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Introduction

Convocation and agenda

1. At its 283rd Session (Geneva, March 2002), the Governing Body of the International Labour Office authorized the Office to convene the Seventeenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) to meet in Geneva from 24 November to 3 December 2003. The main purpose of the Conference was to develop new international recommendations and to revise existing ones in the field of labour statistics. The following items were placed on the agenda of the 17th ICLS:

I. General Report (including chapters on the statistical work of the ILO and its future workplan, monitoring and measuring decent work, statistics on employment and statistics on social protection and social dialogue);

II. Household income and expenditure statistics;

III. Consumer price indices.

2. Three reports covering each of these topics were prepared by the Office for submission to the Conference and circulated to delegates in advance of the meeting.

Organization of the Conference

3. The Conference opened on Monday 24 November 2003 and was attended by 244 delegates from 85 member States, by six Employer and five out of six Worker representatives nominated by the Governing Body of the International Labour Organization and by representatives of 23 international governmental and non-governmental organizations. In all, there were 287 participants.

4. The Conference was opened by the Director-General, Mr. Juan Somavia. After welcoming all participants to the ILO and thanking the Conference organizers for their preparations, Mr. Somavia indicated that statistics were key instruments to obtain a picture of the world of work and the life of workers. He mentioned the creation of the Policy Integration Department and the Advisory Group on Statistics as mechanisms to improve the ILO's response to the statistical demands placed on it. He saw two principal challenges: measuring decent work and statistical capacity building. He envisaged a new statistical vision built around the measurement of decent work. He said that this would require a clear plan and the involvement of our tripartite partners. Decent work is high on the political agenda and in the priorities of all societies. In respect of statistical capacity building, Mr. Somavia noted that a special seminar was to be conducted on the morning of the last day of the Conference, and be jointly organized by the ILO and PARIS21 (PARtnership In Statistics for development in the 21st century). He hoped to be able to attend the 18th ICLS and assess progress being made in these goals.

5. The Director of the ILO Bureau of Statistics, Mr. A. Sylvester Young, serving as Secretary-General of the Conference, introduced the Assistant Secretary-General of the Conference, Ms. Marie-Thérèse Dupré, who outlined the procedures and arrangements for the Conference.

6. The Conference elected Dr. E. Pereira Nunes (Brazil) as Chairperson, Mr. J. Archvadze (Georgia) as Vice-Chairperson and Ms. P.C. Kali (Namibia) as Reporter of the Conference. In his opening statement, the Chairperson thanked the Conference for the confidence placed in him and noted the complexity of the subjects to be discussed. He felt that, with the cooperation of the Conference and the good preparations made by the secretariat, the Conference should achieve its objectives.

7. The Conference set up two committees to deal with the substantive topics that were the subject of draft resolutions for consideration by the Conference. Ms. S. Michaud (Canada) was elected Chairperson of the committee on household income and expenditure statistics and Dr. P. Cheung (Singapore) was elected Chairperson of the committee on consumer price indices.

8. The Standing Orders of the Conference were those for International Conferences of Labour Statisticians adopted by the Governing Body on 19 November 1981 at its 218th Session. The reports were presented to the Conference in English, French and Spanish, and extracts (the draft resolutions) in Arabic, Chinese, German and Russian. The working languages of the Conference were English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, German and Russian.

Decisions of the Conference

9. The Conference adopted three resolutions which are presented in Appendix I. The first two concerned technical recommendations. These are:

resolution I: resolution concerning household income and expenditure statistics;

resolution II: resolution concerning consumer price indices.

A third resolution concerned recommendations on the future work of the Office in the field of labour statistics:

resolution III: resolution concerning further work on the International Standard Classification of Occupations.

10. In addition, the Conference endorsed two sets of guidelines concerning the following topics:

– checklist of good practices for mainstreaming gender in labour statistics;

– guidelines concerning a statistical definition of informal employment.

The text of the first set of guidelines is presented as conclusions of the Working Group on Gender Mainstreaming in the report of the Conference. The text of the second set of guidelines is presented as conclusions of the Working Group on Informal Employment in the report of the Conference.

Closing of the Conference

11. On the final day of the Conference, the Reporter presented her report which was then reviewed and adopted section by section, including the final resolutions, with the following amendments:

(a) paragraph 23: the view presented in this paragraph was too positive. Given the resource situation, it was premature to deal with this kind of statistics at this stage. A revised text reflecting this position was inserted in the body of this paragraph;

(b) paragraph 37: to add the following text at the end of the paragraph: “Future work should include a tripartite meeting of experts to discuss proposals for a draft resolution for consideration by the 18th ICLS”;

(c) paragraph 56: to amend the last sentence to stress the importance of gender to read: “The Conference requested that gender issues should be considered in all aspects of developmental work, as a core principle of the work”;

(d) paragraph 60: to add a reference to the seminar on capacity building for labour statistics that was run in conjunction with PARIS21, on 3 December 2003, at the end of this paragraph;

(e) paragraph 78: to end the paragraph after the word “guidelines” and to delete the subsequent sentences;

(f) paragraph 90: to amend the last bullet to read: “to insert a footnote in Annex 1, explaining that the definition given there for ‘acquisition’ was different from the definition given in the previous (1987) resolution”, and to move this text as subparagraph (j) in paragraph 87;

resolution I on household income and expenditure statistics:

– paragraph 16: to amend the statement “only owner-occupied dwellings should be included for now” to read “owner-occupied dwellings may be the only part of this component that could be included for now”;

resolution II on consumer price indices:

– to insert a footnote under point (b) of Annex I to the resolution, indicating that the definition of “acquisition” given here differs significantly from the one adopted by the 14th ICLS.

12. Following the adoption of the report as a whole, the Director of the Policy Integration Department (Mr. G. Rodgers) addressed the Conference on behalf of the Director-General of the International Labour Office who was absent from Geneva. He observed that the Conference had been very productive and had made considerable progress, thanks to the efforts of all involved. On household income and expenditure statistics and on consumer prices indices there had been movement forward, and the working groups and Conference discussions had provided much important material that would be a rich source for the Office’s work over the next few years. This concerned in particular gender issues that need to be embedded in statistical work; statistics on the informal economy; and developmental work for decent work measures that needs a rigorous statistical framework. He noted the differing views expressed in this connection which need to be understood and treated with care. They will be taken into account in the future work, as decent work is the core of the ILO’s work. He also stated that the ILO has to take heed of the need for resources for statistical work. The Director-General had noted that it was relatively easy to reduce these resources in times of budget cuts. Adequate resources were necessary in the ILO at headquarters and in the field for technical advisory services and for statistical capacity building. The Conference’s discussions had been most stimulating and, on behalf of the Director-General, he expressed the ILO’s appreciation of the work accomplished.

13. In closing the Conference, the Chairperson underlined the considerable progress that had been made. The reports prepared by the Office and the participation of the delegates had all contributed to resolutions aimed at modernizing labour statistics. Guidance had been provided to the ILO on items for future work. In order to undertake all the work required towards the 18th ICLS, sufficient resources would be needed. He thanked the Secretary-General and the Assistant Secretary-General for their support, which had contributed greatly to the success of the Conference.

Conference proceedings

I. General Report

Chapter 1. Statistical work of the ILO since the 16th ICLS

14. The Conference considered Report I: General Report (ICLS/17/2003/1) prepared by the Office and presented by representatives of the Secretary-General. For the first time at an ICLS, this report covered the statistical activities of the ILO as a whole, and not just those of the Bureau of Statistics.

15. Chapter 1 of this report described the statistical work carried out in the ILO since the 16th ICLS in 1998, including the data gathering and dissemination of national labour statistics and associated methodological information, statistical developmental work and technical assistance to national statistical agencies.

16. During the discussion on this chapter, several delegates from the Government, Employers' and Workers' groups expressed strong concern at the reduced resources of the Bureau of Statistics for staff mentioned in the presentation and for printing the *Yearbook of Labour Statistics* and other statistical publications. The speakers referred to this as false economies since, without statistics, policy would not be properly directed. Statistics should be considered as tools for observation, not as tools for particular policies, but the efforts made to measure various aspects of the ILO's Decent Work Agenda were appreciated. The delegates were also concerned at the adverse effects of the staff cuts on the ILO's support for statistical capacity building in countries and on the development of statistical standards. Several speakers called for early action to fill the statistics specialist position at ILO Bangkok that had been vacant since 2001 and asked that progress on this be reported to the March 2004 session of the Governing Body.

17. During the discussion on the ILO's gathering of national statistics, several Government speakers appreciated the ILO's intention to reduce the reporting burden on national institutions by making more use of electronic methods for data gathering and by working closely with other international agencies to minimize duplication of requests.

18. In respect of the ILO's dissemination of labour statistics, several Government, Employers' and Workers' delegates from developing countries were concerned about the likelihood that free ILO printed publications would be replaced with free CD-ROMs as from 2004 as a result of the printing budget cuts. They expressed the view that printed publications were vital to users in these countries, as they may not have sufficient electronic facilities to use CD-ROMs. Employer and Worker representatives requested that their constituents in each country should also receive at least one free copy of printed publications, as was planned for each ministry of labour and national statistical office.

19. The Conference welcomed the presentation on the ILO Key Indicators of the Labour Market and the Labour Market Indicator Library Project. Both initiatives received positive response and support.

20. There was general agreement that the part of the ILO's *October Inquiry* covering occupational wages and hours of work for selected industry and occupational groups needed to be reviewed to cover occupations that have become more important since the present selection was made.

21. The Conference welcomed the first module of the new *International Training Compendium on Labour Statistics*, and called for the ILO to produce more information and literature on labour statistics (manuals, guidelines, etc.) to assist countries in raising statistical awareness in educational institutions.

Chapter 2. Measuring and monitoring decent work

22. The representative of the Secretary-General (Mr. F. Mehran) introduced the topic of ***decent work indicators*** (General Report, sections 2.1-2.2) by drawing the attention of the Conference to the underlying concept which goes beyond the scope of basic labour statistics set forth in the ILO's labour statistics Convention (No. 160) adopted in 1985. He described the work of the Office in identifying 29 indicators under ten headings, each representing a characteristic of work that individuals from around the world would consider as a key element of decent work. Another representative of the Secretary-General (Ms. M. Castillo) described the efforts made by the Office to compile data on this topic in Latin America and the Caribbean. In the discussion that followed, questions were raised about the utility of the decent work concept in countries where the self-employed formed a large portion of the labour force and where the scarcity of jobs meant that workers had to accept any job irrespective of its characteristics. The significance of some of the indicators was also challenged when comparison is to be made among countries with different social arrangements. The proliferation of indicators formulated by international agencies was also a point of concern for certain countries.

23. At the same time, a number of participants voiced their support for the development of indicators of decent work and described their own work in this area. In particular, it was mentioned that the proposed framework could be a convenient tool for integrating labour, social and some economic indicators into a set of measures to monitor social progress of the working population around the world. The Conference emphasized the need for the Office to carry out more work on this topic, taking into account the experience gained by other countries and regions in related areas such as the work being carried out in the European region on the measurement of quality of employment. The Employers' delegates were sceptical, however, about the interest of these indicators, given that fewer resources are allocated to the statistics department and that there are other priorities that ought to be pursued at this time. The Conference decided to form a working group to discuss this matter further. Ms. T. Gorbacheva (Russian Federation) was elected as Chairperson of this Working Group.

24. Following the Working Group's discussions, the Chairperson of the Working Group reported to the Conference on 1 December 2003 on the Group's work. Forty-seven country had been represented, as well as Workers' and Employers' delegates and observers from several official international organizations. She drew attention to the main conclusions of the Working Group, in particular the request for the preparation of a comprehensive report for submission to the next ICLS.

25. In the discussion that followed delegates reiterated their support for further work by the Office in this area and requested that the ILO should convene a tripartite meeting of experts on decent work indicators before the next ICLS. It was recommended that the meeting of experts should work toward a clear conceptual framework, in particular, specifying the dimensions of the concept of decent work and its borderlines for statistical measurement. In this work, special attention should be given to the potential sources from which decent work statistics may be derived in order to avoid overloading the existing sources of labour statistics such as labour force surveys. The Conference emphasized the importance of carrying out the development work in this area in close consultation with developing countries.

Annex

Report of the Working Group on Decent Work Indicators

The Chairperson of the Working Group opened the meeting by summarizing the main points of the plenary discussion. The representative of the Secretary-General (Mr. P. Peek) then described the work done by the Office so far. In particular, he stated that, in response to the increasing demand for assistance, the Office had prepared a preliminary list of core indicators which countries could use for monitoring trends on the four key aspects of decent work, namely, employment, social protection, social dialogue and rights at work. He mentioned that collaboration was under way with several countries to test the feasibility of collecting the necessary data through labour force surveys. He also stated that the Office intended to continue its work to develop indicators using other sources of labour statistics. He emphasized that it was not envisaged to use the resulting data for developing a single-valued decent work index for ranking countries, although some work in this direction has been carried out by different units within the Office.

The representative of the Secretary-General proposed to structure the discussion around the following questions: (a) Is there a need to develop international guidelines in the area of decent work statistics? (b) Is it feasible to establish an international database with comparable data on decent work? (c) Should further work be done to assess the usefulness of labour force surveys for collecting statistics on aspects of decent work?

The Working Group recognized the importance of this new area of labour statistics and its potential role to improve measurement by bringing more qualitative aspects of labour into the statistical framework. It encouraged the ILO to carry out more conceptual and empirical work on this topic and requested the preparation of a comprehensive report for submission to the 18th ICLS. It also requested that the ILO Governing Body should be informed of this work, and its methodology, prior to that ICLS.

The Working Group strongly emphasized the need for more clarity on the underlying concept of decent work and the need for collecting data in this field. Concerns were raised about the difficulties in defining appropriate terms and translating these into other languages for statistical purposes. The experience of certain countries in measuring the quality of employment should be examined and brought into the measurement framework of decent work. It was also pointed out that a distinction should be made between the measurement of decent work, and measures of decent work. The latter was recognized to be more attainable. It was also mentioned that one statistical measure may not be enough to adequately reflect any single key aspect of decent work. For example, one would need more than just trade union density rates to assess the extent of social dialogue in a given country. A proper interpretation would require a joint analysis with indicators relating to the economic and social context of decent work.

The Working Group was unanimous in its recommendation that much more work should be carried out by the Office in formulating acceptable indicators. The goal associated with each indicator or group of indicators should be clearly stated. In principle, each indicator should be selected such that its trend unambiguously and correctly signals a movement toward or away from the stated goal. The indicators should also take into account the gender dimension, where possible. They should be applicable in different countries including developing countries where jobs are mainly concentrated in agriculture and the informal sector. There were mixed views on the required number of indicators. Some delegates advocated the need for a reduced number of core indicators while others, pointing to the complexity of the phenomenon, voiced their support for a larger set of indicators. The Working Group also requested the Office to identify those indicators that could be used for international comparisons. A number of delegates made comments on specific indicators suggesting other measures (e.g. complementing the unemployment rate with measures of persons outside the labour force who are available for work but believe they have no access to the labour market) or reconciling overlaps where they exist (e.g. the labour force participation rate and the employment-population ratio, or the percentage of children not at school and the percentage of children in wage or self-employment).

The Working Group stressed the need to use different sources of data, and not to rely only on labour force surveys. Efforts must be made to ensure that the different sources are compatible. The Working Group recognized that labour force surveys throughout the world are fairly harmonized and could be used to compare data across countries. It was however underlined that the expansion of the use of the labour force surveys should not be to the detriment of its main objective which is the measurement of employment and unemployment. The Working Group also supported the proposal to develop numerical coding of legislative and regulatory information.

The Working Group overwhelmingly opposed the aggregation of the indicators into a composite index of decent work for the purpose of ranking countries. Some countries described their own work in developing national composite indices for measuring their progress toward decent work goals.

26. In his presentation of the section on ***forced labour statistics*** (section 2.4 of the General Report), the representative of the Secretary-General (Mr. P. Belser) emphasized the need for data on forced labour in order to raise awareness and to design appropriate policies to combat the problem. He informed the Conference that the “Special Action Programme to Combat Forced Labour” of the ILO has started to construct a database to be used in its first global estimate, which will rely on secondary sources and use an estimate of the total number of reported cases of forced labour in the world. The Conference noted with interest this new work and encouraged the ILO to pursue it. Some delegates also indicated that freedom from forced labour should be considered by the ILO as a key indicator of decent work.

27. The topic on ***child labour surveys*** (section 2.5 of the General Report) was introduced by another representative of the Secretary-General (Mr. F. Hagemann). He presented the context of increasing awareness and action against child labour in which the Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC) has evolved over the last five years, and reiterated the Programme’s key objectives. SIMPOC has carried out more than 220 surveys in all regions using five main data-collection instruments. The main type consists of national household surveys and more than 50 of these have been undertaken so far. The main challenges to SIMPOC are the need to: (i) translate international labour standards and national legislation on child labour into operational statistical measurement terms; (ii) better mainstream gender considerations in child labour surveys; and (iii) determine the best respondents in child labour inquiries.

28. A large number of participants emphasized the importance of this subject and commented on their experience in measuring child labour and the complexities involved. Many participants stressed the need to develop a precise international statistical definition of child labour, including hazardous work, and methodological guidelines to ensure comparability across countries and over time. There was unanimous support from the Conference for the development of a resolution on child labour statistics for presentation at the next ICLS.

29. The representative of the Secretary-General (Ms. A. Mata-Greenwood) introduced section 2.6 of the General Report on ***gender mainstreaming in labour statistics*** by describing the need to incorporate gender concerns in the production of labour statistics, not only for promoting gender equality but also for improving labour statistics themselves. After distinguishing the main issues in this process, she presented for discussion a tentative list of good practices in this field. Participants supported the idea that mainstreaming gender improved labour statistics as a whole and expressed the need: (a) to have more specific guidelines, preferably for the different area of labour statistics; (b) to ensure that budget constraints in national statistical institutes will not affect gender and social statistics more than other areas of statistics; (c) to clarify the role of time-use surveys in engendering labour statistics; (d) not to propose specific indicators, given regional differences and data collection constraints; and (e) to improve the Arabic terminology of the term "gender" to reflect the broader and more relevant perspective. Given the importance and complexity of this topic, it was decided to discuss it in more depth in a working group. Dr. L.L. Sabbadini (Italy) was elected as Chairperson of the Working Group.

30. During the plenary session on 1 December 2003, the Chairperson of the Working Group reported on its work and presented the checklist of good practices for gender mainstreaming that it had prepared for the consideration and possible endorsement by the Conference. The report of the Working Group, as amended by the Conference, and the checklist of good practices, as endorsed by the Conference, are given at the end of this chapter.

31. The Conference then examined the report as well as the proposed checklist. A number of points were made in the discussion. The first was to change the wording of the penultimate sentence in the second paragraph of the report, to read: "Topics such as labour cost were seen as difficult to disaggregate by sex"; and to add to the end of the previous sentence in the same paragraph: "given the increased response burden". The second related to paragraph (a) of the checklist, which should involve not only producers of labour statistics but analysts as well. A third proposal for changing the text prepared by the Working Group, to delete the words "as far as possible" in paragraph (b), was not supported by the Conference. Finally, it was seen as important to mention that mainstreaming gender into labour statistics implied an increase in costs, especially for reporting enterprises.

Annex

Report of the Working Group on Gender Mainstreaming in Labour Statistics

The Chairperson explained that the objectives of the Working Group were to discuss whether the proposals presented in paragraph 2.6.34 of the General Report, regarding a checklist of good practices, were sound and to agree on any improvements. The representative of the Secretary-General explained the need to disaggregate all statistics by sex, as well as to cover relevant topics. After providing a list of possible topics, she noted the need for adequate definitions, classifications and measurement methodologies that guarantee full worker coverage as well as a complete description of working conditions. Finally, she emphasized the importance of presenting statistics to reveal important distinctions between men and women as well as to try to explain them, by cross-classifying the information by relevant variables, including family composition.

The Working Group examined the proposals and exchanged country experiences. A number of countries have made good progress in mainstreaming gender, by examining all the different statistics currently produced using all possible sources in an integrated way. However, other countries are struggling to produce labour statistics at all, and find it difficult to mainstream gender at the level being proposed. Countries have improved their labour force surveys or carried out time-use surveys to better estimate employment and hours of work. It was noted, however, that it is not always possible to fully engender all labour statistics. Even with an improved survey instrument, work activities that are undeclared to tax authorities will go undetected. In establishment surveys, requiring some reporting units to provide information disaggregated by sex may lead to refusals to respond to the survey given the increased response burden. Topics such as labour cost were seen as difficult to disaggregate by sex. And the need for large sample sizes to produce detailed cross-tabulations would require significant resources that many countries do not have.

There was general agreement that gender-mainstreamed statistics were essential to properly design social protection programmes that are not solely based on workers' participation in paid work, ignoring time away from paid work to look after young children. "Engendered" statistics would highlight the importance of unpaid activities, reveal their relationship with paid work and help understand differences in the life cycles of men and women. They are also useful to explain differences in labour market participation between countries, which tend to be due to differences in women's labour force participation. For these purposes, statistics need to be analysed by sex, level of education, age group, existence of childcare facilities and attitudes and behaviour.

The Working Group agreed that gender mainstreaming should permeate the entire statistical system and should occur from the design of the statistical instruments through to the dissemination of the statistics. The creation of a unit to oversee the mainstreaming process was mentioned as advantageous. The Working Group emphasized the need to include timely and regular statistics that reflect gender concerns in ongoing regular statistical publications. It also endorsed the production of special reports on gender statistics. The efforts carried out, particularly in Arab and Eastern European countries, were well noted.

A number of speakers requested the ILO to provide more guidance on gender statistics, perhaps in the form of a methodological volume that compiled national experiences, a technical handbook on the measurement of unpaid work, or by developing a model that would provide guidance on indicators, tables and analysis. UNESCAP reported that it had produced a handbook on unpaid labour which is currently being printed.

In conclusion, the Working Group welcomed the proposal for a checklist of good practices and reached the following conclusions:

- Labour statistics should satisfy the requirements listed in the checklist, not only to address gender concerns, but also to understand better the real situation of the labour market.

- Political will is essential for producing statistics in general, and engendered statistics especially. It is needed at all levels, within the various data collection agencies and all agencies which do not produce statistics but which have administrative information that can be used by statistical agencies.

- It is important to specify at least a list of subject matters among the topics to be covered. These could be similar to the ones identified by the Office in the General Report with some modifications that include statistics that portray the life cycle or life course approach, lifelong learning and the arrangement of working time, including part-time work. A change of wording was proposed, to convey the idea that incorporating gender into labour statistics is at the core of all statistics that are produced.

- All measurement methodologies are valuable for producing labour statistics that are gender mainstreamed. These statistics should be produced as frequently and as timely as regular labour statistics and should be part of regular publications. Among the possible sources, time-use surveys stand out as essential, in particular for the improved measurement of informal jobs and non-SNA activities.

- When presenting the statistics, it is important to cross-classify them according to personal and family circumstances, but also according to the institutional context (e.g. fiscal regulations) as well as the work environment (e.g. working-time flexibility, childcare facilities, etc.).

The Working Group granted the Office permission to incorporate these conclusions in the proposed checklist of good practices. The agreed checklist is presented below.

