrawal as a proportion of available freshwater resources
- 7.2.1 Renewable energy share in the total final energy consumption
- 7.3.1 Energy intensity measured in terms of primary energy and GDP
- 8.1.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per capita
- 8.2.1 Annual growth rate of real GDP per employed person
- 8.4.2 Domestic material consumption [per capita/ per GDP]
- 8.5.1 Average hourly earnings of female and male employees
- 8.6.1 Proportion of youth (aged 15–24 years) not in education, employment or training
- 8.8.1 Frequency rate of [fatal/ non-fatal] occupational injuries
- 8.10.1 Number of automated teller machines (ATMs) per 100,000 adults
- 8.10.2 Proportion of adults (15 years and older) with an account at a bank or other financial institution or with a mobile-money-service provider
- 9.1.2 Passenger and freight volumes, by mode of transport
- 9.2.1 Manufacturing value added as a proportion of GDP and per capita
- 9.4.1 Carbon dioxide emissions
- 9.5.1 Research and development expenditure as a proportion of GDP
- 9.5.2 Researchers per million inhabitants
- 9.b.1 Proportion of medium and high-tech industry value added in total value added
- 9.c.1 Proportion of population covered by a mobile network
- 10.1.1 Growth rates of household expenditure or income per capita among the bottom 40 per cent of the population and the total population
- 10.4.1 Labour share of GDP, comprising wages and social protection transfers
- 10.c.1 Remittance costs as a proportion of the amount remitted
- 11.1.1 Proportion of urban population living in slums, informal settlements or inadequate housing
- 11.5.1 Number of deaths or missing persons attributed to disasters per 100,000 population
- 11.6.2 Annual mean levels of fine particulate matter in cities
- 12.2.2 Domestic material consumption [per capita/ per GDP]
- 12.4.1 Number of parties to [international multilateral environmental agreements on hazardous waste, and other chemicals] that meet their commitments and obligations in transmitting information as required by each relevant agreement
- 12.c.1 Amount of fossil-fuel subsidies [per unit of GDP/ as a proportion of total national expenditure on fossil fuels]
- 13.1.1 Number of [deaths/ missing persons] attributed to disasters per 100,000 population
- 13.1.3 Proportion of local governments that adopt and implement local disaster risk reduction strategies in line with national disaster risk reduction strategies
- 14.5.1 Coverage of protected areas in relation to marine areas
- 14.6.1 Degree of implementation of international instruments aiming to combat illegal, unreported and unregulated fishing
- 15.1.1 Forest area as a proportion of total land area; protection of [Freshwater/ Terrestrial] Key Biodiversity Areas
- 15.3.1 Proportion of land that is degraded over total land area

- 15.4.1 Average proportion of Mountain Key Biodiversity Areas (KBAs) covered by protected areas
  - 15.4.2 Mountain Green Cover Index
  - 15.5.1 Red List Index
  - 16.1.1 Number of victims of intentional homicide per 100,000 population
  - 16.3.2 Unsentenced detainees as a proportion of overall prison population
  - 16.9.1 Proportion of children under 5 years of age whose births have been registered with a civil authority
  - 17.2.1 Net official development assistance, [total/ to least developed countries], as a proportion of the OECD DAC donors' gross national income
  - 17.3.2 Volume of remittances as a proportion of total GDP
  - 17.4.1 Debt service as a proportion of exports of goods and services
  - 17.6.2 Fixed Internet broadband subscriptions per 100 inhabitants
  - 17.8.1 Proportion of individuals using the Internet
  - 17.9.1 Dollar value of financial and technical assistance committed to developing countries
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