Checklist of good practices for mainstreaming gender in labour statistics

To usefully address gender concerns, and to understand more fully the labour market functioning, labour statistics should satisfy the following four requirements:

(a) They will be based on a political will at all levels, in the various data collection and analysis agencies and in all agencies which can provide administrative information;

(b) The data collection procedures for labour statistics will ensure that, as far as possible, all relevant topics for describing gender concerns are regularly included. Such topics may include employment in the informal economy, non-SNA work, employment by detailed occupations and status in employment categories, income from paid and self-employment, statistics on the life course, on lifelong learning and on working time;

(c) The data collection and processing procedures for labour statistics programmes will be designed to ensure that definitions and measurement methods cover and adequately describe all workers and work situations in sufficient detail to allow relevant gender comparisons to be made. Household and establishment-based surveys as well as administrative sources are valuable and, in particular, periodical time-use surveys are crucial;

(d) The resulting statistics will always be presented as part of regular publications in a way that will clearly reveal differences and similarities between men and women in the labour market and the factors that may influence their situations. This can be done by (i) presenting relevant topics in sufficient and relevant detail, and by (ii) providing statistics according to relevant descriptive variables, of e.g. personal and family circumstances, work environment and institutional setting.

Chapter 3. Statistics of employment

32. The representative of the Secretary-General (Mr. R. Hussmanns) introduced the discussion on ***statistics of informal employment*** (section 3.1 of the General Report). He indicated that, since the adoption of the resolution concerning statistics of employment in the informal sector by the 15th ICLS in 1993, and the inclusion in the *System of National Accounts*, 1993, of the 15th ICLS informal sector definition, it had been recommended by the Expert Group on Informal Sector Statistics (Delhi Group) and others that the definition and measurement of employment in the informal sector should be complemented with a definition and measurement of informal employment. He presented a conceptual framework for employment in the informal economy, which related the enterprise-based concept of employment in the informal sector with a broader, job-based concept of informal employment. As a result, a distinction could be made between: employment in the informal economy; informal employment; employment in the informal sector; and informal employment outside the informal sector. The framework had been developed by the ILO to support the discussion on decent work and the informal economy during the International Labour Conference, 2002. It had been tested successfully by a number of countries upon the recommendation of the Delhi Group. It disaggregates total employment (in terms of jobs) according to type of production unit (formal sector enterprises, informal sector enterprises, households) and by status in employment and the formal versus informal nature of the job. In respect of each status-in-employment category, the ILO had made a proposal for defining informal jobs.

33. Several delegates reported that employment in the informal economy is widespread in their countries and can sometimes be considered as a form of hidden unemployment. It was, however, emphasized that the way in which informal employment manifests itself, varies among countries depending upon their level of development and other factors. Such diversity makes it difficult to harmonize measurement methods and obtain internationally comparable statistics. The conceptual clarity, which the ILO framework has added to the debate, was appreciated. It was confirmed that due to the existence of multiple job holding, jobs rather than employed persons need to be chosen as the main observation units. It was, however, mentioned that in some countries it is difficult to distinguish the informal economy from illegal activities. Some concern was expressed regarding the use of the term "informal employment", which is considered rather vague and which might lead to confusion with the term "employment in the informal sector". However, it was also pointed out that alternative terms (such as "unprotected employment") are unlikely to be applicable to all categories of workers including the self-employed. So as to be able to pursue in more depth its deliberations on the topic, the Conference decided to establish a working group on informal employment and elected Mr. J. Charmes (France) as its Chairperson.

34. On 1 December the Chairperson of the Working Group presented the report and draft guidelines of the Working Group to the Conference. Clarification was sought regarding the statistical treatment of illegal workers engaged in activities, which, as such, are not illegal. It was confirmed that such workers would be considered as having informal jobs in accordance with paragraph 3(5) of the draft guidelines. The Conference agreed that the titles of the resolutions adopted by the 13th and 15th ICLS, which are referred to in the draft guidelines, would be included. It was suggested that, for dissemination of the guidelines on the statistical definition of informal employment, the relevant paragraphs of the 13th and 15th ICLS resolutions would be annexed. The representative of the Secretary-General mentioned in this connection that, following each ICLS, the ILO generally issues a publication containing a complete set of all current international recommendations on labour statistics. Several proposals were made regarding the correction of errors and improvement of the Spanish language version of the guidelines. A suggestion to indicate, in paragraph 1 of the guidelines, not only the observation units, but also the reporting units, was not taken up because the reporting units would depend upon the source of the statistics. Subject to the amendments agreed upon, the Conference endorsed the guidelines unanimously.

Annex

Report of the Working Group on Informal Employment

The Working Group was attended by participants from 59 countries, Employers' and Workers' delegates, and various observers. The Chairperson of the Working Group recalled the context which had led to the inclusion of the topic "informal employment" on the Conference agenda: the informal sector resolution adopted by the 15th ICLS and subsequent data collections by countries on a large scale; the recommendation by the Delhi Group to extend the enterprise-based definition of informal sector to a job-based definition of informal employment; and the request made by the International Labour Conference, 2002, to the ILO to assist countries in the collection, analysis and dissemination of statistics on the informal economy. The representative of the Secretary-General introduced the topic, explaining the conceptual framework developed by the ILO and pointing out the relationships between the concepts of the informal sector and informal employment, on the one hand, and the concepts of underground and illegal production (as defined by the SNA 1993), on the other.

Several participants shared their experience in the collection of data on employment in the informal sector, informal employment, or both. A number of them reported that they had already applied successfully the ILO framework. It became apparent that informal employment is a relevant issue in most countries, although its meaning varies widely among countries of different regions. While in some countries the meaning is essentially a negative one, this is not the case for others.

All speakers agreed on the usefulness of complementing statistics on employment in the informal sector with statistics on informal employment. It was unanimously felt that there is a need for international statistical guidelines regarding a definition of informal employment. The conceptual framework proposed by the ILO for defining informal employment was considered useful to provide more clarity on a complex issue. It was emphasized that, for statistical purposes, the concepts of employment in the informal sector and informal employment are both useful and should be retained. The concept of informal sector is embedded in the conceptual framework of the SNA 1993 and its use will therefore continue for statistical purposes. For statistical purposes, it would be better to keep the two concepts separate. Caution is needed in adding up data on employment in the informal sector and informal employment to obtain data on employment in the informal economy. It was suggested that the links between informal employment and the non-observed economy should be indicated.

Several speakers expressed reservations about the term “informal employment” and suggested replacing it by “unprotected employment”. However, no agreement was reached on this matter, and the term “informal employment” has been retained because it is considered the most suitable one because of its broadness. It was suggested to further subdivide the different types of informal jobs distinguished in the ILO framework.

During a second round of the discussions, the Working Group considered the draft guidelines prepared by the Office. In presenting these guidelines, it was emphasized that they referred only to definitional issues and not to measurement issues. Since informal employment manifested itself in different ways in different countries, any international guidelines on this matter could only be broad. The Working Group recognized the impact on the international comparability of the resulting statistics.

The draft guidelines were examined in detail. During this process, the Working Group decided to amend various paragraphs. The text agreed upon by the Working Group is presented to the Conference for endorsement.

Guidelines concerning a statistical definition of informal employment

The Seventeenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS),

Acknowledging that the relevance of informal employment varies among countries, and that a decision to develop statistics on it is therefore determined by national circumstances and priorities,

Noting that the term “informal economy” is used by the ILO as including the informal sector as well as informal employment and that, as a supplement to the System of National Accounts, 1993, an international conceptual framework for measurement of the non-observed economy already exists, which distinguishes the informal sector from underground production, illegal production and household production for own final use,

Recalling the existing international standards on statistics of employment in the informal sector contained in the resolution concerning statistics of employment in the informal sector adopted by the 15th ICLS (January 1993),

Noting the recommendation made by the Expert Group on Informal Sector Statistics (Delhi Group), during its Fifth Meeting, that the definition and measurement of employment in the informal sector need to be complemented with a definition and measurement of informal employment, Emphasizing the importance of consistency and coherence in relating the enterprise-based concept of employment in the informal sector to a broader, job-based concept of informal employment,

Considering the methodological work, which the International Labour Office and a number of countries have already undertaken in this area,

Supporting the request, which was made by the International Labour Conference in paragraph 37(n) of the resolution concerning decent work and the informal economy adopted during its 90th Session (2002), that the International Labour Office should assist countries in the collection, analysis and dissemination of statistics on the informal economy,

Recognizing that the considerable diversity of informal employment situations poses limits to the extent to which statistics on informal employment can be harmonized across countries,

Realizing the usefulness of international guidelines in assisting countries in the development of national definitions of informal employment, and in enhancing the international comparability of the resulting statistics to the extent possible;

Endorses the following guidelines, which complement the resolution concerning statistics of employment in the informal sector of the 15th ICLS, and encourages countries to test the conceptual framework on which they are based:

1. The concept of informal sector refers to production units as observation units, while the concept of informal employment refers to jobs as observation units. Employment is defined in the sense of paragraph 9 of the resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment adopted by the 13th ICLS.

2. Informal sector enterprises and employment in the informal sector are defined according to the resolution concerning statistics of employment in the informal sector adopted by the 15th ICLS. For the purpose of statistics on informal employment, paragraph 19 of the resolution concerning statistics of employment in the informal sector adopted by the 15th ICLS should be applied to exclude households employing paid domestic workers from informal sector enterprises, and to treat them separately as part of a category named "households".

3. (1) *Informal employment* comprises the total number of informal jobs as defined in subparagraphs (2) to (5) below, whether carried out in formal sector enterprises, informal sector enterprises, or households, during a given reference period.

(2) As shown in the attached matrix, informal employment includes the following types of jobs:

(i) own-account workers employed in their own informal sector enterprises (cell 3);

(ii) employers employed in their own informal sector enterprises (cell 4);

(iii) contributing family workers, irrespective of whether they work in formal or informal sector enterprises (cells 1 and 5);

(iv) members of informal producers' cooperatives (cell 8);

(v) employees holding informal jobs (as defined in subparagraph (5) below) in formal sector enterprises, informal sector enterprises, or as paid domestic workers employed by households (cells 2, 6 and 10);

(vi) own-account workers engaged in the production of goods exclusively for own final use by their household (cell 9), if considered employed according to paragraph 9(6) of the resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment adopted by the 13th ICLS.

(3) Own-account workers, employers, members of producers' cooperatives, contributing family workers, and employees are defined in accordance with the latest version of the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE).

(4) Producers' cooperatives are considered informal if they are not formally established as legal entities and also meet the other criteria of informal sector enterprises specified in the resolution concerning statistics of employment in the informal sector adopted by the 15th ICLS.

(5) Employees are considered to have informal jobs if their employment relationship is, in law or in practice, not subject to national labour legislation, income taxation, social protection or entitlement to certain employment benefits (advance notice of dismissal, severance pay, paid annual or sick leave, etc.). The reasons may be the following: non-declaration of the jobs or the employees; casual jobs or jobs of a limited short duration; jobs with hours of work or wages below a specified threshold (e.g. for social security contributions); employment by unincorporated enterprises or by persons in households; jobs where the employee's place of work is outside the premises of the employer's enterprise (e.g. outworkers without employment contract); or jobs for which labour regulations are not applied, not enforced, or not complied with for any other reason. The operational criteria for defining informal jobs of employees are to be determined in accordance with national circumstances and data availability.

(6) For purposes of analysis and policy-making, it may be useful to disaggregate the different types of informal jobs listed in paragraph 3(2) above, especially those held by employees. Such a typology and definitions should be developed as part of further work on classifications by status in employment at the international and national levels.

4. Where they exist, employees holding formal jobs in informal sector enterprises (cell 7 of the attached matrix) should be excluded from informal employment.

5. *Informal employment outside the informal sector* comprises the following types of jobs:

(i) employees holding informal jobs (as defined in paragraph 3(5) above) in formal sector enterprises (cell 2) or as paid domestic workers employed by households (cell 10);

(ii) contributing family workers working in formal sector enterprises (cell 1);

(iii) own-account workers engaged in the production of goods exclusively for own final use by their household (cell 9), if considered employed according to paragraph 9(6) of the resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment adopted by the 13th ICLS.

6. Countries which do not have statistics on employment in the informal sector or for which a classification of employment by type of production unit is not relevant, may develop statistics on informal employment, if desired, specifying appropriate definitions of informal jobs of own-account workers, employers and members of producers' cooperatives. Alternatively, they may limit the measurement of informal employment to employee jobs.

7. Countries which exclude agricultural activities from the scope of their informal sector statistics should develop suitable definitions of informal jobs in agriculture, especially with respect to jobs held by own-account workers, employers and members of producers' cooperatives.

Annex

Conceptual framework: Informal employment

Production units by type	Jobs by status in employment									
	Own-account workers		Employers		Contributing family workers		Employees		Members of producers' cooperatives	
	Informal	Formal	Informal	Formal	Informal	Formal	Informal	Formal	Informal	Formal
Formal sector enterprises					1	2				
Informal sector enterprises[(a)]	3		4		5	6	7	8		
Households[(b)]	9					10				

[(a)] As defined by the 15th ICLS (excluding households employing paid domestic workers).
[(b)] Households producing goods exclusively for their own final use and households employing paid domestic workers.

Note: Cells shaded in dark grey refer to jobs which, by definition, do not exist in the type of production unit in question. Cells shaded in light grey refer to formal jobs. Unshaded cells represent the various types of informal jobs.

Informal employment:	Cells 1 to 6 and 8 to 10.
Employment in the informal sector:	Cells 3 to 8.
Informal employment outside the informal sector:	Cells 1, 2, 9 and 10.

35. The representative of the Secretary-General (Ms. A. Mata-Greenwood) introduced the topic of ***statistics of working time*** by presenting the main features of current statistical standards on working time, which date back to 1962 and are limited in many ways. She recalled the recommendations of the 15th and 16th ICLS in this field and proposed areas where revision of the current standards might be useful, pertinent and feasible. Participants supported the work carried out by the ILO in this field and agreed fully with the need to revise the current standards, given the crucial role of working time in both economic and social domains. Several raised the need for guidelines on: (a) actual hours of work, including the identification of its various components; (b) usual hours of work, which are essential as a classificatory variable; (c) working-time arrangements, about which little is known; (d) annual hours worked, especially for the calculation of productivity; (e) the various measurement methods; and (f) the usefulness and limitations involved in using and combining various sources, such as labour force and time-use surveys, for improving data quality. The Conference also expressed the need to produce a handbook on good practices and to have the ILO's support for capacity building and for data collection exercises and to relate working-time statistics to gender issues, the informal economy and occupational health and safety issues. Given the importance and complexity of the subject, it was decided to discuss it in more depth in a working group. Mr. J.A. de Sousa Fialho (Portugal) was elected as Chairperson of the Working Group.

36. The Chairperson of the Working Group reported to the Conference on its work on 1 December 2003. The report of the Working Group, as approved by the Conference, is given in the annex.

37. The Conference then examined the report. The following suggestions for modifications were made. The first was to include in the second paragraph statistics of usual hours of work among the statistics that should be considered for international standards. The second related to the role of the Paris City Group: its involvement in further work in this area was considered necessary, but not sufficient, for the development of new and revised standards, as employers and workers should be involved in this work to maintain the principles of tripartism. Future work should include a tripartite meeting of experts to discuss proposals for a draft resolution for consideration by the 18th ICLS.

Annex

Report of the Working Group on Statistics of Working Time

The representative of the Secretary-General presented, for discussion by the Working Group, some issues concerning statistics of working time: their applications, the limitations of current statistical standards, the national statistics compiled by the ILO, comparability problems and some ideas for further work in this area. The Chairperson noted the need for relevant working-time statistics given the economic and social changes that have occurred in past decades, their importance for social and economic policies and the need to study working-time issues together with other work issues, including the intensity of work. He explained that the objective of the Working Group was to discuss the need for revised guidelines on the subject and provide guidance to the ILO on the direction and type of issues that it needed to consider in this work.

The Working Group examined the issues presented and exchanged country experiences. Participants agreed that the need for working-time statistics could not be overstated. The first ILO Convention focused on the regulation of working time. Similarly, the first statistical resolution, adopted by the First ICLS in 1923, focused on the measurement of wages and hours of work. Working-time statistics are seen as central for issues regarding the balancing of family and working life, as well as for designing social protection programmes, which are still based on a traditional household model that no longer exists. Regarding the types of statistics needed, hours actually worked are considered the key concept. It is also considered essential to account for unscheduled working hours and on-call work arrangements, especially because they tend to be unpaid and do not qualify for entitlements to social benefits; for annual hours worked for productivity calculation; for usual hours of work; for commuting time, which is time that workers commit to work even if it is unpaid; and for contractual hours.

The Working Group agreed unanimously on the need to revise the current international statistical standards on working time. They also agreed that it is advisable to carry out this process in close consultation with national statisticians, who would need to commit themselves to carrying out methodological work. The forum offered by the Paris City Group, which has discussed this topic on two occasions and given valuable support to the ILO, was welcomed by the Working Group. Delegates were urged to ensure a good representation of all the regions of the world at the Paris Group meetings. The Working Group was reminded of the importance of involving employers and workers in the process of developing international statistical standards to maintain the principle of tripartism.

The discussion on designing revised guidelines on working-time statistics revolved around three types of challenges, namely, establishing definitions, collecting the information and presenting the resulting statistics.

Regarding *definitions*, the Working Group discussed the need to agree on what should be included in and excluded from hours worked. Examples of activities for which clarification of treatment is required include waiting or stand-by time spent by street vendors in the informal sector or by firefighters or doctors who are expected to be on call but may not be paid during this time. Another difficult area relates to the activities of persons who work at home and who combine household chores with SNA work, or of professionals and managers whose activities include thinking or speaking to clients and who have no fixed working schedule. Economic indicators such as earnings per hour or productivity are very sensitive to changes in the content of hours worked and it is very important to have consensus, not only for international comparisons, but for reliable national analysis as well. The influence of administrative or legal definitions of hours of work on statistical definitions and measurement was also mentioned, as well as the need for statistics to be as independent as possible from this influence.

Regarding the range of topics for which new definitions could to be developed, the Working Group agreed that the topic to be measured depend on the application for which it is intended, and that international guidelines should be prepared on this basis. Definitions should take measurement methodologies into account, as these have a strong influence on the type of definition that can and will be applied. Regarding the reference period to be used, the Working Group agreed that it is important to have statistics for short periods such as a week, as well as for longer periods such as a year or a lifetime.

On *measurement methodologies,* clarification is needed on what each source of information is able to provide and its strengths and limitations. It was apparent from the discussion that the measurement of working time is plagued by inaccuracies that need to be reduced. It also became evident that methodological work is needed to improve the measurement of hours worked especially of the self-employed, those in the informal economy and home-based workers, who are also becoming important in developed countries. The ILO could perhaps initiate this research in various regions of the world, by using information on working-time arrangements and status in employment to assist the measurement of actual hours worked.

The problem of proxy response was mentioned as a major limitation of labour force surveys in the accurate reporting of working time. But countries that have refined their measurement instrument by asking more detailed questions consider this a key source. Time-use surveys are useful, especially for measuring hours worked of workers in the informal economy, in home-based work, and by the hidden or undeclared workforce, as well as to measure absence from work. However, illiteracy may complicate data collection. Specialized surveys or modules were mentioned as being appropriate to measure working time with more precision. Regarding establishment surveys, the limited worker coverage is seen as a problem.

Regarding the *presentation of statistics*, the Working Group noted that some countries use indices, while others use absolute numbers employing different averaging procedures and reference periods. All these factors hamper international comparability and some guidelines would be useful.

The need to harmonize sources was mentioned by countries with more than one data source, as the figures produced by each are often inconsistent or dissimilar. The Working Group also mentioned the need to have guidelines on useful disaggregations, by characteristics of workers and enterprises employing them, as well as on distributions of hours worked. Regarding the estimation of annual hours of work it was mentioned that the ideal would be to have continuous labour force surveys that cover every week of the year.

Finally, the Working Group recommended, as a complement to developing international guidelines, the compilation of detailed methodological information on national practices in the field of working-time statistics, including information on harmonization of data from different sources, averaging procedures and interpretation of results.

38. In respect of ***statistics on training*** (section 3.3 of the General Report), the representative of the Secretary-General (Mr. E. Hoffmann) reported on the ILO's work and plans in this area. In the discussion, it was noted that there was unequal access to training and that this should be considered when developing statistical systems on this topic. Two Government representatives had earlier supported the need for further ILO work on statistics on training.

39. The Conference then considered the section on the ILO's work with ***classifications*** (section 3.5 of the General Report). Following a brief presentation by the representative of the Secretary-General (Mr. E. Hoffmann) on the ILO's work in this area, delegates agreed with the recommendation that the basic principles and structure of the current version of the *International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88)* should not be revised, but that it was necessary to invest in its updating and overall improvements to reflect important changes that have taken place in the world of work during the more than 15 years since it was adopted by the 14th ICLS. Delegates felt that this work should be concluded early enough for the results to be useful in the preparations that will take place in a majority of countries for the population censuses around 2010. As this may not be possible if the results are to be formally adopted by the 18th ICLS, it will be important to find other mechanisms to ensure adequate consultations with national and international specialists. Examples were given of categories that have proved difficult to handle adequately in national data collections and which therefore will need to be considered and/or where guidance should be provided. The Conference also considered that it was necessary to ensure that national classifications are designed to reflect national circumstances and needs, and that it would be useful to consult with the ILO, and for the ILO to assist countries, in the mapping of national classifications to ISCO-88.

40. It was decided to establish a working group to discuss issues related to the ILO's future work on ISCO-88. Mr. G. Lazar (Hungary) was elected as Chairperson of the Working Group on ISCO.

41. During the plenary session on 1 December 2003, the Chairperson of the Working Group presented its report and the draft resolution related to ILO's future work on ISCO-88 that had been prepared for consideration by the Conference.

42. The Conference then examined the report as well as the Working Group's draft resolution. It considered that the report reflected well its deliberations and observations and suggestions made. Following some discussion about the best wording of the first sentence in the third clause of the preamble, the Conference adopted the draft resolution after adding: (i) a new clause to follow the second clause in the draft prepared by the Working Group: "Recognizing that some countries have national occupational classifications that differ significantly from ISCO-88 to well reflect their national circumstances"; and (ii) the following words to point (d): "particularly by the developing countries". The report of the Working Group, as approved by the Conference, is presented in the annex. The resolution, as amended by the Conference, is presented in Appendix I as resolution III.

Annex

Report of the Working Group on ISCO

The Working Group on ISCO met on 27 November. The Chairperson proposed to organize the discussion into two sub-sessions. The first would address the strategic advice that the Working Group would propose that the 17th ICLS should give to the Governing Body of the ILO concerning the Office's future work with the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO), and the form that such advice should take. The second should address specific suggestions for the improvement of the current version of ISCO. It would also discuss the work that the Office has been doing to promote ISCO and assist countries with its adaptation to national circumstances and the use of occupational classifications for statistics and client-related applications.

In its first sub-session the Working Group concluded that the basic principles and main structure of ISCO-88 should not be changed, but that nevertheless modifications are necessary in some areas, both to make improvements in the light of experience gained in many countries using ISCO-88-based classifications, and as a consequence of developments in the world of work over the last 15 years. It further concluded that this work should be finished by 2007 for the results to be taken into account in national preparations for the majority of population censuses that are to be undertaken in the 2010 round. The Working Group also decided to propose that the Conference adopt a resolution on the ILO's future work with ISCO. The draft text for this resolution was prepared on the basis of the plenary's opening discussion as well as the discussion of the Working Group.

In its second sub-session, participants commented on and supplemented the review of national experiences and concrete proposals for improvements to ISCO-88 and the ILO's work that were presented in section 3.5 of the General Report as well as in the reports prepared for the Office by a consultant. [1]

Several Government delegates and one Employer representative reported experiences with developing or revising national standard occupational classifications by adapting ISCO-88 to national circumstances and needs, and the work to implement these classifications in the production of statistics. It was reported that it had been necessary and possible to both update and expand the ISCO-88 structure while retaining the basic principles and main features, and it was suggested that these experiences might be useful also for the ILO's future work with ISCO. Among the areas mentioned were: managers and the relation between "managing" and operational tasks, as well as other jobs with combinations of tasks and duties that differ from the pattern reflected in ISCO-88; the need to expand the number of separate groups in major groups 3, 4 and 5; the need to incorporate the many, mostly new, occupations for which there is no obvious place among the existing categories; the need to consider how to reflect that the education and training requirements for certain occupations are changing over time; and more effort to reduce gender bias.

The quality of the consultant's reports was praised, and many of her recommendations received explicit and strong support, although a few might be given lower priority. The recommendation to give more attention to the needs of client-oriented applications was mostly supported, but it was suggested that for the job placement function of the employment services it is important to have a classification that can be rapidly adapted to a dynamic labour market as well as provide more detailed distinctions than are needed for most areas of statistics. To handle these issues adequately in the future, work with ISCO might require a significant amount of resources, even if priority might be given to specific fields of work. It was also pointed out that many employment services find it convenient to work with occupational classifications that explicitly use

[1] D. Budlender (2003a): *Wither the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88)?* Working Paper No. 9, Bureau of Statistics, Policy Integration Department, ILO, Geneva. D. Budlender (2003b): *Improving occupational classifications as tools for describing labour markets: A summary of national experiences*, Working Paper No. 10, Bureau of Statistics, Policy Integration Department, ILO, Geneva.

"fields of work" (or "work areas") to define aggregate groups, as a supplement to the skills-based structure of ISCO-88-based classifications.

In his concluding remarks, the representative of the Secretary-General thanked the members of the Working Group for their suggestions and the information provided, and said that these would be valuable for any future work with ISCO. He added that this work would only lead to improvements to ISCO-88 if national custodians communicated their experiences to the ILO, for example in the form of requests for advice and clarification.

At the end of the session the Chairperson thanked the members of Working Group for their effective and constructive contributions.

43. The representative of the Secretary-General (Mr. E. Hoffmann) presented a report on the ILO's work and present plans related to ***statistics for its sectoral activities*** (section 3.6 of the General Report). There was no comment from the Conference on this item.

44. The representative of the Secretary-General (Mr. F. Lepper) presented section 3.7 of the General Report dealing with ***statistics on the employment situation of persons with disabilities***. The ILO survey of national practices showed that these statistics are mainly produced from population censuses and labour force surveys, and that countries generally use definitions of disability that come from national legislation or that have been developed for statistical use. Less than 50 per cent of the countries responding to the survey questionnaire use the relevant international standards dealing with statistics on disability. There was a need to develop recommendations on the compilation of statistics on the employment situation of people with disabilities, giving guidance on concepts, definitions, classifications and data sources for those countries that wish to establish or improve such statistics.

45. During the discussion by the Conference, it was proposed that a compact set of questions on employment should be developed for use in health surveys. The representative of the Secretary-General pointed out that few respondents had mentioned health surveys as a source of data on the employment situation of people with disabilities. In addition, the Bureau of Statistics had provided comments on labour force characteristics to the World Health Organization in relation to the World Health Survey.

Chapter 4. Statistics on social protection and social dialogue

46. The representative of the Secretary-General (Ms. K. Taswell) presented the work carried out by the ILO in the five years since the 16th ICLS on ***statistics of occupational safety and health***, described in section 4.1 of the General Report. In its resolution on statistics of occupational injuries, the 16th ICLS had recommended several areas for further work by the ILO, and details were provided on the progress made in each of these. One major output reaching completion was a technical manual setting out the methodology for the collection of basic information on occupational injuries from sources other than notification systems; it was hoped that this would be released in 2004. She noted that the mapping between the 16th ICLS classifications on type of injury and part of body injured and the *International Statistical Classification of Diseases and Related Health Problems, ICD-10* (WHO, Geneva, 1992), had been prepared by EUROSTAT, and was available in their document on the methodology of statistics on accidents at work. [2] Information was also provided about the Recommendation concerning occupational safety and health

[2] See EUROSTAT: *European statistics on accidents at work (ESAW) – Methodology – 2001 edition* (European Communities, 2002).

adopted by the International Labour Conference (ILC) in June 2003, after the General Report had been prepared. This contains the conclusions of the ILC, which set out a global strategy in which knowledge development, management and dissemination plays an important role.

47. The representative of the Secretary-General (Ms. C. Behrendt) introduced the work of the ILO in the field of ***social security statistics*** (section 4.2 of the General Report). She recalled that, since the adoption of the Resolution Concerning the Development of Social Security Statistics by the 9th ICLS, substantial progress has been made, but that there is still a considerable lack of statistical data that would allow cross-national comparisons, notably for non-OECD countries. She then summarized the previous and ongoing work of the ILO in the field of social security statistics, notably in respect of the Inquiry into the Cost of Social Security and the Social Protection Expenditure and Performance Reports (SPER). In response to the lack of a global statistical database on social security, she presented the next steps envisaged by the ILO for which she asked the Conference for comments.

48. The Conference strongly supported the proposals of the ILO to strengthen efforts to achieve more reliable and comprehensive international data on social security, including in respect of means-tested and private schemes. Many delegates drew attention to the great need for reliable data in social security. After expressing his general support for the proposal, an Employer delegate pointed to difficulties in using labour force surveys for statistics on social security because individuals/households often are not well informed on specific aspects of their entitlements. A delegate suggested that the data gathered could be used to undertake social accounting as well as forecasting of the future performance of social security systems. Another delegate proposed that efforts should be strengthened to assure compatibility with the data collected by EUROSTAT and the OECD and suggested a common data collection process.

49. In respect of ***statistics on socio-economic security*** (section 4.3 of the General Report), the representative of the Secretary-General (Mr. A. Khag) informed the Conference that a socio-economic security database exists in the ILO at the micro, meso and macro levels. The micro and meso levels are essentially primary data-gathering activities through the People's Security Surveys (PSSs) and Enterprise Labour Flexibility and Security Surveys (ELFSs), whereas the macro-level database is a consolidation of extant information available in governments and other public institutions worldwide. The basic intent of this data gathering is to support policy-related research and policy formulation for enhancing socio-economic security in ILO member countries.

50. In respect of ***statistics on trade unions and collective bargaining*** (section 4.4 of the General Report), the representative of the Secretary-General (Ms. S. Lawrence) presented supplementary information on the outcome of the joint exploratory project by the InFocus Programme on Social Dialogue and the Bureau of Statistics, and requested further guidance from the Conference on the wide range of conceptual and methodological issues.

51. From country responses in 15 out of the 17 countries covered in the project, a national rate of unionization for nine countries and a national bargaining coverage rate for 12 could be computed but not on a comparable basis. Trade union membership refers to the number of workers who are members of trade unions and the proportion of worker members in relation to all workers employed in the same units, or all workers who are potential union members. Bargaining coverage refers to the number and proportion of workers covered by a collective agreement because their pay or other conditions of employment are collectively negotiated. Governments, workers' and employers' organizations would benefit from reliable statistics. Despite growing demand, the only statistical standards date from 1926 when the 3rd ICLS adopted the resolution concerning statistics of collective agreements. The ILO sought the Conference's guidance on a systematic approach to the definition and collection of this set of statistics, while fully recognizing that it does not cover all labour relations processes and outcomes. Specifically guidance related to definitional criteria, calculation of density and coverage rates, scope and periodicity of the statistics, key variables, appropriate sources, etc., was sought.

52. In view of the many technical issues involved, several participants proposed to hold a working group and to consider a national structure for statistics, as workers and employers currently used different sources. The Workers' delegates view the issue of freedom of association as associated to this area of statistics. The Conference decided to form this Working Group on Statistics of Trade Union Membership and Collective Bargaining Coverage and elected Mr. G. Bode (Australia) as Chairperson.

53. The Chairperson of the Working Group presented the report to the plenary session on 1 December 2003, and focused on the conclusions and recommendations made by the Working Group concerning their concepts and definitions, including proposals for other measures; appropriate sources and methods; and advice on future ILO statistical work in this field.

54. The Conference noted the conclusions of the Working Group. It considered that the two sets of statistics on trade union membership and collective bargaining coverage needed to be seen in the wider context of social dialogue. It was agreed that they should be discussed by a meeting of experts in the context of the decent work measures proposed, which included trade union density rates and collective (pay) bargaining coverage. This was consistent with the decisions taken earlier on this subject by the Conference. It was reiterated that statistics covering employers' organizations should be included and that it is necessary to further study how this should be done. The Conference agreed that there were many types of workers (e.g. casual and contract workers) or workers who are not allowed to join unions or collectively negotiate, whose inclusion or not in the statistics needed further study. Future developmental work should also address broader types of social dialogue, such as employer/employee consultations and relations at different levels starting from the enterprise itself. The Conference also expressed some interest with respect to another proposed measure as reported from the Working Group, namely: number of complaints against governments or against employers concerning denial of collective bargaining rights (or freedom of association) reported through the media or through the ILO complaints mechanism. It was pointed out that this type of indicator could be interpreted to reflect a negative as well as a positive impact on the occurrence of social dialogue, depending on national circumstances, and would require further study. The report of the Working Group is given in the annex.

Annex

Report of the Working Group on Statistics of Trade Union Membership and Collective Bargaining Coverage

The Chairperson of the Working Group opened the meeting and proposed to organize the discussion on the two topics around three main areas: concepts and definitions (including proposals of other measures); appropriate sources and methods; and advice on future statistical work. He first gave the floor to a representative of the InFocus Programme on Social Dialogue (Mr. L. Baccaro) who addressed the need for such statistics. The representative of the Secretary-General then introduced the issues raised earlier and renewed her request for the Working Group's guidance and information on participants' experience with respect to a set of questions covered in room document 10 on statistics of social dialogue that had been made available on the first day of the Conference. These questions related to two core statistics, namely statistics of trade union membership and collective bargaining coverage. These were important, traditional measures of industrial relations, although they did not cover all aspects of social dialogue for which other dimensions needed to be taken into account, as was the case for other important measures, such as the unemployment rate for the labour market. It was recalled that the ILO's work on statistics for social dialogue was a joint data collection and developmental effort of the Bureau of Statistics and the InFocus Programme on Social Dialogue, closely consulting with the Bureaux for Workers' and for Employers' Activities. Guidance was sought from the Working Group, as representatives from all regions of the world and the social partners, on three main areas: concepts and definitions, including proposals of other measures; appropriate sources and methods; and advice on future statistical work on these two topics.

Concepts and definitions. The attention of the Working Group was drawn to the absence of internationally agreed definitions of trade union membership and collective bargaining coverage and it was recalled that the only standard was the resolution concerning statistics of collective agreements adopted by the 3rd ICLS in 1926. Working definitions that would be universally applicable had been suggested in room document 10 for each concept. In view of the changing actors involved in collective bargaining negotiations, the options presented for consideration included definitional criteria and formulae for calculating different rates of trade union density and collective bargaining coverage, whose relevance to different countries would not be the same. The Working Group considered that traditional definitions of union membership might no longer be fully appropriate because they did not encompass new groups of workers (e.g. self-employed, professionals) that might behave or negotiate like unions but were not recognized as such. It was pointed out that without coverage of employers' organizations, the statistics would be partial and of little value. The definitional element of "independence" anchored in the ILO standards, for both trade unions and employers' organizations, although it might be difficult to ascertain statistically, was considered crucial. This was not the case for other rights, such as the right to strike for trade unions or the right to lockout for employers, which, if specified in the definitions, might exclude organizations that did not have such rights but which took part in collective negotiations. Active membership was considered to be the foremost criterion for measuring union membership and this could be defined by payment of dues. For defining collective bargaining coverage, "negotiation of pay" was considered to be the most important. The inclusion of negotiations of "other employment conditions" such as working time, was particularly important in some countries but was considered insufficient on its own. Both direct and indirect coverage of workers by agreements should, in principle, be included in the measure, although the latter might not always be identifiable.

For the calculation of rates using denominators defined in terms of ILO labour force concepts, alternative measures might be necessary depending on the economic structure of countries, but would also depend on data availability. The use of eligible employees, normally the smallest, most restricted denominator, produced the adjusted rates of density or coverage that expressed the importance of membership and bargaining coverage amongst workers who were included, who had opted for their right to join or to negotiate. The size of ineligible groups in countries might vary significantly, but where these were small, they could be hidden by measurement errors. With respect to the proposed unadjusted rates that were not restricted to eligible categories of workers, a difficulty with the use of the non-agricultural labour force was distinguishing between workers in agricultural unions that cover both the agricultural as well as related sectors, such as the processing of agricultural products. Developing countries with predominant agricultural sectors may have large plantation-type organized components, as well as large, informal components that may or may not be eligible to join unions or to negotiate collectively. The correct interpretation of all rates would normally require complementary, qualitative information.

Only one additional measure of social dialogue was proposed by the Working Group: the number of complaints against governments or against employers concerning denial of collective bargaining rights (or freedom of association) reported through the media or through the ILO complaints mechanism. Unlike strikes, which could be interpreted as a negative or a positive outcome of industrial relations, complaints were always a negative indicator.

Sources and methods. The three main sources of these statistics described in room document 10, are administrative records, surveys of establishments and of households. Administrative records, encompassing surveys of unions, might be the most frequently available source, where records are collected from trade unions themselves or registered with other central offices or ministries. These data provide information on types of union, on membership concentration, but present problems of coverage due to non-registration of some unions, and problems of under- and over-reporting. Household surveys are rare and more expensive undertakings, but present the advantage of non-discrimination coverage and calculation of density and coverage rates by demographic and labour force characteristics normally collected if undertaken, e.g. for a labour force survey. Information obtained from employers through surveys of establishments present advantages concerning information on collective bargaining agreements and coverage but employers might not be well informed about union membership. Workplace industrial relations surveys were cited as a useful source, covering in-depth information on practices and perceptions, although these are costly to implement. Based on country experiences and in the light of the sensitive nature of the topics, the Working Group observed that disparity in numbers could exist between government sources and other sources such as reports from the social partners themselves. Whatever the source, the confidentiality or protection of individual information, and the reliability of statistics, are important issues that, together with even the possibility to collect such information, might also be subject to national legislation. The combining of information from multiple sources where they exist in countries, to confront or reconcile the final results needed further study as the use of a single definition in these different types of data collections could also be subject to different interpretations of the concept. Researcher-based collections that exist in part due to the lack of regular or available sources in countries, might not replace the establishment and definition of national structures. While a labour force survey could provide statistics for a short reference period, household respondents' lack of knowledge of membership or of collective bargaining coverage, especially where extension mechanisms exist, is a disadvantage of this source. The incorporation of questions on these topics in labour force survey questionnaires could be relevant as long as the adequacy of the samples for statistical significance is also ensured, to avoid biased estimates. Similarly the type of classification variables that can be obtained depend on the statistical source and availability of basic data. As to the frequency of data collection, surveys of unions are a comprehensive source of information but involve heavy operations that might only be carried out at longer (five-year) intervals, while labour force surveys are often more frequent (at least annual). It was pointed out that the level of either measure might change slowly, while the distribution between unions and agreements might change more rapidly.

Future work. There was recognition of and broad support for the need for further work by the ILO to develop international guidelines to assist countries to obtain meaningful, reliable statistics on the two topics. In particular the union density and pay bargaining coverage rates are also part of the proposed ILO decent work measures. Guidelines are especially needed in view of the complex nature of the statistics and their collection, both in developing and industrialized countries, owing to different features. In addition, more international consultation was essential to assess whether the 1926 resolution on collective agreements should be revised. The Working Group considered that, without statistics of employers' organizations, only part of the picture could be obtained. It also recognized that, while the outcome of future work might raise further new issues it should entail the preparation of a comprehensive report on the measurement of trade union membership and collective bargaining coverage, to pool together the experience that would advance the ambitious target of standard setting, which the ILO is best placed to do.

The Working Group considered holding a meeting of experts prior to consideration of standards in this field by the next ICLS, otherwise it would be at least ten years before internationally approved statistical standards would be available. However, the Employer representatives, while fully supporting continued work by the Office, considered that, in view of the many other priority topics for development, such a meeting during the next two years might be premature.

Chapter 5. Future work of the ILO in labour statistics

55. The Secretary-General introduced Chapter 5 of the General Report concerning "Future work of the ILO in labour statistics". He sought the guidance of the Conference on topics for further developmental work and their associated priorities. He also described the ILO's future plans for developments in data gathering and dissemination and in technical cooperation, advisory services and training, and sought confirmation from the Conference that these plans were appropriate.

56. In respect of what they considered to be priorities for future developmental work, delegates mentioned a wide range of activities, many of which have already been mentioned in the reports of the working groups of the Conference. Most frequently mentioned were:

statistics of working time and working-time arrangements; statistics on labour demand (and the balance between labour demand and supply); statistics on labour underutilization; social security statistics; child labour statistics; updating of ISCO-88; statistics on international labour migration (and the associated "brain drain" in some countries); statistics on vocational training; and statistics on workers with disabilities. The Conference requested that gender issues should be considered in all aspects of developmental work, as a core principle of the work.

57. Delegates also mentioned the need to extend the work on labour accounting systems, statistics on wages and income from employment (and associated work to review the *October Inquiry*), and on the compilation of a minimum wage database. It was stated that the ILO should greatly enhance resources for work on CPI if it is to continue playing a leading role in this topic.

58. It was suggested that the ILO might undertake some of this developmental work in collaboration with other agencies (one example mentioned was to work with EUROSTAT on statistics of the demand for labour). Experience and knowledge might more easily be shared by using the electronic bulletin boards and web sites with answers to frequently asked questions. In his concluding remarks the Secretary-General signalled that, because of initiatives already taken, some of the developmental work mentioned (for example on child labour statistics, social security statistics and minimum wage compilation) would be undertaken by other ILO units than the Bureau of Statistics.

59. In respect of data gathering, a request was made for the ILO to have free access to those national statistics that are available online. On the topic of data dissemination, delegates from developed countries saw potential resource savings in the move from printed to electronic data dissemination. However, some delegates from developing countries foresaw problems in this trend and requested that the ILO would need to consider the capacity for electronic access in their countries before moving away from printed publications. There was also a suggestion that ISCO-88 should be available online in a form that permitted rapid search and retrieval.

60. In respect of technical cooperation, the ILO was requested to continue and strengthen its work in labour statistics and related areas, e.g. on the inclusion of economic characteristics in population censuses. In this connection, a seminar on capacity building for labour statistics, organized jointly by the ILO and PARIS21, took place on the morning of 3 December 2003. The report of the seminar is available on the web site of the ILO Bureau of Statistics [3] and on that of PARIS21. [4]

II. Household income and expenditure statistics

61. The Conference had before it for discussion *Report II: Household income and expenditure statistics* (ICLS/17/2003/2), prepared by the Office. The report contained an introduction (Chapter 1) and seven other chapters for consideration. A proposal for a draft resolution concerning household income and expenditure statistics was included in the report as an appendix.

62. The Secretary-General introduced the subject for general discussion at the plenary. He outlined the major uses to which these statistics are put and their continued importance to

[3] http://www.ilo.org/stat/ .. Meetings .

[4] http://www.paris21.org .

countries (Chapter 2). These statistics are also essential to the mandate of the ILO as evidenced in the several ICLS resolutions and publications since the inception of the ILO. An overview of developments that had taken place since 1973, the year of adoption of the latest resolution, was presented and their relative purposes and limitations explained. As a result, the Governing Body of the ILO had convened a Meeting of Experts in October 2001 to examine the issues relating to household income and expenditure statistics. Recognizing the usefulness of discussion of this topic by a broad-based group of countries, the Meeting of Experts recommended that the Office present a report to the ICLS with a proposal for revised international standards on household income and expenditure statistics. The proposals in the report were consistent with existing standards on these and related statistics and drew from the discussions at the Meeting of Experts as well as recent experiences and developments at national and international levels in the production of these statistics. The Secretary-General expressed the appreciation of the ILO for the assistance provided by the Bureau of Labor Statistics of the United States in drafting the Conference report and preparing the draft resolution.

63. A conceptual framework for income statistics turned on decisions relating to three issues: should receipts be recurrent, accessible for current consumption and not come from a reduction in net worth? The recommendation was to accept all three requirements but with some flexibility. A detailed categorization of receipts was used to define income and determine those receipts to be excluded on grounds of measurement difficulties, leading to an operational definition of income, and those excluded from the conceptual definition of income (Chapter 3). A similar approach was used to define payments and other outgoings that: (a) were household consumption expenditure, actual final consumption and household expenditure; (b) were to be excluded on measurement grounds (operational definitions); and (c) conceptually (Chapter 4). Measurement issues relating to statistical units, household membership, other household characteristics and reference periods (Chapter 5) and sources of data for these statistics (Chapter 6) were briefly mentioned. The draft resolution proposed that the frequency of collection or compilation of the data should be at least once every five years. The presentation then touched on classification, valuation methods for in-kind goods and services and questions of estimation, analysis and dissemination of these statistics (Chapter 7). The production of a technical guide as a collaborative effort, setting up of a city group by a national statistical office to study the unresolved problems of expenditure statistics and the possible creation of an international repository for micro-data on household expenditure were raised as areas of future work in these statistics (Chapter 8).

64. The general observation of the plenary was that Report II was well prepared, comprehensive, analytical, informative and addressed the key issues. However, delegates made comments and asked questions relating to:

(a) the use of income and expenditure statistics for studies on undernourishment;

(b) the importance to developing countries of consumption expenditure statistics for poverty analysis but the difficulties posed by their inappropriate uses;

(c) the treatment of severance and termination pay and of capital gains and losses;

(d) the difficulty of collecting information on bank charges;

(e) the implication on reduction of net worth for rural households selling their animals;

(f) the difficulty of collecting good quality data on self-employment income and the treatment of negative values arising from the use of mixed income;

(g) the use of econometric empirical research to establish components that have a positive influence on consumption as a way of defining income;

(h) the usefulness of a detailed list of items when collecting expenditure data but the likely effect on quality of a list that is too long;

(i) the sometimes wide difference between aggregates from national accounts and the corresponding aggregates from household income and expenditure surveys;

(j) the practice of balancing income and expenditure statistics;

(k) the need to have as one of the statistical units an income unit in which members pooled their income;

(l) the use of "six months" as cut-off for usual membership of a household;

(m) the lack of harmonization, even for something like the definition of a durable good, and standardized data collection to enhance inter-country comparisons;

(n) the effect of the choice of sample design on estimates of seasonal variations.

65. The suggestions for a technical manual and the setting up of a city group on expenditure statistics were supported.

66. The Secretary-General gave preliminary brief responses to the issues raised. In order to ensure full and careful consideration of these issues and proposals in the draft resolution, the Conference decided to refer it to a committee. Ms. S. Michaud (Canada) was elected Chairperson of the Committee on Household Income and Expenditure Statistics. The draft resolution, as modified after the discussions in the Committee, would be brought back to the plenary for final examination.

67. The report of the Committee on Household Income and Expenditure Statistics (see annex) and the revised draft resolution as amended by the Committee were submitted for consideration by the Conference.

68. The Chairperson of the Committee presented the report. The Conference then reviewed the amended draft resolution concerning household income and expenditure statistics.

69. The following amendments were accepted by the Conference:

(a) In paragraph 1: to replace "including" with "among which its most important uses are".

(b) In paragraph 7: to insert after the sentence ending "severance and termination pay as well as employers' social insurance contributions", a new sentence "These items should be recorded separately, when included."

(c) In paragraph 16: to insert after the first sentence, a new sentence "These are services that fall under the general production boundary of the System of National Accounts."

(d) In subparagraph 18(e): to move the phrase at the end referring to transfer in kind of housing services to paragraph 19.

(e) As a result of the change in subparagraph 18(e), to change paragraph 19 to read: "Transfer of housing services between households should be considered as income for the recipient household. Although income includes current transfers received in the form of services from governments and non-profit institutions (social transfers in kind) and in the form of other services from households, the operational definition of income should exclude such transfers until methods exist for valuing them that are widely acceptable."

(f) In paragraph 24: to replace the last sentence with "Total income, if aggregated across households, leads to double counting."

(g) In subparagraph 54(b): to replace "legal and social" with "legal/social".

(h) In paragraph 58: to replace "university" in the third line with "university/school".

(i) In paragraph 58: to insert, after "accommodation" in the seventh line, the clause "where students are not involved in decision-making about their consumption".

(j) In paragraph 58: to delete "also" in the seventh line.

(k) In paragraph 71: to replace "receipts from outlets" with "outlet receipts".

(l) In paragraph 74: to delete "as specified below" in the second line.

(m) In paragraph 75: to delete "and distance to various types of services" in the fourth line.

(n) In paragraph 76: to replace subparagraph (d) with "the place of acquisition (e.g. location, type), for expenditures incurred while on tourism-related trips, where required for domestic tourism statistics".

(o) In paragraph 93: to replace "second homes are" in the last sentence with "ownership of a second home is".

(p) In paragraph 94: to replace the first sentence with "When the flow of services from (major) durable goods is used, the value that is determined should be the same for household income and expenditure."

(q) In paragraph 94: to replace "should" in the last line with "may".

70. The attention of the Conference was drawn to the apparent inconsistency between the proposal in paragraph 7 to include severance and termination pay as well as employers' social insurance contribution as income, and previous ICLS resolutions. The treatment of the former is in conflict with its exclusion in the 12th ICLS resolution on an integrated system of wage statistics, and the treatment of the latter with its exclusion in the 16th ICLS resolution on employment-related income. It was pointed out that the proposal in the draft resolution allowed for the optional exclusion of these items and so could not be said to be inconsistent with the earlier resolutions.

71. In response to the demand to tone down the exclusion of holding gains/losses from the operational definition of income (paragraph 20), it was noted that there were still issues with respect to the comparative treatment of realized and unrealized gains/losses that would make their inclusion difficult. Moreover, the provision in paragraph 23 allows flexibility for those countries that may wish to include them.

72. There was an observation that the inclusion of gambling stakes as consumption expenditure was not symmetrical to the exclusion of winnings as household income. It was pointed out that the winnings, which tend to be mostly small anyway, can either be put into a memorandum account for receipts to be used for balancing the stakes or netted out of the stakes.

73. The Conference was asked to consider including the "willingness to stay" criterion in the duration for qualification of usual residence in paragraph 59. It was observed that there was nothing in that paragraph that precludes doing so.

74. The Conference adopted the resolution, subject to the amendments decided on. The text is given in resolution I in Appendix I of this report.

Annex

Report of the Committee on Household Income and Expenditure Statistics

1. The Committee first met at the morning session on Tuesday, 25 November 2003, and held five sessions concluding its work at the morning session of Thursday, 27 November 2003. The list of participants is given in Appendix II.

2. The Chairperson, Ms. S. Michaud (Canada), opened the discussions by noting that the intention was for the Committee to examine and, if necessary, amend the draft resolution and not to approve the report nor to have general discussions on the topic. Her proposal that the Committee carry this out by taking each paragraph in turn following its presentation by the Secretary-General was accepted.

3. During the in-depth discussions of the draft resolution, a number of points were raised about which there were substantial debates. This report highlights only these areas, indicating where they led to significant changes to paragraphs of the draft resolution in Report II. The paragraphs that did not give rise to any debate and those that only required drafting changes to reflect decisions about terminology are not discussed. Paragraph numbers referred to in this report are those in the draft resolution. The report also presents the conclusions reached by the Committee on future work.

4. It was decided that the Committee would set up a Drafting Committee to ensure that the text of the amended resolution reflected its conclusions in an appropriate way. The members of the Drafting Committee are listed in Appendix II.

Objectives and uses

5. It was proposed that there was a need for an explicit reference to the use of income and expenditure statistics within an integrated and multidimensional framework for the study of poverty and social exclusion either in replacement of paragraph 1(e) or in addition to it. After much discussion, a new subsection was added at the end of paragraph 1 that would include this use.

6. A second proposal was to explicitly include the well-being of individuals in addition to that of households in subparagraph 1(b). There was some initial concern about the implications for data collection and the methodological limitations that could permit this kind of use. Also some participants indicated that it might be difficult to extend their surveys to incorporate this. It would depend on how the data are collected. It was finally decided to accept the proposal.

7. The Committee accepted the proposal to reorder subparagraphs 1(a) and 1(b) to give more weight to the welfare use of these statistics.

Household income

8. The Committee decided that the exception mentioned in paragraph 4 should be deleted because: (a) not all items in paragraph 18 reduce net worth; and (b) even though operationally we may include some receipts as income which reduced net worth, it is not necessary to state this in the conceptual definition in paragraph 4. Moreover, the other exceptional case of inclusion of social

security contributions, even though these might not be available for current consumption, is not mentioned in this paragraph.

9. It was decided to replace the phrase "operationally in terms of" by "to cover" since some of the components listed are not included as part of the operational definition of income (paragraph 5).

10. The inclusion of severance and termination pay as well as social security contributions as income was extensively debated, as practices differ between countries (paragraph 7). The decision was to make their inclusion as income optional.

11. There was a long debate on the components of income from own-account production of household services in paragraph 16. It was felt that only the component on services from owner-occupied dwellings should be included for now, as the other components still suffer from problems of identification and measurement.

12. An omission of current transfer of housing services between households from the definition of income was pointed out to the Committee. It was decided to include them under paragraph 18(e). However, the Conference may wish to move the inclusion to paragraph 19 as paragraph 18 deals only with transfers in cash and in goods.

13. The Committee indicated that there must be symmetry in the treatment of holding gains and holding losses as income (paragraph 20). Consequently, both should either be included or excluded from the operational definition of income. The decision was to exclude both elements.

14. It was decided that the proposal on collection of data on excluded receipts in paragraph 23 should be more flexible. The Committee agreed to the proposed correction of paragraph 24 to also deduct social security contributions from total income to get disposable income. A clear warning should be given against aggregating total income across households to avoid double counting.

Household consumption expenditure

15. There was an extensive debate on the treatment of expenditure on food. Some participants preferred to base this on the quantities used rather than on those acquired, especially for own-produced food. It was pointed out that this could make nonsense of weights for CPI compilation as what is important are the values of food acquired on the basis of the price at acquisition. The counter argument posed was that food acquired during the reference period could be very different from that consumed, which is the important quantity from a well-being perspective. It was therefore requested that some flexibility should be in the resolution to permit both approaches. The Secretary-General indicated that the desired flexibility was already included in paragraph 28. Consumption expenditure of food could be registered either at time of acquisition or at time of use depending on the purpose for compiling the consumption aggregate.

16. It was decided that the assertions in paragraph 32 with regard to the preferred approaches for CPI compilation and welfare analysis are too definitive.

17. An insertion was made in paragraph 40 to rectify an omission from the draft resolution of the treatment of consumption expenditure for services received as income in kind. With regard to paragraph 41, it was decided to include a reference to possible difficulties in collecting expenditures relating to financial services.

18. The Committee also deliberated on whether it is nominal or real interest payments that should be recorded. The proposal finally accepted was to mention "high inflationary circumstances" as the basis for excluding such payments as consumption expenditures.

19. The issue of "regular donations" to non-profit institutions serving households (NPISHs) in paragraph 46 raised much discussion. It was agreed that the important characteristic required for such payments to be consumption expenditure is that the donor household receives goods and services in return, and not their regularity. Also the use of the word "donation" is inappropriate. A corresponding change to reflect the condition under which these payments are excluded was made in paragraph 52.

20. An insertion was made in paragraph 50 on consumption expenditures for housing services received as transfers from other households to complement that done for income.

21. The proposal in paragraph 51 that consumption expenditure on illegal goods and services should be measured was debated at length. Many participants voiced reluctance to expose their offices, especially the interviewers, to this risk. The paragraph was therefore amended to reflect this concern.

Measurement issues

22. The discussions on statistical units (paragraphs 54-57) centred on the possible use of a dwelling unit and a person unit as units of analysis. It was argued that in some circumstances the co-sharing of a dwelling by several households is such that the housing costs cannot be separately allocated to the different households. Given the importance of these costs in household consumption expenditures, any realistic equivalence scale would have to be derived at the dwelling level. Although some delegates expressed doubt about the use of a dwelling unit as a unit of analysis, it was agreed to include it as a possibility since it is done in some countries. A proposal that was more easily accepted was the inclusion of the individual as both a unit of analysis and a sampling unit. Hence the decision: (a) to move the definition of the dwelling unit from paragraph 56 to paragraph 54; and (b) to include the definition of a person unit in paragraph 54. The consumer unit is also defined as a type of household in paragraph 55(c). It was also decided to give the meaning of "shared command over income" in the definition of an income unit in paragraph 54(c).

23. The Committee decided that the coverage of the statistics should extend to include some types of collective households, e.g. university residences and retirement homes, provided the members are involved in decision-making with respect to their consumption. Also households within institutions that are separately identifiable should be covered.

24. Delegates discussed the criteria proposed for usual residence in paragraph 59. Some indicated their country practices, which are also based on the criterion of willingness to stay for a specified future period in the household. Some others wanted to extend the consistency requirement to other international standards such as the System of National Accounts and international migration recommendations. It was felt that having too many constraints for consistency would make it difficult to implement the definition in practice. So, much as it might have been desirable to make these links, it was decided not to change the paragraph, except for clarifying in the last sentence that usual residence is with respect to the household and not necessarily the country.

25. With respect to paragraph 60, there was some discussion on the use of head of household and of reference persons. It was agreed that explicit mention be made of the criterion "person with main income" in the list of possible criteria for head of household. It was noted that the establishment of pair-wise relationships could be difficult in practice. The use of a reference person to characterize a household for analytical purposes was questioned but the Committee decided to accept the formulation in the draft resolution.

Sources of household income and expenditure statistics

26. The Committee agreed to spell out the importance of obtaining the frequency of the components of receipts/expenditures during the accounting period, as done in the amended paragraph 70. An insertion was accepted into paragraph 71 to give details on the instruments used for data collection, especially on the balancing of length against quality.

27. In paragraph 75, it was decided that "distance to various types of services" should be amongst the optional items in the second sentence while dwelling characteristics should be added to the first list.

28. There was some initial confusion with respect to the proposal to collect data on expenditures while away from home, as specified in paragraph 76(d). It was clarified that this was in relation to domestic tourism expenditures incurred while on tourism-related trips. However in some countries the household income and expenditure surveys might not be the vehicle where those statistics were recorded. This has now been reflected in the paragraph.

29. With respect to survey design, the Secretary-General proposed the inclusion of some guidance for countries of small size on the choice of an appropriate month for data collection, since they might not be able to cover a full year. While sympathetic to the idea, the Committee was concerned that this could be misinterpreted by authorities in other countries, who would use it as an excuse to reduce resources of statistical offices for collecting such data. It was decided to refer the wording to the Drafting Committee. The new paragraph following paragraph 77 is the proposal from the Drafting Committee.

30. Paragraph 80: There was a difference of opinion among members of the Committee on the use of incentives to improve response. It was pointed out that, in fact, the draft resolution does not make any specific recommendations on methods for reducing non-response. A request for it to do so was not accepted by the Committee.

31. The Committee decided to allow some flexibility to countries in the proposal that expenditure statistics should be compiled at least every five years (paragraph 81). It was also decided that the first sentence should be deleted. Participants wanted an indication in paragraph 82 that, also, other sources could be used to estimate changes in important aggregates between large-scale surveys.

Classification, valuation, estimation, analysis and dissemination

32. On the issue of separate tabulation of monetary and non-monetary income aggregates in paragraph 86, it was considered important to include that so-called “salary packaging” by employees are monetary transactions. This relates to employees who prefer receiving their monetary wages and salaries in the form of goods and services from their employers.

33. The Committee noted an omission in the draft resolution with regard to the treatment of subsidized rent. A new paragraph has been inserted after paragraph 90 based on the proposals in the report regarding this issue.

34. There was extensive discussion on the issue of collecting data on second homes, i.e. weekend and vacation homes. While accepting that this information is needed for tourism statistics in those countries where this activity is significant, some participants believed that other sources exist for obtaining these statistics. Others argued that these alternative sources are frequently not available in their countries because of their limited household survey programme. It was decided to reformulate subparagraph 91(d) to take into consideration both points of view and to make it a separate sentence.

35. The Committee decided that only the accounting depreciation approach for valuing consumption costs of services from durable goods should be included in paragraph 92.

36. It was agreed that some mention should be made in paragraph 94 about the treatment of outliers, which could distort the analysis of these statistics, especially income statistics.

37. There was some concern about the unqualified use of zeros and negative values in the analysis of these statistics. An addition has been made at the end of paragraph 98 to reflect this.

38. After much discussion, it was agreed to qualify the first sentence in paragraph 105 to indicate that analysis of income/expenditure distributions for poverty, inequality and social exclusion might be done using multiple sources/surveys in some countries while others might add content to their household income and expenditure surveys to achieve a similar objective.

39. A decision was taken to delete the reference to “based on other sources” in paragraph 107 as well as its last clause on the grounds that these were unnecessarily limiting.

40. The proposal in paragraph 109 for accessibility to public-use files provoked much discussion on two grounds. It might be difficult to do so because of issues of confidentiality, contractual agreement with the sponsor of the survey and concern about the quality of low-level aggregates. These concerns have now been addressed in the reformulation. The second problem was with the last sentence requiring that these files should be provided free to some categories of clients. Some participants argued that this was unrealistic as there are government pricing policies and

researchers had other means of paying or accessing such data. As the Drafting Committee could not find an appropriate comprise statement it was decided to drop this last sentence.

41. With respect to the last sentence of paragraph 110, the Committee decided that it should apply only to outputs for public dissemination and that printed and electronic dissemination should be alternatives, as the former are already dying out in some countries.

Future work

42. The Committee strongly supported the production of a technical guide and some organizations have indicated a desire to collaborate in this. Also, it is important for developing statistical systems to continue receiving other forms of technical assistance in their production of these statistics. There was also support for the idea of creating a city group on expenditure statistics and some national statistical offices stated their intention of participating in it, one of which would look into the possibility of setting it up.

43. The draft resolution as amended by the Committee is presented in Appendix 1. It is submitted for consideration and adoption by the Conference.

III. Consumer price indices

75. The Conference had before it for discussion *Report III: Consumer price indice*s (ICLS/17/2003/3), prepared by the Office. The report addressed issues concerning the uses and computation of consumer price indices (CPI), and included a draft resolution concerning CPI, with four annexes, for consideration by the Conference.

76. The representative of the Secretary-General (Ms. V. Stoerska) introduced the subject. She noted the main uses of CPI and covered recent developments in the area of CPI theory and practices. In addition, she outlined the principal reasons for the proposed revision of the 1987 ICLS resolution, and described the procedures followed by the Office to prepare the proposals submitted to the Conference. She noted that the draft resolution had been developed in parallel with the preparation of the revised manual on CPI [5] under the auspices of the Inter-secretariat Working Group on Price Statistics (IWGPS). Its preparation had benefited from the work on the manual, and the two instruments were consistent with each other. The printed version of the manual would be available early in 2004, and she thanked, on behalf of the ILO, all those involved in the drafting of the manual and others who had made valuable contributions. Particular thanks were due to Peter Hill, the technical editor, Erwin Diewert, who contributed extensively to the theoretical chapters and David Fenwick of the Office of National Statistics of the United Kingdom who served as Chairperson of the Technical Expert Group. The assistance provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics in drafting the Conference report and preparing the draft resolution was also greatly appreciated. She finished her introduction by explaining the main features of the proposals for a revised resolution, highlighting the major differences from the 1987 resolution.

77. During the plenary discussion, several participants recognized the conceptual difference between the cost-of-living index (COLI) and fixed-basket index but pointed out that, in practice, methods for calculating these two types of indices do not lead to different results, except for owner-occupied housing. No single method could be universally applied; the

[5] *Consumer price index manual: Theory and practice* (International Labour Office, International Monetary Fund, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Statistical Office of the European Communities (EUROSTAT), United Nations Economic Commission for Europe and the World Bank, Geneva, 2004).

method that would be used would depend on the purpose of the index, the availability of the data needed and the acceptability of the method to the users. It was pointed out that a mixed approach for expenditure data is often used, depending on how items have been acquired.

78. Concerns were expressed, especially by the Employer representatives, that the section on CPI uses and the draft resolution in general may have been heavily influenced by the needs of monetary policy, and less by the needs of other important areas of use, in particular for wage indexation. The former use should not be allowed to dominate the formulation of the guidelines.

79. Some Government participants pointed out that, given the widespread use of CPI by central banks as a proxy for general inflation in the economy, there was a need for international guidelines for a general index of price inflation that covers all expenditures.

80. It was also suggested by a Government participant that the ILO should develop guidelines and methods that would provide close approximates of COLI, and provide assistance to countries in applying them.

81. Some participants expressed concern about the recommendation in the draft resolution to construct a family of indices designed to serve different purposes. The production of several CPIs could create confusion among the general public, with consequences which could outweigh the advantages of tailoring CPIs for different purposes.

82. It was suggested that the preamble to the resolution, or the section on consultation and integrity, should refer to the revised CPI manual. Some participants pointed out that the manual does not represent an international standard adopted by an appropriate forum, but rather guidance for the practical application of standards and on a variety of practices or approaches that could be adopted to do this. The Conference could not adopt the manual in the same way as it would consider and adopt a new resolution. Some concerns were also expressed regarding the consistency between the resolution and the manual on all important points.

83. To ensure full and careful consideration of the draft resolution on this topic, the Conference decided to refer it to a committee following the general discussion in plenary session. The draft resolution, as modified by the committee, would then be submitted to the plenary session of the Conference for final review and adoption. The Conference elected Dr. P. Cheung (Singapore) as Chairperson.

84. The report of the Committee on Consumer Price Indices (see annex) and a new draft of the resolution as amended by the Committee was submitted for consideration by the Conference.

85. The Chairperson of the Committee presented the report on the work of the Committee. He highlighted its main modalities of work as well as the major amendments to the original draft resolution that had resulted from the Committee’s constructive, smooth and useful deliberations. These had sought to arrive at a balanced text that would be useful to CPI compilers in countries at all levels of development and providing them with clear guidance, while leaving sufficient flexibility to take account of relevant national circumstances and CPI objectives. It had also been recognized that the resolution would have to stand the test of time for a fairly long period. When the discussions demonstrated that it might be difficult to find satisfactory formulations through deliberations in the full Committee, the redrafting of the paragraphs concerned had been entrusted to a small group of participants who reported back to the Committee through the Chairperson. In addition, the Drafting Committee had worked to ensure the equivalence of the three language versions of the amended draft resolution.

86. To achieve the stated objectives for the resolution, the Committee had spent considerable time discussing conceptual issues and their relationship to the many important uses that are made of CPI estimates. It had been stressed that the increasing importance that the CPI has been given as an indicator for monetary and financial policies has not reduced the importance of its traditional use for adjusting wages, benefits and contracts to compensate fully or partially for changes to the overall price level that households were experiencing.

87. Following the Chairperson's presentation, the Conference reviewed the amended draft resolution section by section. This resulted in the following decisions:

(a) to remove the words included in the parenthesis in paragraph 10;

(b) to replace "in principle" with "conceptually" in the first line of paragraph 13;

(c) to move footnote 1 to follow the first sentence in paragraph 15:

(d) to remove the word "more" in the fifth line of paragraph 23;

(e) to replace "all" by "available" in the third line in paragraph 36, and to replace "deployed" by "used" at the end of the same paragraph;

(f) to use "elementary aggregate indices" as the heading for the section that includes paragraphs 41-44;

(g) to add the sentence "Some of these methods are complex, costly and difficult to apply." before the last sentence in paragraph 67;

(h) in paragraph 73: to add "seriously" before "distorted" in the first line; to add "or mistakes" after "errors" in the second line; to add "such" before "corrections" at the start of the second sentence; to remove the "e.g." before "for wages and contracts", and to replace "corrections" by "revisions" in the last sentence;

(i) to modify the definition of "acquisition" in Annex 1 and make it consistent with this approach in the resolution concerning household income and expenditure statistics adopted by this Conference;

(j) to insert a footnote in Annex 1 explaining that the definition given there for "acquisition" is different from the definition given in the previous (1987) resolution.

(k) to add a definition of "quota sampling" in Annex 1.

88. The changes to paragraph 73 described in (h) resulted from a long discussion on how to best resolve the contradiction between the recommendation for retrospective correction of errors detected in the CPI in the first sentence, and the recommendation to limit retrospective corrections to the extent possible when the CPI is used for adjustment purposes in the last sentence. In the last sentence, it was decided to remove the presentation of wage and contract adjustments as examples, since this was one of the most important uses of CPI. The Chairperson pointed out that the criteria for deciding whether a distortion in a published index estimate is serious would be determined by the publicly available policy, and would depend on national circumstances.

89. The other changes were adopted with little discussion..

90. The following proposals were not adopted:

- to write “appropriate lower level indices” and not “elementary aggregate indices” at the end of paragraph 40. It was concluded that the formulation in the draft resolution as amended by the Committee covered situations where higher level indices are calculated in several steps to include separate indices for different geographic areas, and explained why there is a separate section on “Elementary aggregate indices”;

- to delete “for which adequate resources should be allocated” at the end of paragraph 68, as the issue of adequate resources was covered in paragraph 81. It was concluded that the emphasis on the need for adequate resources to minimize the impact of errors is important and should be retained, despite the general paragraph on the need for resources to support a high-quality CPI programme;

91. It was agreed that the Office would ensure that the references to the *Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose* (COICOP) in this resolution and the resolution concerning household income and expenditure statistics are consistent.

92. Following the adoption by the Conference of the amended draft resolution on consumer price indices, with the amendments noted above, the Chairperson of the Conference thanked the delegates, the Committee, its Chairperson and the representative of the Secretary-General for the valuable work that they had all done to make it possible for the Conference to achieve this important result. The text is given as resolution II in Appendix I of this report.

Annex

Report of the Committee on Consumer Price Indices

1. The Committee first met in the afternoon session on Thursday, 27 November 2003, and held five sessions. The list of participants is attached. Dr. P. Cheung (Singapore) was elected Chairperson, his nomination having been proposed by Ukraine and seconded by India and Mexico.

2. Having held a full general discussion in the plenary session of the proposals in Report III, the Committee began straightaway by the examination of the draft resolution. It decided that it would consider matters of substance in the Committee, and appoint a Drafting Committee to ensure that the text of the amended resolution reflected its conclusions in English, French and Spanish. The members of the Drafting Committee are listed at the end of the list of participants. In cases where the Committee had difficulty in agreeing on the wording and content of a particular paragraph, it was decided to leave the reformulation of the text to a small group of experts, who subsequently submitted the new text to the Committee. The paragraph numbers quoted in this report are those contained in the draft resolution in Report III. The paragraphs appearing in the draft resolution attached to this report have been renumbered by the Drafting Committee. This report provides an explanation of the significant changes agreed by the Committee.

3. In his opening remarks, the Chairperson noted that the draft resolution was the result of a long process of consultation and development, and most of the points had already been discussed at length. The resolution was intended to provide guidance for countries throughout the world, at all levels of development, for at least the next 15 years, as had the one adopted by the 14th ICLS. Consequently, it should be flexible and allow enough leeway for future changes to be taken into account while providing minimum standards and guidance on best practice. On his proposal, the Committee decided to examine the draft resolution section by section, beginning with the preamble.

4. The Committee decided that the phrase “and particularly those with less advanced statistical infrastructure”, at the end of the second preambular paragraph, was inappropriate as the ILO guidelines are intended to be useful for all countries, both developed and developing, without restriction.

5. The Committee next considered the section “Nature and meaning of the CPI”. It was suggested that “general” should be deleted, or replaced by “overall” in paragraph 1. This was not

accepted, on the grounds that the CPI is a summary measure of all relevant individual price changes. The suggestion to delete “acquire, use or pay for” was also not accepted, as these are conceptual issues directly linked to the uses of the index.

6. Following considerable discussion about the expression of objectives in paragraphs 2 and 3, the Committee agreed that, as these paragraphs deal principally with the aims of consumer price indices in relation to the different types of indices, they should be amended accordingly. It decided to delete the reference to the Laspeyres-type formula in paragraph 2 and the last sentence of paragraph 3, as these aspects are dealt with in the section “Calculation of the index”. It was pointed out that both the fixed-basket price index and the COLI are estimates that approximate their respective objectives. It was also pointed out that the COLI could be scientifically approximated and that the Laspeyres index could also be used as a way of approximating COLI.

7. Concern was expressed that the concept of standard of living could be subject to misinterpretation because households’ welfare also depends on a variety of physical and social factors that have no connection with prices, such as environmental factors and quality of life. It was suggested that, in paragraph 3, “standard of living” should be replaced by “standard of consumption”, but this was not accepted. Several participants pointed out that the latter term is not widely used or necessarily understood, while the former is generally well understood in the way intended in this context. A proposal was made to explicitly define the concept “standard of living” in the annex on terminology. In further discussions, it was concluded that the first sentence of paragraph 3 already reflects this point by saying that the aim of the index is to measure “the effect of price changes on the cost of achieving a constant standard of living” and therefore there is no need to include this term in Annex 1.

8. Paragraph 4 was amended to include reference to the use of CPI as a macroeconomic indicator at the end of the first sentence. Paragraph 5 was amended to include other uses of the index: for formulating and assessing fiscal and monetary policies and trade and exchange rate policies. In paragraph 6, the Committee decided that clearer language was required to indicate that one index is unlikely to suit all applications. In addition to the recommendation that each index should be properly named, it agreed that they should also be defined, so this was inserted in the third sentence.

9. In the section “Scope of the index”, in paragraph 9, it was decided to replace “domestically sourced inflation” by “inflation in the domestic economy”. It was pointed out that paragraph 12, as it stood, missed an important point: if there are different identifiable groups, this should be reflected in the index. As a result, the phrase “and care should be taken to ensure that they are represented in the index” was inserted at the end of the first sentence.

10. The issue of recommending inclusion of illegal or undesirable goods within the scope of the index was raised in connection with paragraph 13. Several participants recalled the decisions taken by the Committee on Household Income and Expenditure Statistics with respect to the treatment of such goods, and stated that the same practice should be adopted for the CPI. It was also pointed out that illegal goods and services are recognized in the System of National Accounts (SNA) with respect to household income and expenditure. Other participants disagreed, stating that illegal goods and services should be excluded from the scope of the CPI for a number of reasons: such goods tend to be overpriced and therefore distort the market; it is often difficult or dangerous to obtain prices for them and there are large measurement errors; including them in the CPI scope could give the wrong impression that governments accept that they are available on the market; and it would not be appropriate for a CPI used for indexing compensation or benefits to include items that are illegal or undesirable. There was general agreement in the Committee that all goods and services, even if not legally available or socially desirable such as alcohol or tobacco, should be included, if they are of significance to the reference population. It was also agreed that, where needed, special aggregates excluding certain items could be constructed for the purposes of a particular application or analysis. The Committee agreed that paragraph 13 should be amended to reflect these points.

11. Paragraph 15 was modified to provide a clearer expression of the link between the use of the three approaches and the main purpose of the index, and paragraph 16 was modified to make clear that the differences between them are most pronounced for products where the timing of acquisition, use and payment may not coincide. Several participants pointed out the difficulties of

dealing with owner-occupied housing, particularly in the absence of a real housing market. They proposed the compilation of indices excluding housing, so that more meaningful comparisons of inflation levels between countries could be made. It was considered however that these concerns are taken care of by the provisions in paragraphs 13 and 83. In view of the practices in a number of countries, paragraph 14 was modified to include the observation that, in some countries the expenditures on owner-occupied housing are excluded from the CPI because the purchase of houses is regarded as a capital investment.

12. During the discussions on paragraph 32 it was pointed out that there is some duplication between this paragraph and paragraph 18 and therefore the relevant part of paragraph 18 dealing with valuation and pricing techniques was moved to paragraph 32.

13. As the choice of reference period and geographic coverage are already covered in the section on the scope of the index, it was decided to delete these from paragraph 19 and replace them by "scope". Paragraph 20 was modified to stress the need for consistency between the classifications used for the compilation of the CPI and for HIES respectively, as well as the need for the classification to be reconcilable with COICOP. Paragraph 22 was simplified to indicate more clearly that, when weights are to remain fixed for several years, they should be representative of contemporary household behaviour. The availability and quality of appropriate data from different sources were considered to be important, and this was inserted in paragraph 23.

14. Paragraph 26 was modified to stress both that weights should be updated at least every five years, and that for certain items it might be necessary to have more frequent updates. An observation on the need for frequent updates in periods of rapid inflation was also added to this paragraph. The point made that the revision is important to ensure that the basket and weights remain representative was appropriately reflected in the second sentence of this paragraph.

15. In paragraph 28, "elementary aggregates" replaced "expenditure classes" as more appropriate. It was decided to delete the references to the acquisition, use and payment in paragraph 29 but to stress the importance of the main purpose of the index and practicalities of compilation.

16. The proposal that the decision on the approach used should be based on whether the focus of the index is on month-to-month or annual changes was deleted from paragraph 30 as the choice should rather be based on national circumstances.

17. The formulations in paragraph 31 on the treatment of second-hand goods were simplified, and those in paragraph 32 on the valuation of consumption from own production that is within the scope of the index were expanded to clarify the basis for such valuation. Paragraph 33 was deleted as the issues presented were covered elsewhere.

18. Paragraph 34 was modified to include a reference to the need to sample in time, and in paragraph 35, emphasis on the need to observe movements of prices over time was included. Following some discussion regarding the advantages and disadvantages of using probability sampling techniques, paragraph 36 was amended to better reflect these.

19. Paragraph 37 was expanded to include references to non-probability sampling techniques, other than cut-off sampling, as well as the possibility of using a mixture of sampling techniques. Paragraph 38 was expanded to provide a more complete presentation of various sampling frames that may be used for selecting outlets and products.

20. It was decided to insert paragraph 98 of Report III as a new paragraph before paragraph 40 as it provided a clear summary of the compilation of the index.

21. Paragraph 40 was modified to reflect that in some countries it is reasonable to regard the index calculation as consisting of more than two steps, in particular where the size or the federal nature of the country means that the compilation of regional indices is required.

22. established" in the second line. A suggestion to delete the words "and are expected to have similar price movements" was not taken into account because the elementary aggregate should be defined in such a way to minimize the variation of price movements within the aggregate. In

paragraph 42 a modification was introduced to reflect that one should also take into account available weight-relevant information for the compilation of elementary indices. The reformulations of paragraph 43 were made to clarify the advantages, disadvantages and usages of each of the three types of mean.

23. The observations made in the second part of paragraph 45 on the various alternative index formulae were deleted as unnecessary, as was the last sentence, paragraph 46. It was also observed that in some cases the increased frequency in weights updating may not result in lower differences between the Laspeyres-type and superlative indices.

24. Paragraph 47 was reformulated to present more clearly the need for updating of weights in cases where the index between the current and base period is calculated by chaining the index measuring the change between two consecutive periods with that measuring the change between the base and previous period.

25. The Committee's attention was drawn to the fact that much of this section was similar to the corresponding section in the 1987 resolution. Most proposals made by delegates aimed at improving the draft text or developing the content.

26. Paragraph 48 was amended to take account of the importance for the reliability of the CPI of the number of prices observed, as well as the product specifications. The last part of paragraph 49 was reorganized and it was added that the timing of price measurements should be representative of the period to which the prices refer. Paragraph 50 was modified to stress the importance of observing the prices for perishable goods at the same time of the day and week, to minimize any effects of related quality differences.

27. The first sentence in paragraph 51 was reformulated to stress that price collection should be representative of all geographical areas, even where there is no need to have sub-indices for all regions. The recommendation to collect prices in all geographical areas was deleted as not relevant and misleading. In paragraph 52 it was stressed that the sample design for choosing outlets for a particular type of item should ensure that all types of outlets for an item will be covered.

28. The need to collect information on price-determining characteristics of items, for the purpose of any replacement or quality adjustment that might be needed, was added to paragraph 53. A reference to the date of the price observation was deleted from paragraph 55 as unnecessary. It was decided that a more logical order was for paragraph 57 to follow paragraph 58. The recommendation on non-availability in the second sentence in paragraph 60 was limited to non-seasonal items.

29. In paragraph 61 it was decided to reorganize and shorten the text slightly to obtain greater clarity, and to delete the last sentence, as it concerned a management issue, not a methodological matter. The first sentence was modified to accommodate situations where a product is replaced when it disappears permanently from a region or an area. The recommendation to replace a product within three months of becoming unavailable was maintained, although a view was expressed that this was too difficult in practice.

30. To achieve greater clarity in paragraph 64, "as far as possible" in the first sentence was replaced by "as long as it is representative". For the same reason it was decided to reformulate the last sentence to include a reference to "price-relevant and utility-relevant" characteristics. This reference was also included in paragraph 65, which was modified to reflect better that the most important information on such characteristics is collected together with the prices. In paragraph 66 it was decided to use "as nearly as possible" instead of "only" in the second line. The last sentence was reformulated to underline that the automatic assumption that all price changes reflect changes in quality or that products with different qualities are essentially equivalent should be avoided.

31. The second part of paragraph 67 was simplified to state that the methods used for estimating quality-adjusted prices should be based on objective criteria as far as possible.

32. Several participants noted that the indices, as all other statistics, are subject to errors. This fact was inserted in paragraph 68, as was the need for adequate resources to reduce these errors. In paragraph 69 it was decided to remove the references to particular forms of errors being more

important for particular types of CPI, as this might be misleading. Paragraph 70 was reformulated to make it clearer.

33. It was decided that, to achieve a more logical presentation of important issues, the sequence of paragraphs should be modified and to reassign certain paragraphs to this and the following section. Paragraphs 79 and 80 were moved to the section on consultation and integrity, and paragraphs 83 and 84 were moved forward to the section on dissemination.

34. The need for the frequency of the release of sub-indices to be determined in accordance with users' needs was inserted in paragraph 72, and the reference to a semi-annual periodicity for the general CPI was deleted. As press releases are not used in certain countries, paragraph 73 was amended to refer instead to publications.

35. Paragraph 74 was modified to clarify the proposal concerning sub-indices. The compilation and release of sub-indices should depend on the demand for them. It was further decided to replace "socio-economic groups" with "population groups". The choice of index reference period was considered to be more important than the frequency of changing the base period, so the order of the two sentences in paragraph 76 was reversed.

36. A lively discussion took place on the need to make retrospective corrections for errors made in the compilation of the index, and how to make such corrections. Paragraph 78 was modified to indicate that such modifications should be avoided to the extent possible in cases where the CPI is widely used for adjustment purposes. It was recommended that modifications should be made as soon as possible and be published widely when the errors were detected. Such modifications should be made in accordance with a publicly available policy for these corrections.

37. Paragraph 79 was reformulated to make clear that each release of CPI results should include a reference to a comprehensive description of the objective of the main objective of the index as well as the methods and procedures used in its compilation. The reference to "subjective assessment" of the accuracy of the index was removed as inappropriate.

38. In paragraph 80 it was decided to use the word "informed" instead of "warned", as the latter might give a misleading impression of the nature of the changes that were being made.

39. It was decided to include at the end of the resolution reference to the revised technical manual on consumer price indices, as this contained more detailed guidance on operational aspects of CPI construction. It was also recommended in the resolution that this manual should be updated periodically as current best practices develop.

40. The first three annexes were modified slightly to take account of the decisions taken by the Committee. In addition, it was decided that the term "product" was more appropriate than "item", and that this should be used throughout the resolution.

41. The Committee concluded its consideration of Report III and the draft resolution by congratulating the Office, and the representative of the Secretary-General in particular, for the extensive developmental work carried out to revise the 1987 resolution. The Chairperson closed the final session, thanking the secretariat and the participants for their support, contributions and flexibility. The amended draft resolution represented a sound document to submit to the Conference in its plenary session.

42. The draft resolution, as amended in the three languages by the Drafting Committee to take into accounts the agreements reached, is submitted for consideration and adoption by the Conference.

Appendix I

Text of resolutions adopted by the Conference

Resolution I:	Resolution concerning household income and expenditure statistics
Resolution II:	Resolution concerning consumer price indices
Resolution III:	Resolution concerning further work on the International Standard Classification of Occupations

Resolution I

Resolution concerning household income and expenditure statistics

The Seventeenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians,

Recognizing the need to revise and supplement the recommendations concerning household income and expenditure surveys contained in the resolution of the Twelfth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (1973),

Wishing to promote the development and use of household income and household expenditure statistics along sound lines and also to promote consistency in their measurement as well as improvement in their quality and international comparability,

Recalling the resolutions concerning: (a) an integrated system of wages statistics; and (b) the measurement of employment-related income, adopted respectively by the Twelfth and Sixteenth International Conferences of Labour Statisticians (1973 and 1998),

Recognizing also that, in the interests of promoting the coordination and integration of international statistical standards, new recommendations concerning household income and expenditure statistics should be consistent, so far as possible, with relevant existing standards of statistics, including those within the System of National Accounts;

Adopts this third day of December 2003 the following resolution:

Objectives and uses

1. Household income and expenditure statistics may serve as a basis for the description and analysis of a wide range of economic, social and other issues among which its most important uses are:

(a) to assess the level, structure and trends of the economic well-being of households and individuals in terms of the distribution of income/consumption expenditure across households and individuals for various population subgroups of interest;

(b) to determine baskets of goods and services as well as to obtain weights and other useful information for the compilation of consumer price indices, cost of living indices, indices of comparative costliness, etc.;

(c) to compile the sequence of accounts for the household sector, to check the quality of estimates produced from other sources, and to reconcile national account estimates with micro-level data;

(d) to formulate, implement, monitor and evaluate social and economic policies;

(e) to carry out studies of the relationship between income and expenditure statistics and various socio-economic characteristics of individuals and households;

(f) to study consumer behaviour among socio-economic groups;

(g) to develop and monitor policies relating for example to tourism, nutrition, food security, housing, migration, education, labour market and health;

(h) to contribute to the study of poverty and social exclusion.

2. These various uses may not all be served equally well from a single source and, in some instances, it will be necessary to combine statistics and information from different sources, for example administrative records, through statistical matching or modelling.

3. Household income and expenditure statistics should be produced in such a way as to enhance their international comparability and consistency with other statistics on income and expenditure and related economic and social statistics. Therefore, to the extent possible, the collection of income and expenditure data should be such that income and expenditure aggregates consistent with all international guidelines may be derived.

Income

Concept and definition

4. **Household income** consists of all receipts whether monetary or in kind (goods and services) that are received by the household or by individual members of the household at annual or more frequent intervals, but excludes windfall gains and other such irregular and typically one-time receipts. Household income receipts are available for current consumption and do not reduce the net worth of the household through a reduction of its cash, the disposal of its other financial or non-financial assets or an increase in its liabilities.

5. Household income may be defined to cover: (i) income from employment (both paid and self-employment); (ii) property income; (iii) income from the production of household services for own consumption; and (iv) current transfers received.

Income from employment

6. Income from employment comprises receipts for participation in economic activities in a strictly employment-related capacity, as defined in the resolution adopted by the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (1982) concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment. It consists of: (a) employee income; and (b) income from self-employment.

7. **Employee income** comprises direct wages and salaries for time worked and work done, cash bonuses and gratuities, commissions and tips, directors' fees, profit-sharing bonuses and other forms of profit-related pay, remuneration for time not worked as well as free or subsidized goods and services from an employer. It may include severance and termination pay as well as employers' social insurance contributions. These items should be reported separately, when included. The definition of these terms is consistent with their use in the resolution concerning statistics of employment-related income adopted by the Sixteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (1998).

8. Employee income may be received in cash (monetary) or in kind as goods or services. Those receipts in kind that are outputs of the employer's production process should be included only in so far as they are in line with the recommendations contained in the Protection of Wages Convention, 1949 (No. 95), of the International Labour Organization. Otherwise, they are imposed payments in kind that should be excluded from employee income or valued at zero.

9. **Income from self-employment** is income received by individuals, over a given reference period, as a result of their involvement in self-employment jobs as defined in the resolution concerning the International Classification of Status in Employment adopted by the Fifteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (1993). In particular, income from self-employment concerns primarily owners of unincorporated enterprises who work in these enterprises. It excludes profits from capital investment of partners who do not work in these enterprises ("sleeping partners"), dividends and directors' fees paid to owners of incorporated enterprises. Income from self-employment includes the estimated value of goods and services produced for barter as well as goods produced for own consumption, less expenses.

10. The basis for the measurement of income from self-employment is the concept of mixed income defined by the System of National Accounts. Mixed income consists of the value of gross output less operating costs and after adjustment for depreciation of assets used in production, where

these terms are as defined in the resolution concerning the measurement of employment-related income adopted by the Sixteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (1998).

Property income

11. Property income is defined as receipts that arise from the ownership of assets (return for use of assets) that are provided to others for their use. These are returns, usually monetary, from financial assets (interests, dividends), from non-financial assets (rents) and from royalties (return for services of patented or copyright material).

12. Interest receipts are payments received from accounts with banks, building societies, credit unions and other financial institutions, certificates of deposit, government bonds/loans, securities, debentures and loans to non-household members.

13. Dividends are receipts from investment in an enterprise in which the investor does not work. Pensions and annuities in the form of dividends from voluntary private insurance schemes are also included.

14. Rents are payments received for the use of both unproduced assets (i.e. natural resources), such as land, and for produced assets, such as houses. Rents should be recorded net of expenses.

15. Royalties are receipts from writings, right to make use of inventions, etc. (i.e. patented or copyright materials).

Income from household production of services for own consumption

16. Income from household production of services for own consumption consists of the net estimated value of housing services provided by owner-occupied dwellings, of unpaid domestic services and of services from household consumer durables. These are services that fall under the general production boundary of the system of national accounts. Because of measurement issues, owner-occupied dwellings may be the only part of this component that could be included for now. The operational definition of this component should be clearly described when estimates for it are presented or included in estimates of the total income of households. The net estimated values of housing services from owner-occupied dwellings should be presented separately from the estimates for other services. Estimates of the values of these services should be made in a consistent manner in producing household income and household expenditure statistics when these are to be analysed jointly.

Transfer incomes

17. Transfers are receipts for which the recipient does not give anything to the donor in direct return for the receipts. Transfers can consist of cash (in the monetary sense), of goods or of services. Current transfers are those that usually recur regularly (relative to the reference period used for income), tend to be small and are also mostly available for use during the reference period.

18. Regarded as income are all current transfers received in cash and as goods as follows:

(a) social security pensions, insurance benefits and allowances generated from government-sponsored social insurance schemes (compulsory/legal schemes) such as pensions (including military and overseas pensions), unemployment benefits, sickness benefits;

(b) pensions and other insurance benefits from employer-sponsored social insurance schemes not covered by social security legislation (both funded and unfunded) such as education allowance, medical expenses;

(c) social assistance benefits from governments (universal or means-tested) which provide the same benefits as social security schemes but which are not provided for under such schemes;

(d) current transfers from non-profit institutions (e.g. charities, trade unions, religious bodies) in the form of regular gifts and financial support such as scholarships, union strike pay, union's sickness benefits, relief payments;

(e) current transfers from other households in the form of family support payments (such as alimony, child and parental support), regular receipts from inheritances and trust funds, regular gifts, financial support or transfer in kind of goods.

19. Transfer of housing services between households should be considered as income for the recipient household. Although income includes current transfers received in the form of services from governments and non-profit institutions (social transfers in kind) and in the form of other services from households, the operational definition of income should exclude such transfers until methods exist for valuing them that are widely acceptable.

Exclusions

20. Holding gains/losses, resulting from changes in the value of financial and non-financial assets and liabilities, should be excluded from the operational definition of income.

21. All irregular, non-recurring receipts are excluded from the definition of income. They include lottery prizes, gambling winnings, non-life insurance claims, inheritances, lump-sum retirement benefits, life insurance claims (except annuities), windfall gains, legal/injury compensation (except those in lieu of foregone earnings) and loan repayments.

22. Other receipts that result from a reduction in net worth are excluded from income. These include sale of assets, withdrawals from savings and loans obtained.

23. For analytical and other purposes, data may be collected wherever possible on receipts that are excluded from the concept of income as well as from the operational definition of income.

Aggregation

24. The sum of income from employment and income from household production of services for own consumption is referred to as **income from production**. When this is added to property income and transfer income, the sum is **total income. Disposable income** is total income less direct taxes (net of refunds), compulsory fees and fines, social security contributions as well as compulsory and quasi-compulsory inter-household transfers paid. Whenever it is possible to also compute social transfers in kind, the sum of these receipts and disposable income constitutes **adjusted disposable income**. Total income, if aggregated across households, leads to double counting.

Expenditure

Concepts and basic definitions

25**. Consumer goods and services** are those used by a household to directly satisfy the personal needs and wants of its members. **Household consumption expenditure** is the value of consumer goods and services acquired, used or paid for by a household through direct monetary purchases, own-account production, barter or as income in-kind for the satisfaction of the needs and wants of its members.

26. The **actual final consumption** of a household is the sum of its household consumption expenditure and the value of consumer goods and services acquired or used by the household through transfers from government, non-profit institutions or other households. This is the most appropriate concept for welfare analysis as it takes into account all consumer goods and services available to a household for the satisfaction of the needs and wants of its members.

27. **Household expenditure** is defined as the sum of household consumption expenditure and the **non-consumption expenditures** of the household. The latter are those expenditures incurred by a household as transfers made to government, non-profit institutions and other households, without

acquiring any goods or services in return for the satisfaction of the needs of its members. Household expenditure represents the total outlay that a household has to make to satisfy its needs and meet its "legal" commitments.

Measurement

28. For purposes of registering their expenditures, services may be regarded as consumed at the time of acquisition or at the time of payment. For goods, the choice is between the time of acquisition and the time of use. The decision depends on the main purpose for compiling the consumption expenditure aggregate. In particular, if it is intended for the estimation of weights for consumer price indices, the choices made should be the same in producing the aggregate and compiling the consumer price indices.

29. Consumption expenditure may be measured in terms of:

(a) the purchase values of the goods and services (referred to as the acquisition approach);

(b) the cash outflows resulting from ownership of the goods or benefiting from the services (referred to as the payment approach); or

(c) the estimated values of the service flow from the goods and the values of the actual services (referred to as the consumption costs approach).

The first two approaches are jointly referred to as the **expenditure basis** for measuring consumption expenditure while the last is the **consumption costs basis**.

30. Consumer goods that are completely consumed on acquisition or gradually consumed over a period of time after acquisition (including bulk purchases) are referred to as **non-durable goods**. Consumer goods that are used many times over a long period of time without reducing their capacity to satisfy needs and wants are referred to as **durable goods**. In some instances, the notion of semi-durable goods (relatively shorter expected lifetime) may also be useful.

31. For services acquired from the market and non-durable goods, consumption expenditure measured on an expenditure basis is a good approximation for measurement on a consumption costs basis. Consumption expenditure on services and non-durable goods may therefore be measured using the acquisition approach, where this approach is extended to include the estimated values of own production of non-durable goods and those received as income in kind or through barter.

32. Consumption expenditure on durable goods when estimated using the acquisition approach, is in general different from the value obtained using the consumption costs approach. For use in the compilation of weights for a consumer price index to be used to monitor inflation, the acquisition approach is often used, especially when restricted only to monetary purchases. When the purpose is for use in welfare analysis or to compile weights for a cost-of-living index, the consumption approach may be preferable.

33. These different approaches may be combined for computing consumption expenditure on goods by using one or other for different expenditure items. In particular, to be consistent with the conventions of the System of National Accounts, consumption expenditure on owner-occupied dwellings may be valued on the consumption costs basis while the acquisitions approach is used for durable goods, non-durable goods and services.

34. The consumption costs approach may also be used for durable goods for the purpose of welfare analysis and the production of tourism statistics. This use may be limited to major durable goods, since the consumption costs of other durable goods do not differ greatly from their acquisition costs. For this purpose, major durable goods may be defined in terms of a long expected lifetime, such as beyond five years, combined with a relatively high value (e.g. a car or bicycle but not socks or a hammer).

35. Whichever of the above approaches is adopted for estimating consumption expenditure for durable goods and owner-occupied dwellings, it should be consistent with that used for

estimating their contribution to household income whenever these statistics are to be analysed jointly.

Operational definitions

36. Expenditure on non-durable goods is measured as the purchase value of these goods or the estimated value of those received as income in kind, through barter, from own production, from stocks of household enterprises and from transfers from outside the household. Typical examples of non-durable goods include food items, personal care items (toiletries, make-up and medical products, etc.), fuel (firewood, heating oil, coal), education and entertainment (newspapers, books, etc.), household items (cleaning products, etc.).

37. Expenditure on durable goods is assessed in the same way as for non-durable goods under the acquisitions approach. Typical examples of durable goods are household kitchen appliances (cookers, refrigerators, dishwashers, microwave ovens, etc.), household entertainment appliances (hi-fi equipment, televisions, cameras, etc.), other household appliances (washing machines, vacuum cleaners, dryers, etc.), household transportation equipment (cars, bicycles, etc.), other household items (furniture, soft furnishings, etc.), clothing, utensils, etc.

38. The purchase value of second-hand goods should be recorded in the same way as for new goods. The value of any direct sales of used goods or their indirect sales ("trade-ins") should be recorded separately. Consumption expenditure on second-hand goods may then be computed net or gross of these sales to satisfy the requirements of both compilation of consumer price indices (or national accounts) and analysis of households' welfare and behaviour.

39. In principle, expenditure on non-monetary gifts should be recorded as part of actual final consumption for the recipient household. However, in practice, for consistency with the above recommendation to include them as income for the recipient household, they could be treated as part of household consumption expenditure for this household. They should be recorded as non-consumption expenditure of the donor household in either case.

40. Consumption expenditure on services is measured as the amount paid for the services acquired from the market or the estimated value of those received as income in kind. However, in some circumstances, for example in the case of utilities, it may be necessary for practical reasons to use payments made for the services irrespective of when they were acquired. Any reimbursement for overpayment should then be treated as negative consumption expenditure.

41. Financial services such as accounting fees, bank service charges and credit card service fees should be included in household consumption expenditure as payment for services. Some of these may however be difficult to measure at the household level.

42. Interest payment consists of two components: a service charge and a return to capital. Interest payments on consumer credit should in principle be included as household consumption expenditure consistent with the assumption that the greater part of interest is a charge for the services in administering the credit scheme. However, particularly in high inflationary circumstances, these interest payments may be considered as non-consumption expenditures on the grounds that the greater part of interest is compensation to the original owner of the borrowed money for the high inflation.

43. Non-life insurance premiums are those taken out against property risks such as fire, theft and water damage; health risks such as accident and sickness; risks in transportation such as personal transport, travel and luggage; and others such as civil liability. Premiums should be recorded gross as household consumption expenditure. Reimbursements and claims arising out of any such insurance may be recorded separately so that aggregate consumption expenditure could be computed gross or net of them to satisfy the needs of both compilation of consumer price indices and the analysis of households' welfare and behaviour.

44. Expenditures on gambling should be recorded as consumption expenditure. Any winnings may be separately recorded so that household consumption expenditure could be computed gross or net of winnings to satisfy various analytical demands. For compilation of consumer price indices,

use in national accounts and for joint analysis of consumption expenditure and household income, computing this expenditure net may be preferable.

45. Housing decoration, repairs and maintenance normally carried out by tenants should be recorded as consumption expenditures by tenants as well as by owner-occupiers. Other major repairs and home improvements should be regarded as capital expenditures. Since there are differences between countries in the legal obligations of tenants in this respect, expenditures on these items should be recorded separately to allow for flexibility in their treatment in cross-country analysis.

46. Payments (e.g. subscriptions, membership fees) to non-profit institutions such as religious bodies, trade unions and political parties should be recorded as consumption expenditure when they give rise to the provisions of goods and services acquired by the donor household.

47. Licences and fees paid to governments that generate the delivery of specific individual services to households should be treated as consumption expenditures. Examples include testing, inspecting and licensing the use of certain equipment (TVs, radios, firearms, etc.); providing passports, court services, access to museums, garbage collection, driving or piloting licences; and so on. In those instances where payments for licences to own or use a vehicle, boat or aircraft go towards providing for or enhancing their use (e.g. maintaining roads), they should also be included as consumption expenditure.

48. Consumption expenditure on services from owner-occupied dwellings should be assessed as the gross estimated value of the flow of services from these dwellings. This should extend to all dwellings owned including vacation and weekend homes.

49. When the consumption costs approach is used for stocks of any category of durable goods, their consumption expenditure is assessed as the estimated value of their service flow. In these instances the purchase value or estimated value of acquiring this category of goods should not be included in any previous or current estimate of household consumption expenditure. This treatment of the stocks of durable goods facilitates apportioning expenditure when goods have multiple uses.

50. Complementary to the inclusion as income of housing services received as transfers from other households, these services should also be considered as consumption expenditure of the recipient household. Services from unpaid household work, social transfers in-kind and transfers of in-kind services from other households should be excluded from household consumption expenditure and from actual final consumption until such time when the valuation of these services is based on agreed principles.

51. In principle, expenditures on goods and services that may be illegal or considered undesirable or luxury items, are consumption expenditures. However they may be measured only as far as it is feasible in practice, given the peculiar circumstances relating to the collection of the data.

Household expenditure

52. The non-consumption expenditures of households include current transfers of cash, goods and services to other households such as gifts donated, remittances, alimony, child support, etc. Other items included are contributions to non-profit institutions that do not give rise to the provision of goods and services to the donor household; compulsory transfers to governments such as income and other direct taxes (e.g. wealth taxes), compulsory fees and fines; and pension and social security contributions.

53. Expenditures on goods and services for use in the operation of unincorporated enterprises as well as the occupational expenses of employees are excluded from the measurement of household expenditure. In addition, capital expenditures such as savings, reduction of liabilities, amounts loaned, purchase of financial assets, life insurance premiums are excluded. Expenditures on valuables (works of art, jewellery, gemstones, etc.) are also excluded from household expenditure. The identification of goods to be treated as valuables depends on national circumstances. However, they are generally defined as goods of relatively high value, the main purpose of which is to serve as a form of savings and not for use in production or for consumption.

Measurement issues

Statistical units

54. The statistical units for the collection and analysis of statistics on income and on expenditures are defined as follows:

(a) *Household*: The concept of household should be consistent with the one adopted in the latest version of the *Principles and recommendations for population and housing censuses of the United Nations*.

A household may be either:

- a one-person household, i.e. a person who makes provision for his or her own food or other essentials for living without combining with any other person, or

- a multi-person household, that is to say, a group of two or more persons living together who make some common provision for food or other essentials for living. The persons in the group may pool their incomes and may, to a greater or lesser extent, have a common budget; they may be related or unrelated persons or a combination of both.

(b) *Family*: A family within a household is defined as those members of the household who are related, to a specified degree, through blood, adoption, marriage or other legal/social arrangements (including cohabiting partners of the same or different sex).

(c) *Income unit*: An income unit consists of a subset of a multi-person household with shared command over income (either by pooling their income or having access to the pooled income) or a one-person household.

(d) *Dwelling unit*: All persons living together in a housing unit or a set of collective living quarters.

(e) *Person unit*: Individual members of households.

55. Members of a multi-person household may be identified based on any of the following criteria:

(a) sharing in housing facilities (either contributing to housing costs or benefiting from costs paid by others);

(b) sharing of at least one meal each week; or

(c) financially dependent for at least two out of these three types of items: food, housing or other expenditures. In this case the household is referred to as a “consumer unit”.

56. The household is the basic sampling unit and unit of enumeration. The dwelling unit or the individual may also be used as the sampling unit, as may the postal or physical address.

57. From the standpoint of statistics on consumption expenditures, the household is the appropriate unit of analysis while, for income statistics, the income unit may be used as a unit for further analysis. For policy analysis focused on the family, a unit for further analysis may be the family. Where appropriate, the dwelling unit and the individual may also be used as units of analysis.

58. Household income and household expenditure statistics should cover all persons living in private households in a country, including students sharing accommodation, and lodgers. Collective households, such as retirement homes, university/school accommodation, etc. may be included provided the members are involved in decision making about their consumption, including the consumption of housing services. Other collective households like boarding houses, hotels, etc. and institutions such as military installations, hospitals, penal institutions, university/school

accommodation where students are not involved in decision-making about their consumption, and so on, should be excluded from the coverage of these statistics. However, identifiable households within the institutions may be included.

Household characterization

59. The membership of a household consists of all persons usually resident in the household, where usual residence should be defined in a manner consistent with the provisions in the latest version of the *Principles and recommendations for population and housing censuses of the United Nations*. A minimum duration of six months may be used as one of the criteria for determining usual residence within the household.

60. In order to identify relationships between household members at the data collection stage, an easy-to-use criterion may be applied to select a unique person against whom these relationships could be established. Examples include the person recognized as head, the person taking important decisions, the oldest adult present, the person with the main income, etc. Alternatively, all pair-wise relationships between members of the household may be identified at the data collection stage, thereby eliminating the need to have a unique person. However this may be difficult to implement in practice.

61. For some analytical purposes, it may be necessary to describe a household in terms of the characteristics of one of its members, i.e. a reference person. The choice of a reference person would depend on the purpose of the analysis. Criteria linked to employment status, economic activity, demographic factors, and so on may be used.

Reference period

62. Household income and household expenditure statistics should relate to a full-year **accounting period** to take into account seasonal variations in incomes and expenditures. For the purpose of compiling consumer price indices, the accounting period should as much as possible be a normal year with respect to economic and social factors. When data for these statistics are collected or compiled based on administrative sources and/or when the survey period is short and occurs not long after the accounting period, a fixed accounting period should be used. (The **survey period** is the period over which the data as a whole are collected or compiled.) Otherwise, the accounting period should be a 12-month moving reference period relative to the survey period. A moving reference period reduces the risk of recall errors, especially when the survey period is also long.

63. The **reference period** for collecting data for components of income and expenditure that are available only annually, for example annual dividends, mixed income, etc., should be the full 12-month accounting period. The same period should also be used for data relating to components that have an annual cycle, that is seasonal, or occur infrequently.

64. To assure good quality data and minimize recall errors, the reference period for data relating to some components of income and expenditure should be based on a duration that makes less demand on the memory of respondents and avoids unnecessary computations. For example, information about weekly wages and consumption expenditure on some food items and personal care products should be collected using a short reference period. However, the use of short reference periods may introduce instability into the statistics, leading to greater observed inequality in the distributions of income and expenditures between households than with the use of longer reference periods.

65. The choice of appropriate reference periods should be made on the basis of careful experimentation in the practical application of the concepts and definitions and investigation of respondents' ability to provide the information. Analysis of data derived in past household surveys will frequently assist in determining the optimum reference periods.

66. Data collected using a short reference period should be adjusted to obtain estimates for the full accounting period. This should be done using a suitable temporal scaling factor. It should be noted, however, that such an adjustment introduces some non-comparability into the aggregates, and assumes that the data collected are typical for all non-observed periods during the accounting period.

Surveys of income and of expenditure statistics

Data collection

67. Data on household income and expenditures may be collected using income surveys or household income and expenditure surveys. These surveys may be conducted through interviews and/or completion of questionnaires by households (the retrospective method). They may also be implemented using the diary method, in which households are requested to regularly enter into a diary all or some of their receipts and expenditures for a given period.

68. The retrospective method, with relatively long reference and recall periods, is best suited for large infrequent or irregular purchases, especially of durable goods, and for regular expenditures such as rent, utility bills, etc. Diaries are preferable for those items that are frequently purchased such as food, personal care products and household supplies. Income data are mostly collected using the retrospective method with varying reference periods. The relative advantages of using the retrospective method, or the diary method, or a combination of the two, in the particular circumstances of the inquiry should be carefully investigated. Different methods of collection may be used for different components to obtain results of optimum quality. Useful information to guide these choices, including the various recall/reference periods to use for the various components, may be obtained from past experience, experimentation and cognitive testing.

69. Income data should be collected directly from each relevant household member and separately for each type of income at a level that is as disaggregated as possible. Expenditure data should be collected at the household level from a person knowledgeable about the household's expenditures and capable of completing the instruments. However, some items, especially those collected using diaries, may be collected from different household members. In this case a record should be kept about these persons and the responses for which they were responsible.

70. When a short reference period is used, a decision should be made as to whether to collect the actual value of the income/expenditure item or its usual value. Alternatively, the "last payment/purchase" approach may be used. For income data, the amount received most recently is recorded along with the period that the payment covers. For expenditure data, the most recent expenditure made on an item is recorded. The frequency of the components of these receipts/expenditures during the accounting period should be determined to assist in compiling estimates for the full accounting period. Amounts that are not paid in every payment period may result in acceptable estimates of household sector incomes across the full accounting period. However, this may result in a significant understatement or overstatement of the estimates of individual household incomes for the full accounting period, thereby distorting income distribution and other microeconomic analysis.

71. Questionnaires should have as detailed a list of goods and services as possible to obtain accurate estimates of household consumption expenditure. However this has to be balanced against increased costs and the likelihood of falsification and non-response that it may entail. Diaries may be open-ended or structured to varying degrees up to being fully pre-coded. Supplementary methods that may facilitate data collection include the use of the Internet, outlet receipts and electronic equipment (hand-held radio cassette tapes or mobile telephones) for real-time recording of expenditures.

Scope

72. The scope of these surveys should, as much as possible, include all types of specified receipts and outgoings, as detailed as possible, including separate identification of all components of household income and expenditure. When income is to be used as a classificatory variable for analysing expenditure statistics, income data may be collected at an aggregated level.

73. Data should be collected to estimate the income of the self-employed as mixed income. However, for certain categories of self-employed, such as own-account artisans, their income may be more appropriately determined by requesting from them the same data as for employees. When direct reliable estimates of mixed income are not available or are inappropriate, data on the drawings from the enterprise of the self-employed or the value of the consumption expenditure of their households may be used to impute values for their income. When using this method, one

should be aware of the shortcomings in directly using drawings or consumption expenditure as the income measurement.

74. For non-monetary receipts and expenditures, relevant information should be collected to enable their valuation. To the extent possible, quantity data on all expenditure items should be collected, especially for food items including those consumed away from home.

75. Information on the membership of the household (socio-demographic and employment characteristics) and on the household characteristics (geographical location, level of urbanization, dwelling characteristics) should be collected. Other variables such as health situation, educational attainment may be collected for analytical purposes.

76. To the extent possible, data should be collected in such a way that various aggregates of household consumption expenditure, household expenditure, actual final consumption and household income may be computed to satisfy users' needs for national account estimates, compilation of consumer price indices, welfare analysis and other analytical contexts. In particular, to the extent possible, data should be obtained from households or from other sources on:

(a) the consumption of social transfers in kind and other in-kind services;

(b) outlays for investments, net changes over the reference period in savings (including valuables) and in household or personal liabilities and other such disbursements;

(c) direct taxes, social contributions and transfers paid; and

(d) the place of acquisition (e.g. location, type), for expenditures incurred while on tourism-related trips, where required for domestic tourism statistics.

To ensure the quality and usefulness of the data, special data collection mechanisms may need to be adopted other than those used for household expenditure statistics.

Survey design

77. Income surveys and household income and expenditure surveys should use a design that produces reliable and valid estimates at reasonable cost and that is easy to implement. The designs may be cross-sectional, in which inquiries are made to each household in the sample only once through interviews, diaries or both methods. They may also be panel designs in which inquiries are made to each household more than once. Cross-sectional and panel designs may be used with a single sample of households. It is also possible to have a series of cross-sectional or panel designs applied to representative and independent sub-samples staggered over the survey period.

78. Surveys with a short data collection period are not advisable. If this is done, special care should be taken to ensure that the estimates should be based on periods with normal household income and expenditures.

Sample design

79. The design of the sample and the selection of sample households should be made in accordance with appropriate sampling techniques in order to obtain results that are as accurate as possible with the resources available, taking into account circumstances such as availability of suitable sampling frames. As far as possible, the sampling method employed should permit the calculation of sampling errors. Thorough research should be carried out to find and clearly identify the most suitable sampling frame, to determine the number of stages, the optimum stratification and other salient features of the sample to be used, as well as the best procedures for selection of the sample units.

80. The sample size should be determined on the basis of the accuracy required, i.e. the magnitude of the acceptable level of the sampling error for key estimates, and the resources available. It should be sufficient to ensure adequate representation of households of different sizes and compositions, income classes, demographic and socio-economic groups, as well as urban and rural areas and, where relevant, different climatic zones within the country.

81. Effort should be made to identify the main sources of non-sampling errors in the surveys and to determine through experimental studies how best to minimize these errors. It is particularly important in the case of low response rates, which may adversely affect the representativeness of the survey.

Frequency

82. A major sample survey of household expenditures, so far as possible representing all private households in the country, should be undertaken preferably at intervals not exceeding five years. Under conditions of fast-changing socio-economic and political situations, lifestyles of the population and availability of different types of goods and services, the surveys should be undertaken more frequently. Where monetary income constitutes most of total household income, income surveys may be as frequent as annual.

83. Smaller-scale surveys or other sources of statistics could be used to estimate changes in important aggregates during the interval between two large-scale surveys.

84. In certain circumstances, a continuing survey with a smaller annual sample but covering the full scope of a major survey may be undertaken. The average of its results over several successive years may provide a satisfactory substitute for a large-scale survey. While this approach may reduce the volume of work compared to large-scale surveys, it may have implications for the statistical infrastructure, particularly the need to have a permanent field structure.

Other sources of income statistics

85. Some components of income may be collected through establishment surveys or from administrative systems. These data are usually of good quality for the units and types of income covered. Issues of coverage of households as well as types of income, reference periods, timeliness, definitions and units of analysis should, however, be considered when using such sources.

86. Wherever possible, a combination of sources including an income survey and relevant administrative records, such as tax records and social security records, is recommended to ensure optimal coverage, completeness and accuracy of the data.

Classification, valuation, estimation, analysis and dissemination

Classification

87. Income should be classified by types of source, at as detailed a level as relevant and, to the extent possible, by means of payment so that users would have the option of including or excluding in-kind receipts, e.g. to facilitate international comparisons. Wages and salaries packaging that is negotiated at the discretion of the employee and is to be delivered as goods and services should be considered as monetary income and not in-kind income.

88. Household expenditures should be reported in such a way as to permit their classification in various ways to meet different analytical and descriptive purposes. They should be classified in a way that is meaningful for analysis at national level, especially for purposes of compiling consumer price indices. However, to enhance international comparability, national classification systems of household expenditures should, as much as possible, be compatible with the Classification of Individual Consumption according to Purpose (COICOP), at least at the division level. Wherever possible, information should be available for regrouping expenditures into relevant COICOP categories at least at the group (three-digit) level.

Valuation

89. Income in kind (goods and services) and other goods received as transfers in kind should be valued at market prices for equivalent goods and services. Own-produced goods for own consumption should be valued at market prices for equivalent goods when estimating consumption expenditure, and at producer or basic prices when estimating household income. Where this is not

possible or not advisable, self-evaluation by the respondent may be used in both instances. Data should be collected on the quantities acquired and the relevant prices, unless self-evaluation is being used.

90. For consistency with the System of National Accounts, the services of owner-occupied dwellings should be valued as the rental equivalence when estimating consumption expenditure. For the estimation of household income, those housing costs normally paid by landlords should be deducted from the rental equivalence. These costs may include property taxes, property and liability insurance, mortgage interest, water and sewerage charges, repairs and maintenance of the dwelling. Details of the costs should be made available to facilitate different analytical and descriptive needs, e.g. international comparability.

91. Depending on national circumstances, the user-costs approach may be adopted for consumption expenditure of owner-occupied dwellings and the interest on home equity may be used for the corresponding measurement of household income. In particular, if rental markets are limited or do not exist, this approach or the out-of-pocket expenditures of owner-occupiers may be used. In the case of the latter, it should be noted that the estimated housing expenditure derived includes some non-consumption costs and that there are no corresponding additions to household income.

92. Where rents are subsidized, rental flows should be evaluated at market value for an equivalent dwelling.

93. To estimate consumption expenditure of owner-occupied dwellings, data should be collected on:

(a) housing characteristics (age, size, type of construction and facilities, maintenance and repair costs, status of neighbourhood);

(b) rents for rented dwellings (from the survey or from other sources) and market value of dwellings;

(c) housing costs normally paid by landlords for dwellings; and

(d) the owner’s assessment of the rental value for owner-occupied dwellings, where relevant.

Where alternative sources are not available and ownership of a second home is an issue, data on duration of use for vacation and weekend homes should also be collected.

94. When the flow of services from (major) durable goods is used, the value that is determined should be the same for household income and expenditure. Data on the initial purchase price, age and other important characteristics of these durable goods may be collected.

95. Social transfers in kind should be valued from time to time because of their importance for welfare analysis using a suitable methodology. Data should be collected regularly from the surveys on the take-up of the different services while data on the total cost to the providers and number of beneficiaries should be obtained from other sources.

Estimation

96. Zeros and negative values for income or expenditures are legitimate values and should be used in computing household income or household expenditure. Households reporting such values should be included in the total number of households when computing means and other such statistics. Statistical techniques may be used for the treatment of outliers.

97. In order to facilitate the analysis of the statistics, efforts should be made to impute missing values of variables (item non-response) for individual households, provided the number of these is not unduly large and there is a reasonable basis for making the imputations.

98. When a moving accounting reference period is used, in circumstances such as periods of high inflation, the estimation of aggregated values may need to take into account possible

differences in expenditure patterns arising from differences in prices and/or volumes over the full survey and accounting periods.

99. Appropriate weights may be used to adjust for selection probabilities, non-response (assuming this is related to the factors used for probability sampling) and benchmarking with respect to the distribution of demographic, geographic and employment characteristics.

Analysis

100. The possible existence and extent of bias due to: (a) under-reporting of purchases of certain types of products such as alcohol; (b) over-reporting of purchases of luxury goods; (c) under-reporting of income; and (d) unsatisfactory estimation of self-employment income or the income of poor households, should be investigated. Zeros and negative values may need special treatment in the analysis.

101. Sampling errors should be computed and reported for estimates of parameters for key variables and important subgroups using a formula appropriate to the sampling and weighting schemes used for the survey.

102. In analysing the data, the effects of the size and composition of households should be taken into consideration through separate analysis of households with different compositions and/or through the use of an appropriate equivalence scale. In the case of the latter, this should be used with either the income or the expenditure estimates but not both when they are being analysed jointly.

103. The summary statistics presented in basic tables should include, as appropriate:

(a) counts (persons or households);

(b) averages (means and medians), totals and ratios relating to income and expenditure statistics and, where possible, their standard errors.

104. Basic tables should be produced relating to the level and structure (component shares) of consumption expenditures of households (total and subgroups of major items):

(a) by household income group/income quantiles (e.g. quintiles and deciles);

(b) by principal sources of income;

(c) by household characteristics such as size, composition (age and sex), typology (e.g. employee households);

(d) by characteristics of individuals (demographic, educational, socio-economic status, employment status, etc.); and

(e) by housing characteristics (age, tenure, occupancy rate, etc.).

Where appropriate, the tables from (c) to (e) should also be produced for the level of household income.

105. In addition, basic tables describing the situation of households may be useful. These may include tables relating the number of households (or household members) to the characteristics of household members, characteristics of the household, principal sources of income as well as income and expenditure groups.

106. As far as possible, these basic tables should also be presented by geographical location, level of urbanization and sex of the reference person or head (where applicable) and, if possible, separately for monetary and non-monetary (estimated) values. The number or proportion of households with zero expenditure on tabulated components should also be reported.

107. Where alternative sources of data are not available, the analysis of distributions of income and/or consumption expenditure, including measuring poverty, inequality and social exclusion, may be carried out for the whole population as well as for key subgroups. Other types of analysis may be made of indebtedness, food insecurity, housing, health, education, tourism, etc.

108. To the extent possible, the analysis should reflect the extent to which the various strata of the population access the different services provided through social transfers in kind and received free from other households. Savings and liabilities should also be taken into account when analysing expenditure statistics.

109. When comparing income and expenditure statistics from micro sources with macro aggregates from national accounts, account should be taken of the different objectives of the sources and the conceptual and measurement differences of some of their components. Such comparisons may be useful for mutual checking between these sources, as a service to users and as an attempt to identify and explain discrepancies.

Dissemination

110. The main statistical report should contain basic tables and aggregates. It should include a summary presentation of the methodology used, including basic concepts and definitions, the sample and survey design as well as details on data collection and data processing. An assessment of the quality of the data, sampling and non-sampling errors, non-response rates and any other major issues relating to the statistics should also be provided. An indication of the extent of and the method used for the imputations should also be made available when the statistics are published, and imputed values should be identified when micro data sets are distributed.

111. As much as possible and without breaching the confidentiality of the information collected or contractual agreements, public-use files (anonymised confidentialized micro data sets) should be made available to analysts and other interested users. They should always be accompanied by clear and comprehensive documentation of all aspects of the data collection process. In particular, if top-coding (restricting the maximum value disseminated for a variable) is used to protect the confidentiality of information, the details should be documented and the values should be identified.

112. In addition to the dissemination of the statistical report and possible distribution of public-use files, the main results from the survey should be publicized through conferences, seminars, the media (interviews, popular articles and press releases), etc. Focused, in-depth reports and analytical papers should be produced for policy-makers. Outputs for public dissemination should be made available in appropriate media, whether in paper publications or in electronic formats such as diskettes, tapes, CD-ROMs, micro data laboratories and the Internet.

113. As a source of institutional memory for future exercises and for consultation by others who would need such information, a detailed methodological report should be prepared including full details of the procedures used as well as lessons learned and conclusions reached from the whole exercise.

114. The dissemination of these statistics should adhere to the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics adopted by the Special Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (1994) and the guidelines concerning dissemination practices for labour statistics adopted by the Sixteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (1998).

Resolution II

Resolution concerning consumer price indices

Preamble

The Seventeenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians,

Having been convened at Geneva by the Governing Body of the ILO and having met from 24 November to 3 December 2003,

Recalling the resolution adopted by the Fourteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians concerning consumer price indices and recognizing the continuing validity of the basic principles recommended therein and, in particular, the fact that the consumer price index (CPI) is designed primarily to measure the changes over time in the general level of prices of goods and services that a reference population acquires, uses or pays for,

Recognizing the need to modify and broaden the existing standards in the light of recent methodological and computational developments to enhance the usefulness of the international standards in the provision of technical guidelines to all countries,

Recognizing the usefulness of such standards in enhancing the international comparability of the statistics,

Recognizing that the CPI is used for a wide variety of purposes and that governments should be encouraged to identify the (priority) purposes a CPI is to serve, to provide adequate resources for its compilation, and to guarantee the professional independence of its compilers,

Recognizing that the (priority) objectives and uses of CPI differ among countries and that, therefore, a single standard could not be applied universally,

Recognizing that the CPI needs to be credible to observers and users, both national and international, and that better understanding of the principles and procedures used to compile the index will enhance the users' confidence in the index,

Agrees that the principles and methods used in constructing a CPI should be based on the guidelines and methods that are generally accepted as constituting good statistical practices;

Adopts, this third day of December 2003, the following resolution which replaces the previous one adopted in 1987:

The nature and meaning of a consumer price index

1. The CPI is a current social and economic indicator that is constructed to measure changes over time in the general level of prices of consumer goods and services that households acquire, use or pay for consumption.

2. The index aims to measure the change in consumer prices over time. This may be done by measuring the cost of purchasing a fixed basket of consumer goods and services of constant quality and similar characteristics, with the products in the basket being selected to be representative of households' expenditure during a year or other specified period. Such an index is called a fixed-basket price index.

3. The index may also aim to measure the effects of price changes on the cost of achieving a constant standard of living (i.e. level of utility or welfare). This concept is called a cost-of-living index (COLI). A fixed basket price index, or another appropriate design, may be employed as an approximation to a COLI.

The uses of a consumer price index

4. The CPI is used for a wide variety of purposes, the two most common ones being: (i) to adjust wages as well as social security and other benefits to compensate, partly or completely, for changes in the cost of living or in consumer prices; and (ii) to provide an average measure of price inflation for the household sector as a whole, for use as a macro-economic indicator. CPI sub-indices are also used to deflate components of household final consumption expenditure in the national accounts and the value of retail sales to obtain estimates of changes in their volume.

5. CPIs are also used for other purposes, such as monitoring the overall rate of price inflation for all sectors of the economy, the adjustment of government fees and charges, the adjustment of payments in commercial contracts, and for formulating and assessing fiscal and monetary policies and trade and exchange rate policies. In these types of cases, the CPI is used as more appropriate measures do not exist at present, or because other characteristics of the CPI (e.g. high profile, wide acceptance, predictable publication schedule, etc.) are seen to outweigh any conceptual or technical deficiencies.

6. Given that the CPI may be used for many purposes, it is unlikely that one index can perform equally satisfactorily in all applications. It may therefore be appropriate to construct a number of alternative price indices for specific purposes, if the requirements of the users justify the extra expense. Each index should be properly defined and named to avoid confusion and a "headline" CPI measure should be explicitly identified.

7. Where only one index is compiled, it is the main use that should determine the type of index compiled, the range of goods and services covered, its geographic coverage, the households it relates to, as well as to the concept of price and the formula used. If there are several major uses, it is likely that compromises may have to be made with regard to how the CPI is constructed. Users should be informed of the compromises made and of the limitations of such an index.

Scope of the index

8. The scope of the index depends on the main use for which it is intended, and should be defined in terms of the type of households, geographic areas, and the categories of consumer goods and services acquired, used or paid for by the reference population.

9. If the primary use of the CPI is for adjusting money incomes, a relevant group of households, such as wage and salary earners, may be the appropriate target population. For this use, all consumption expenditures by these households, at home and abroad, may be covered. If the primary use of the CPI is to measure inflation in the domestic economy, it may be appropriate to cover consumption expenditures made within the country, rather than the expenditures of households resident within the country.

10. In general, the reference population for a national index should be defined very widely. If any income groups, types of households or particular geographic areas are excluded, for example, for cost or practical considerations, then this should be explicitly stated.

11. The geographic scope refers to the geographic coverage of price collection and of consumption expenditures of the reference population and both should be defined as widely as possible, and preferably consistently. If price collection is restricted to particular areas due to resource constraints, then this should be specified. The geographic coverage of the consumption expenditure may be defined either as covering consumption expenditure of the resident population (resident consumption) or consumption expenditure within the country (domestic consumption).

12. Significant differences in the expenditure patterns and/or price movements between specific population groups or regions may exist, and care should be taken to ensure that they are represented in the index. Separate indices for these population groups or regions may be computed if there is sufficient demand to justify the additional cost.

13. In accordance with its main purpose, the CPI should conceptually cover all types of consumer goods and services of significance to the reference population, without any omission of those that may not be legally available or may be considered socially undesirable. Where

appropriate, special aggregates may be constructed to assist those users who may wish to exclude certain categories of goods or services for particular applications or for analysis. Whenever certain goods or services have been excluded from the index, this should be clearly documented.

14. Goods and services purchased for business purposes, expenditures on assets such as works of art, financial investment (as distinct from financial services), and payments of income taxes, social security contributions and fines are not considered to be consumer goods or services and should be excluded from the coverage of the index. Some countries regard expenditures on the purchase of houses entirely as a capital investment and, as such, exclude them from the index.

Acquisition, use or payment

15. In determining the scope of the index, the time of recording and valuation of consumption, it is important to consider whether the purposes for which the index is used are best satisfied by defining consumption in terms of "acquisition", "use", or "payment".[1] The "acquisition" approach is often used when the primary purpose of the index is to serve as a macroeconomic indicator. The "payment" approach is often used when the primary purpose of the index is for the adjustment of compensation or income. Where the aim of the index is to measure changes in the cost of living, the "use" approach may be most suitable. The decision regarding the approach to follow for a particular group of products should in principle be based on the purpose of the index, as well as on the costs and the acceptability of the decision to the users who should be informed of the approach followed for different products. Because of the practical difficulties in uniformly defining consumption and estimating the flow of services provided by other durable goods in terms of "use", it may be necessary to adopt a mixed approach, e.g. "use" for owner-occupied housing and "acquisition" or "payments" basis for other consumer durables.

16. The differences between the three approaches are most pronounced in dealing with products for which the times of acquisition, use and payment do not coincide, such as owner-occupied housing, durable goods and products acquired on credit.

17. The most complex and important of the products mentioned above is owner-occupied housing. In most countries, a significant proportion of households are owner-occupiers of their housing, with the housing being characterized by a long useful life and a high purchase outlay (price). Under the "acquisition" approach, the value of the new dwellings acquired in the weights reference period may be used for deriving the weight (and the full price of the dwelling is included in the CPI at the time of acquisition, regardless of when the consumption is taking place). Under the "payment" approach, the weights reflect the amounts actually paid out for housing (and the prices enter the CPI in the period(s) when the prices are paid). Under the "use" approach the weights are based on the value of the flow of housing services consumed during the weights reference period estimated using an implicit or notional cost (and prices or estimated opportunity costs enter the CPI when the consumption is taking place).

18. Own-account consumption, remuneration in kind and/or goods and services provided without charge or subsidized by governments and non-profit institutions serving households may be important in some countries where the purpose of the index is best satisfied by defining consumption in terms of "use" or "acquisition" (under the payment approach these are out of scope). The inclusion of these products will require special valuation and pricing techniques.

Basket and weights

19. Decisions on the composition of the basket and the weights follow directly from the scope, as well as from the choice between the "acquisition", "use" or "payment" approaches.

20. Once defined, the expenditures that fall within the scope of the index should be grouped into similar categories in a hierarchical classification system, e.g. divisions/groups/classes, for compilation as well as analytical purposes. There should be

[1] See Annex 1.

consistency between the classification used for index compilation and the one used for household expenditure statistics. The CPI classification should meet the needs of users for special sub-indices. For the purposes of international comparisons, the classification should also be reconcilable with the most recent version of the UN *Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose* (COICOP), at least at its division level.[2]

21. In order to facilitate the analysis and interpretation of the results of the index, it may be desirable to classify goods and services according to various supplementary classifications, e.g. source of origin, durability and seasonality. Calculation of the CPI by using various classifications should generate the same overall results as the original index.

22. The classification should also provide a framework for the allocation of expenditure weights. Expenditures at the lowest level of the classification system, expressed as a proportion of the total expenditure, determine the weights to be used at this level. When the weights are to remain fixed for several years, the objective should be to adopt weights that are representative of the contemporary household behaviour.

23. The two main sources for deriving the weights are the results from household expenditure surveys (HESs) and national accounts estimates on household consumption expenditure. The results from an HES are appropriate for an index defined to cover the consumption expenditures of reference population groups resident within the country, while national account estimates are suitable for an index defined to cover consumption expenditures within the country. The decision about what source or sources to use and how they should be used depends on the main purpose of the index and on the availability and quality of appropriate data.

24. The information from the main source (HESs or national accounts) should be supplemented with all other available information on the expenditure pattern. Sources of such information that can be used for disaggregating the expenditures are surveys of sales in retail outlets, point-of-purchase surveys, surveys of production, export and import data and administrative sources. Based on these data the weights for certain products may be further disaggregated by region and type of outlet. Where the data obtained from different sources relate to different periods, it is important to ensure, before weights are allocated, that expenditures are adjusted so that they have the same reference period.

25. Where the weight reference period differs significantly from the price reference period, the weights should be price updated to take account of price changes between the weights reference period and price reference period. Where it is likely that price updated weights are less representative of the consumption pattern in the price reference period this procedure may be omitted.

26. Weights should be reviewed and if appropriate revised as often as accurate and reliable data are available for this to be done, but at least once every five years. Revisions are important to reduce the impact on the index of product substitutions and to ensure the basket of goods and services and their weights remain representative.[3] For some categories, it may be necessary to update the weights more frequently as such weights are likely to become out of date more quickly than higher-level weights. In periods of high inflation, the weights should be updated frequently.

27. When a new basket (structure or weights) replaces the old, a continuous CPI series should be created by linking[4] together the index numbers based on the new basket of goods and services to those based on the earlier basket. The particular procedure used to link index number series will depend on the particular index compilation technique used. The objective is to ensure that the technique used to introduce a new basket does not, of itself, alter the level of the index.

[2] See Annex 4.

[3] See Annex 1.

[4] See Annex 2.

28. Completely new types of goods and services (i.e. goods and services that cannot be classified to any of the existing elementary aggregates) should normally be considered for inclusion only during one of the periodic review and reweighting exercises. A new model or variety of an existing product that can be fitted within an existing elementary aggregate should be included at the time it is assessed as having a significant and sustainable market share. If a quality change is detected an appropriate quality adjustment should be made.[5]

29. Some products such as seasonal products, insurance, second-hand goods, expenditure abroad, interest, own production, expenditures on purchase and construction of dwellings, etc., may need special treatment when constructing their weights. The way these products are dealt with should be determined by the main purpose of the index, national circumstances and the practicalities of compilation.

30. Seasonal products should be included in the basket. It is possible to use: (i) a fixed-weight approach which uses the same weight for the seasonal product in all months using an imputed price in the out-of-season months; or (ii) a variable weights approach where a changing weight is attached to the product in various months. The decision on the approach should be based on national circumstances.

31. The expenditure weights for second-hand goods should be based either on the net expenditure of the reference population on such goods, or the gross expenditure, depending on the purpose of the index.

32. When consumption from own production is within the scope of the index, the weights should be based on the value of quantities consumed from own production. Valuation of consumption from own production should be made on the basis of prices prevailing on the market, unless there is some reason to conclude that market prices are not relevant or cannot be reliably observed, or there is no interest in using hypothetically imputed prices. In this case the expenditures and prices for the inputs into the production of these goods and services could be used instead. The third option is to valuate it by using quality adjusted market prices.

Sampling for price collection

33. A CPI is an estimate based on a sample of households to estimate weights, and a sample of zones within regions, a sample of outlets, a sample of goods and services and a sample of time periods for price observation.

34. The sample size and sample selection methods for both outlets and the goods and services for which price movements over time are to be observed should ensure that the prices collected are representative and sufficient to meet the requirements for the accuracy of the index, but also that the collection process is cost-effective. The sample of prices should reflect the importance, in terms of relative expenditures, of the goods and services available for purchase by consumers in the reference period, the number, types and geographic spread of outlets that are relevant for each good and service, and the dispersion of prices and price changes across outlets.

35. Probability sampling techniques are the preferred methods, in principle, as they permit sound statistical inference and control over the representativity of the sample. In addition, they permit estimation of sampling variation (errors). However, they may be costly to implement and can result in the selection of products that are very difficult to price to constant quality.

36. In cases where appropriate sampling frames are lacking and it is too costly to obtain them, samples of outlets and products have to be obtained by non-probability methods. Statisticians should use available information and apply their best judgement to ensure that representative samples are selected. The possibility of applying cut-off or detailed quota sampling[6] strategy may

[5] See Annex 2.

[6] See Annex 1.

be considered, especially where the sample size is small. A mixture of probability and non-probability sampling techniques may be used.

37. Efficient and representative sampling, whether random or purposive, requires comprehensive and up-to-date sampling frames for outlets and products. Sample selection can be done either by head office from centrally held sampling frames, or in the field by price collectors, or by a mixture of the two. In the first case, price collectors should be given precise instructions on which outlets to visit and which products to price. In the second case, price collectors should be given detailed and unambiguous guidelines on the local sampling procedures to be adopted. Statistical business registers, business telephone directories, results from the point-of-purchase surveys or from surveys of sales in different types of outlets, and lists of Internet sellers may be used as sampling frames for the central selection of outlets. Catalogues or other product lists drawn up by major manufacturers, wholesalers or trade associations, or lists of products that are specific to individual outlets such as large supermarkets might be used as the sampling frame for selection of products. Data scanned by bar-code readers at the cashier's desk (electronic databases) can be particularly helpful in the selection of goods and services.

38. The sample of outlets and of goods and services should be reviewed periodically and updated where necessary to maintain its representativeness.

Index calculation

39. The compilation of a CPI consists of collecting and processing price and expenditure data according to specified concepts, definitions, methods and practices. The detailed procedures that are applied will depend on particular circumstances.

40. CPIs are calculated in steps. In the first step, the elementary aggregate indices are calculated. In the subsequent steps, higher level indices are calculated by aggregating the elementary aggregate indices.

Elementary aggregate indices

41. The elementary aggregate is the smallest and relatively homogeneous set of goods or services for which expenditure data are defined (used) for CPI purposes. It is the only aggregate for which an index number is constructed without any explicit expenditure weights, although other kinds of weights might be explicitly or implicitly introduced into the calculation. The set of goods or services covered by an elementary aggregate should be similar in their end-uses and are expected to have similar price movements. They may be defined not only in terms of their characteristics but also in terms of the type of location and outlet in which they are sold. The degree of homogeneity achieved in practice will depend on the availability of corresponding expenditure data.

42. An elementary index is a price index for an elementary aggregate. As expenditure weights usually cannot be attached to the prices or price relatives for the sampled products within the elementary aggregate, an elementary index is usually calculated as an unweighted average of the prices or price relatives. When some information on weights is available, this should be taken into account when compiling the elementary indices.

43. There are several ways in which the prices, or the price relatives, might be averaged. The three most commonly used formulae are the ratio of arithmetic mean prices (RAP), the geometric mean (GM) and the arithmetic mean of price relatives (APR). The choice of formula depends on the purpose of the index, the sample design and the mathematical properties of the formula. It is possible to use different formulae for different elementary aggregates within the same CPI. It is recommended that the GM formula be used, particularly where there is a need to reflect substitution within the elementary aggregate or where the dispersion in prices or price changes within the elementary aggregate is large. The GM has many advantages because of its mathematical properties. The RAP may be used for elementary aggregates that are homogeneous and where consumers have only limited opportunity to substitute or where substitution is not to be reflected in the index. The APR formula should be avoided in its chained form, as it is known to result in biased estimates of the elementary indices.

44. The elementary index may be computed by using either a chained or direct form of the formula chosen. The use of a chained form may make the estimation of missing prices and the introduction of replacement products easier.

Upper level indices

45. These price indices are constructed as weighted averages of elementary aggregate indices. Several types of formulae can be used to average the elementary aggregate indices. In order to compile a timely index, the practical option is to use a formula that relies on the weights relating to some past period. One such formula is the Laspeyres-type index, the formula used by most national statistical agencies.

46. For some purposes it may be appropriate to calculate the index retrospectively by using an index number formula that employs both base-period weights and current-period weights, such as the Fisher, Törnqvist or Walsh index. Comparing the difference between the index of this type and the Laspeyres-type index can give some indication of the combined impact of income changes, preference changes and substitution effects over the period in question, providing important information for producers and users of the CPI.

47. Where the change in an upper level index between two consecutive periods such as t-1 and t is calculated as the weighted average of the individual indices between t-1 and t, care should be taken to ensure that the weights are updated to take account of the price changes between the price reference period 0 and the preceding period t-1. Failure to do so may result in a biased index.

Price observations

48. The number and quality of the prices collected are critical determinants of the reliability of the index, along with the specifications of the products priced. Standard methods for collecting and processing price information should be developed and procedures put in place for collecting them systematically and accurately at regular intervals. Price collectors should be well trained and well supervised, and should be provided with a comprehensive manual explaining the procedures they have to follow.

Collection

49. An important consideration is whether the index or parts of the index should relate to monthly (or quarterly) average prices or to prices for a specific period of time (e.g. a single day or week in a month). This decision is related to a number of issues, which include the use of an index, the practicalities of carrying out price collection and the pattern of price movements. When point-in-time pricing is adopted, prices should be collected over a very small number of days each month (or quarter). The interval between price observations should be uniform for each product. Since the length of the month (or quarter) varies, this uniformity needs to be defined carefully. When the aim is monthly (or quarterly) average prices, the prices collected should be representative of the period to which they refer.

50. Attention should also be paid to the time of day selected for price observation. For example, in the case of perishable goods, price observations may need to be collected at the same time on the same day of the week and not just before closing time, when stocks may be low, or sold cheaply to minimize wastage.

51. Price collection should be carried out in such a way as to be representative of all geographical areas within the scope of the index. Special care should be taken where significant differences in price movements between areas may be expected.

52. Prices should be collected in all types of outlets that are important, including Internet sellers, open-air markets and informal markets, and in free markets as well as price-controlled markets. Where more than one type of outlet is important for a particular type of product, this should be reflected in the initial sample design and an appropriately weighted average should be used in the calculation of the index.

53. Specifications should be provided detailing the variety and size of the products for which price information is to be collected. These should be precise enough to identify all the price-determining characteristics that are necessary to ensure that, as far as possible, the same goods and services are priced in successive periods in the same outlet. The specifications should include, for example, make, model, size, terms of payment, conditions of delivery, type of guarantees and type of outlet. This information could be used in the procedures used for replacement and for quality adjustment.

54. Prices to be collected are actual transaction prices, including indirect taxes and non-conditional discounts, that would be paid, agreed or costed (accepted) by the reference population. Where prices are not displayed or have to be negotiated, where quantity units are poorly defined or where actual purchase prices may deviate from listed or fixed prices, it may be necessary for the price collectors to purchase products in order to determine the transaction prices. A budget may be provided for any such purchases. When this is not possible, consideration may be given to interviewing customers about the prices actually paid. Tips for services, where compulsory, should be treated as part of the price paid.

55. Exceptional prices charged for stale, shop-soiled, damaged or otherwise imperfect goods sold at clearance prices should be excluded, unless the sale of such products is a permanent and widespread phenomenon. Sale prices, discounts, cut prices and special offers should be included when applicable to all customers without there being significant limits to the quantities that can be purchased by each customer.

56. In periods of price control or rationing, where limited supplies are available at prices which are held at a low level by measures such as subsidies to the sellers, government procurement, price control, etc., such prices as well as those charged on any significant unrestricted markets should be collected. The different price observations should be combined in a way that uses the best information available with respect to the actual prices paid and the relative importance of the different types of sales.

57. For each type of product, different alternatives for collecting prices should be carefully investigated, to ensure that the price observations could be made reliably and effectively. Means of collection could include visits to outlets with paper forms or hand-held devices, interviews with customers, computer-assisted telephone interviews, mail-out questionnaires, brochures, price lists provided by large or monopoly suppliers of services, scanner data and prices posted on the Internet. For each alternative, the possible cost advantages need to be balanced against an assessment of the reliability and timeliness of each of the alternatives.

58. Where centrally regulated or centrally fixed prices are collected from the regulatory authorities, checks should be made to ascertain whether the goods and services in question are actually sold and whether these prices are in fact paid. For goods and services where the prices paid are determined by combinations of subscription fees and piece rates (e.g. for newspapers, journals, public transport, electricity and telecommunications) care must be taken to ensure that a representative range of price offers are observed. Care must also be taken to ensure that prices charged to different types of consumers are observed, e.g. those linked to the age of the purchaser or to memberships of particular associations.

59. The collected price information should be reviewed for comparability and consistency with previous observations, the presence of replacements, unusual or large price changes and to ensure that price conversions of goods priced in multiple units or varying quantities are properly calculated. Extremely large or unusual price changes should be examined to determine whether they are genuine price changes or are due to changes in quality. Procedures should be put in place for checking the reliability of all price observations. This could include a programme of direct pricing and/or selective re-pricing of some products shortly after the initial observation was made.

60. Consistent procedures should be established for dealing with missing price observations because of, e.g. inability to contact the seller, non-response, observation rejected as unreliable or products temporarily unavailable. Prices of non-seasonal products that are temporarily unavailable should be estimated until they reappear or are replaced, by using appropriate estimation procedures, e.g. imputation on the basis of price changes of similar non-missing products. Carrying forward the last observed price should be avoided, especially in periods of high inflation.

Replacements

61. Replacement of a product will be necessary when it disappears permanently. Replacement should be made within the first three months (quarter) of the product becoming unavailable. It may also be necessary when the product is no longer available or sold in significant quantities or under normal sale conditions. Clear and precise rules should be developed for selecting the replacement product. Depending on the frequency of sampling and the potential for accurate quality adjustment, the most commonly used alternatives are to select: (i) the most similar to the replaced variety; (ii) the most popular variety among those that belong to the same elementary aggregate; and (iii) the variety most likely to be available in the future. Precise procedures should be laid down for price adjustments with respect to the difference in characteristics when replacements are necessary, so that the impact of changes in quality is excluded from the observed price.

62. Replacement of an outlet may be motivated if prices cannot be obtained e.g. because it has closed permanently, because of a decline in representativeness or because the outlet no longer cooperates. Clear rules should be established on when to discontinue price observations from a selected outlet, on the criteria for selecting a replacement, as well as on the adjustments that may be required to price observations or weights. Such rules should be consistent with the objectives of the index and with the way in which the outlet sample has been determined.

63. Deletion of an entire elementary aggregate will be necessary if all products in that elementary aggregate disappear from most or all outlets and it is not possible to locate a sufficient number of price observations to continue to compile a reliable index for this elementary aggregate. In such situations, it is necessary to redistribute the weight assigned to the elementary aggregate among the other elementary aggregates included in the next level of aggregation.

Quality changes

64. The same product should be priced in each period as long as it is representative. However, in practice, products that can be observed at different time periods may differ with respect to package sizes, weights, volumes, features and terms of sale, as well as other characteristics. Thus it is necessary to monitor the characteristics of the products being priced to ensure that the impact of any differences in price-relevant or utility-relevant characteristics can be excluded from the estimated price change.

65. Identifying changes in quality or utility is relatively more difficult for complex durable goods and services. It is necessary, therefore, to collect a considerable amount of information on the relevant characteristics of the products for which prices are collected. The most important information can be obtained in the course of collecting prices. Other sources of information on price-relevant or utility-relevant characteristics can be producers, importers or wholesalers of the goods included and the study of articles and advertisements in trade publications.

66. When a quality change is detected, an adjustment must be made to the price, so that the index reflects as nearly as possible the pure price change. If this is not done, the index will either record a price change that has not taken place or fail to record a price change that did happen. The choice of method for such adjustments will depend on the particular goods and services involved. Great care needs to be exercised because the accuracy of the resulting index depends on the quality of this process. To assume automatically that all price change is a reflection of the change in quality should be avoided, as should the automatic assumption that products with different qualities are essentially equivalent.

67. The methods for estimating quality-adjusted prices [7] may be:

(a) *Explicit (or direct) quality adjustment methods* that directly estimate the value of the quality difference between the old and new product and adjust one of the prices accordingly. Pure price change is then implicitly estimated as the difference in the adjusted prices.

[7] See Annex 2.

(b) *Implicit (or indirect) quality adjustment methods* which estimate the pure price change component of the price difference between the old and new products based on the price changes observed for similar products. The difference between the estimate of pure price change and the observed price change is considered as change due to quality difference.

Some of these methods are complex, costly and difficult to apply. The methods used should as far as possible be based on objective criteria.

Accuracy

68. As with all statistics, CPI estimates are subject to errors that may arise from a variety of sources.[8] Compilers of CPIs need to be aware of the possible sources of error, and to take steps during the design of the index, its construction and compilation processes to minimize their impact, for which adequate resources should be allocated.

69. The following are some well-known sources of potential error, either in pricing or in index construction, that over time can lead to errors in the overall CPI: incorrect selection of products and incorrect observation and recording of their prices; incorrect selection of outlets and timing of price collection; failure to observe and adjust correctly for quality changes; appearance of new goods and outlets; failure to adjust for product and outlet substitution or loss of representativity; the use of inappropriate formulae for computing elementary aggregate and upper level indices.

70. To reduce the index's potential for giving a misleading picture, it is in general essential to update weights and baskets regularly, to employ unbiased elementary aggregate formulae, to make appropriate adjustments for quality change, to allow adequately and correctly for new products, and to take proper account of substitution issues as well as quality control of the entire compilation process.

Dissemination

71. The CPI estimate should be computed and publicly released as quickly as possible after the end of the period to which it refers, and according to a pre-announced timetable. It should be made available to all users at the same time, in a convenient form, and should be accompanied by a short methodological explanation. Rules relating to its release should be made publicly available and strictly observed. In particular, they should include details of who has pre-release access to the results, why, under what conditions, and how long before the official release time.

72. The general CPI should be compiled and released monthly. Where there is no strong user demand for a monthly series or countries do not have the necessary resources, the CPI may be prepared and released quarterly. Depending on national circumstances, sub-indices may be released with a frequency that corresponds to users' needs.

73. When it is found that published index estimates have been seriously distorted because of errors or mistakes made in their compilation, corrections should be made and published. Such corrections should be made as soon as possible after detection according to publicly available policy for correction. Where the CPI is widely used for adjustment purposes for wages and contracts, retrospective revisions should be avoided to the extent possible.

74. The publication of the CPI results should show the index level from the index reference period. It is also useful to present derived indices, such as the one that shows changes in the major aggregates between: (i) the current month and the previous month; (ii) the current month and the same month of the previous year; and (iii) the average of the latest 12 months and the average of the previous 12 months. The indices should be presented in both seasonally adjusted and unadjusted terms, if seasonally adjusted data are available.

[8] See Annex 3.

75. Comments and interpretation of the index should accompany its publication to assist users. An analysis of the contributions of various products or group of products to the overall change and an explanation of any unusual factors affecting the price changes of the major contributors to the overall change should be included.

76. Indices for the major expenditure groups should also be compiled and released. Consideration should be given to compiling indices for the divisions and groups of the COICOP.[9] Sub-indices for different regions or population groups, and alternative indices designed for analytical purposes, may be compiled and publicly released if there is a demand from users, they are judged to be reliable and their preparation is cost effective.

77. The index reference period may be chosen to coincide with the latest weights reference period or it could be established to coincide with the base period of other statistical series. It should be changed as frequently as necessary to ensure that the index numbers remain easy to present and understand.

78. Average prices and price ranges for important and reasonably homogeneous products may be estimated and published in order to support the research and analytical needs of users.

79. Countries should report national CPI results and methodological information to the International Labour Office as soon as possible after their national release.

80. Comparing national CPI movements across countries is difficult because of the different measurement approaches used by countries of certain products, particularly housing and financial services. The exclusion of housing (actual rents and either imputed rents or acquisition of new houses, and maintenance and repair of dwelling) and financial services from the all-items index will make the resulting estimates of price change for the remaining products more comparable across countries. Therefore, in addition to the all-items index, countries should, if possible, compile and provide for dissemination to the international community an index that excludes housing and financial services. It should be emphasized, though, that even for the remaining products in scope, there can still be difficulties when making international comparisons of changes in consumer prices.

Consultations and integrity

81. The compiling agency should have the professional independence, competence and resources necessary to support a high quality CPI programme. The UN *Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics*[10] and the ILO *Guidelines concerning dissemination practices for labour statistics*[11] should be respected.

82. The agency responsible for the index should consult representatives of users on issues of importance for the CPI, particularly during preparations for any changes to the methodology used in compiling the CPI. One way of organizing such consultations is through the establishment of advisory committee(s) on which social partners, as well as other users and independent experts, might be represented.

83. In order to ensure public confidence in the index, a full description of the data collection procedures and the index methodology should be prepared and made widely available. Reference to this description should be made when the CPI is published. The documentation should include an explanation of the main objectives of the index, details of the weights, the index number formulae used, and a discussion of the accuracy of the index estimates. The precise identities of the outlets and goods and services used for price collection should not be revealed.

[9] See Annex 4.

[10] UN Economic and Social Council, 1994.

[11] Sixteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians, 1998.

84. Users should be informed in advance of any changes that are going to be made to the scope, weights or methodology used to estimate the CPI.

85. Technical guidance on the compilation of consumer price indices is provided in the *Consumer price index manual: Theory and practice*.[12] This manual should be updated periodically in order to reflect current best practice.

Annex 1

Terminology and definitions

(a) "Consumer goods" are goods or services that are used by households for the satisfaction of individual needs or wants.

(b) "Consumption expenditures" are expenditure on consumer goods and services and can be defined in terms of "acquisition", "use", or "payment":

- "acquisition"[13] indicates that it is the total value of the goods and services acquired during a given period that should be taken into account, irrespective of whether they were wholly paid for or used during the period. This approach could be extended to include the estimated values of own-account production and social transfers in kind received from government or non-profit institutions. The prices enter the CPI in the period when consumers accept or agree prices, as distinct from the time payment is made;

- "use" indicates that it is the total value of all goods and services actually consumed during a given period that should be taken into account; for durable goods this approach requires valuing the services provided by these goods during the period. The prices (opportunity costs) enter the CPI in the period of consumption;

- "payment" indicates that it is the total payment made for goods and services during a given period that should be taken into account, without regard to whether they were delivered or used during the period. The prices enter the CPI in the period or periods when the payment is made.

(c) "Scope of the index" refers to the population groups, geographic areas, products and outlets for which the index is constructed.

(d) "Coverage" of the index is the set of goods and services represented in the index. For practical reasons, coverage may have to be less than what corresponds to the defined scope of the index.

(e) "Reference population" refers to that specific population group for which the index has been constructed.

(f) "Weights" are the aggregate consumption expenditures on any set of goods and services expressed as a proportion of the total consumption expenditures on all goods and services within the scope of the index in the weight reference period. They are a set of numbers summing-up to unity.

[12] *Consumer price index manual: Theory and practice* (International Labour Office, International Monetary Fund, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, Statistical Office of the European Communities (EUROSTAT), United National Economic Commission for Europe and the World Bank, Geneva, 2004).

[13] This definition differs from the one adopted by the 14th ICLS (1987).

(g) “Price updating of weights” is a procedure that is used to bring the expenditure weights in line with the index or price reference period. The price updated weights are calculated by multiplying the weights from the weight reference period by elementary indices measuring the price changes between weight reference and price reference period and rescaling to sum to unity.

(h) “Index reference period” is the period for which the value of the index is set at 100.0.

(i) “Price reference period” is the period whose prices are compared with the prices in the current period. The period whose prices appear in the denominators of the price relatives.

(j) The “weight reference period” is the period, usually a year, whose estimates of the volume of consumption and its components are used to calculate the weights.

(k) “Probability sampling” is the selection of a sample of units, such as outlets or products, in such a way that each unit in the universe has a known non-zero probability of selection.

(l) “Cut-off sampling” is a sampling procedure in which a predetermined threshold is established with all units in the relevant population at or above the threshold being eligible for inclusion in the sample and all units below the threshold being excluded. The threshold is usually specified in terms of the size of some relevant variable (such as some percentage of total sales), the largest sampling units being included and the rest excluded.

(m) “Quota sampling” is a non-probability method where the population is divided into certain strata. For each stratum, the number (“quota”) of elements to be included in the sample is specified. The price collector simply “fills the quotas”, which means, in the case of outlet sampling, that the selection of the outlets is based on the judgement of the price collectors and the specified criteria.

(n) “Imputed expenditures” are the expenditures assigned to a product that has not been purchased, such as a product that has been produced by the household for its own consumption (including housing services produced by owner-occupiers), a product received as payment in kind or as a free transfer from government or non-profit institutions.

(o) “Imputed price” refers to the estimated price of a product whose price during a particular period has not been observed and is therefore missing. It is also the price assigned to a product for which the expenditures have been imputed, see (n).

(p) “Outlet” indicates a shop, market stall, service establishment, internet seller or other place where goods and/or services are sold or provided to consumers for non-business use.

(q) “Linking” means joining together two consecutive sequences of price observations, or price indices, that overlap in one or more periods, by rescaling one of them so that the value in the overlap period is the same in both sequences, thus combining them into a single continuous series.

(r) “Price” is defined as the value of one unit of a product, for which the quantities are perfectly homogeneous not only in a physical sense but also in respect of a number of other characteristics.

(s) “Pure price change” is that change in the price of a good or service which is not due to any change in its quality. When the quality does change, the pure price change is the price change remaining after eliminating the estimated contribution of the change in quality to the observed price change.

(t) “Quality adjustment” refers to the process of adjusting the observed prices of a product to remove the effect of any changes in the quality of that product over time so that pure price change may be identified.

(u) “Consumer substitution” occurs when, faced with changes in relative price, consumers buy more of the good that has become relatively cheaper and less of the good that has become relatively more expensive. It may occur between varieties of the same product or between different expenditure categories.

Annex 2

Quality adjustment methods

Implicit quality adjustment methods

1. The "overlap" method assumes that the entire price difference at a common point in time between the disappearing product and its replacement is due to a difference in quality.

2. The "overall mean imputation" method first calculates the average price change for an aggregate without the disappearing product and its replacement, and then uses that rate of price change to impute a price change for the disappearing product. It assumes that the pure price difference between the disappearing product and its replacement is equal to the average price changes for continuing (non-missing) products.

3. The "class mean imputation" method is a variant of the overall mean imputation method. The only difference is in the source of the imputed rate of price change to period t+1 for the disappearing product. Rather than using the average index change for all the non-missing products in the aggregate, the imputed rate of price change is estimated using only those price changes of the products that were judged essentially equivalent or were directly quality-adjusted.

Explicit quality adjustment methods

4. The "expert's adjustment" method relies on the judgement of one or more industry experts, commodity specialists, price statisticians or price collectors on the value of any quality difference between the old and replacement product. None, some, or all of the price difference may be attributed to the improved quality.

5. The "differences in production costs" approach relies on the information provided by the manufacturers on the production costs of new features of the replacements (new models), to which retail mark-ups and associated indirect taxes are then added. This approach is most practicable in markets with a relatively small number of producers, with infrequent and predictable model updates. However, it should be used with caution as it is possible for new production techniques to reduce costs while simultaneously improving quality.

6. The "quantity adjustment" method is applicable to products for which the replacement product is of a different size to the previously available one. It should only be used if the differences in quantities do not have an impact on the quality of the good.

7. The "option cost" method adjusts the price of the replacements for the value of the new observable characteristics. An example of this is the addition of a feature that earlier has been a priced option as standard to a new automobile model.

8. A "hedonic" regression method estimates the price of a product as a function of the characteristics it possesses. The relationship between the prices and all relevant and observable price-determining characteristics is first estimated and then results are used in the estimation of the index.

Annex 3

Types of errors

- "Quality change error" is the error that can occur as a result of the index's failure to make proper allowance for changes in the quality of goods and services.
- "New goods error" is the failure to reflect either price changes in new products not yet sampled, or given a COLI objective, the welfare gain to consumers when those products appear.
- "Outlet substitution error" can occur when consumers shift their purchases among outlets for the same product without proper reflection of this shift in the data collection for the index.
- "New outlets error" is conceptually identical to new goods error. It arises because of the failure to reflect either price changes in new outlets not yet sampled, or the welfare gain to consumers when the new outlets appear.
- "Upper level substitution error" arises when the index does not reflect consumer substitution among the basic categories of consumption owing to the use of an inappropriate method for aggregating elementary aggregates in the construction of the overall index value. Only relevant to a COLI, although an equivalent (representativity error) may be defined from the perspective of the pure price index.
- "Elementary index error" arises from the use of an inappropriate method for aggregating price quotations at the very lowest level of aggregation. The elementary index error can take two forms: formula error and lower level substitution error. The index suffers from formula error if, as a result of the properties of the formula, the result produced is biased relative to what would have been the result if a pure price change could have been estimated. The index suffers from lower level substitution error if it does not reflect consumer substitution among the products contained in the elementary aggregate.
- "Selection error" arises when the sample of price observations is not fully representative of the intended population of outlets or products. The first four types of errors listed above can be seen as special cases of this type of error.

Annex 4

Classification of Individual Consumption According to Purpose (COICOP) 14 (breakdown of individual consumption expenditure of households by division and group)

01 Food and non-alcoholic beverages

01.1 Food

01.2 Non-alcoholic beverages

02 Alcoholic beverages, tobacco and narcotics

02.1 Alcoholic beverages

02.2 Tobacco

02.3 Narcotics

[14] Explanatory notes are available on http://unstats.un.org/unsd/cr/registry/.

03 Clothing and footwear

03.1 Clothing

03.2 Footwear

04 Housing, water, electricity, gas and other fuels

04.1 Actual rentals for housing

04.2 Imputed rentals for housing

04.3 Maintenance and repair of the dwelling

04.4 Water supply and miscellaneous services related to the dwelling

04.5 Electricity, gas and other fuels

05 Furnishings, household equipment and routine household maintenance

05.1 Furniture and furnishings, carpets and other floor coverings

05.2 Household textiles

05.3 Household appliances

05.4 Glassware, tableware and household utensils

05.5 Tools and equipment for house and garden

05.6 Goods and services for routine household maintenance

06 Health

06.1 Medical products, appliances and equipment

06.2 Outpatient services

06.3 Hospital services

07 Transport

07.1 Purchase of vehicles

07.2 Operation of personal transport equipment

07.3 Transport services

08 Communication

08.1 Postal services

08.2 Telephone and telefax equipment

08.3 Telephone and telefax services

09 Recreation and culture

09.1 Audio-visual, photographic and information processing equipment

09.2 Other major durables for recreation and culture

09.3 Other recreational products and equipment, gardens and pets

09.4 Recreational and cultural services

09.5 Newspapers, books and stationery

09.6 Package holidays

10 Education

10.1 Pre-primary and primary education

10.2 Secondary education

10.3 Post-secondary non-tertiary education

10.4 Tertiary education

10.5 Education not definable by level

11 Restaurants and hotels

11.1 Catering services

11.2 Accommodation services

12 Miscellaneous goods and services

12.1 Personal care

12.2 Prostitution

12.3 Personal effects n.e.c.

12.4 Social protection

12.5 Insurance

12.6 Financial services n.e.c.

12.7 Other services n.e.c.

Resolution III

Resolution concerning further work on the International Standard Classification of Occupations

The Seventeenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians,

Having examined the report to the Conference of the International Labour Office's work with classifications,

Recognizing the valuable work that the International Labour Office (ILO) has carried out over the years to develop the current version of the *International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88)* and to advise on its use as a model for national occupational classifications as well as on their effective and reliable use for statistics and in client-related applications,

Recognizing that some countries have national occupational classifications that differ significantly from *ISCO-88* to well reflect their national circumstances,

Concluding that the basic principles and main structure of ISCO-88 should not be changed, but that nevertheless modifications are necessary in some areas, both to make improvements in light of experience gained in many countries using ISCO-88-based classifications, and as a consequence of developments in the world of work over the last 15 years,

Observing that the custodians of national standard occupational classifications as well as the users of such classifications and of occupational statistics significantly benefit from the technical advisory services that the ILO is uniquely qualified to provide, and

Recalling the request made by the Statistical Commission of the United Nations at its 34th session (March 2003) that the timetable for the revision of ISCO should meet the needs of the 2010 round of population and housing censuses;

Requests the Governing Body of the International Labour Organization to:

(a) ensure that the ILO, as the custodian of the *International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88)*, will have the capacity to:

  (1) undertake the research and consultations necessary to formulate the modifications and updates of ISCO-88 that are necessary to ensure that it can continue to serve as a good model for national occupational classifications to be used for statistics as well as for client-related applications;

  (2) complete this work not later than the end of 2007 for the results to be taken into account in national preparations for the majority of population censuses that are to be undertaken in the 2010 round;

(b) develop and implement mechanisms for this work to be done in cooperation and consultation with representatives of custodians of national occupational classifications as well as other experts and interested parties;

(c) convene an ILO meeting of experts to evaluate and make appropriate recommendations on the results to the Governing Body; and

(d) ensure that the ILO will have the capacity to provide the technical advisory services that will be needed particularly by the developing countries to ensure that national occupational classifications can be developed or improved correspondingly and be used effectively and reliably.

Appendix II

Participants and secretariat of the Conference

- List of participants
- Officers of the Conference
- Members of Committees and Working Groups
- Secretariat of the Conference

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