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INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

Report I

## **General report**

**18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians**

Geneva, 24 November–5 December 2008



INTERNATIONAL LABOUR OFFICE GENEVA

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## Abbreviations

ACS	African Centre for Statistics
ASEAN	Association of Southeast Asian Nations
CARICOM	Caribbean Community and Common Market
CARTAC	Caribbean Regional Technical Assistance Centre
CCSA	Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities
CIS	Commonwealth of Independent States
CLMIS	Caribbean Labour Market Information Systems
CNPS	National Social Protection Fund
COE	Council of Europe
CPI	consumer price index
DIEESE	Inter-Trade Union Department of Statistics and Socio-Economic Studies
DSD	data structure definition
EAC	East African Community
ECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
ECLAC	Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean
Eurostat	Statistical Office of the European Communities
FASDEV	Forum for African Statistical Development
GDP	gross domestic product
IAPRP	Inter-African Association for the Prevention of Occupational Risks
ICF	International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health
ICLS	International Conference of Labour Statisticians
ICP	International Comparison Programme
ICT	information and communications technology
IHSN	International Household Survey Network
ILM	international labour migration
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IPEC	International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour
ISCED	International Standard Classification of Education
ISCO	International Standard Classification of Occupations
IWGPS	Inter-Secretariat Working Group on Price Statistics

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KILM	Key Indicators of the Labour Market
LMIS	labour market information systems
MDG	Millennium Development Goal
MERCOSUR	Southern Cone Common Market
NSDS	national strategies for the development of statistics
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OECS	Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States
ONS	Office for National Statistics of Great Britain and Northern Ireland
PARIS21	Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century
RESA	Regional Economic and Social Analysis Unit
RSSF	Reference Regional Strategy Framework
SAFEWORK	InFocus Programme on Safety and Health at Work and the Environment
SDMX	Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange
SIAL	Labour Information and Analysis System
SIMPOC	Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour
SNA	System of National Accounts
SPERs	Social Protection Expenditure Reviews
STATCOM–Africa	Statistical Commission for Africa
TEG	Technical Expert Group
UCW	Understanding Children’s Work
UEMOA	West African Economic and Monetary Union
UNDAF	United Nations Development Assistance Framework
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization
UNICEF	United Nations Children’s Fund
UNSD	United Nations Statistics Division
UNWTO	United Nations World Tourism Organization
WHO	World Health Organization

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# 1. Statistical work of the ILO during the period 2004–08

## 1.1. Introduction

### (a) *Developments in the organization of ILO statistical activities*

1. Statistical activities in the ILO are currently carried out by a variety of departments and units both at headquarters and in the field structures. The Bureau of Statistics, situated in the Policy Integration and Statistics Department, consists of ten professional staff, five associate experts, seven statistical and information technology (IT) assistants and four secretarial/administrative staff. It is mainly responsible for: (i) the compilation and dissemination of official statistics from countries; (ii) the development and maintenance of statistical standards in labour statistics; (iii) the provision of technical assistance to countries in the production of labour statistics; (iv) the statistical work of the ILO in collaboration with other international agencies; and (v) the servicing of ILO units with respect to their statistical needs. Other units: (i) also compile statistics and indicators from both national and international sources; (ii) collect micro-data from national surveys; (iii) support countries in the design and implementation of specialized surveys; (iv) carry out statistical analysis such as production of indicators, imputations and estimations; and (v) support countries in their analysis of statistics and in the implementation of labour market information systems (LMIS).
2. The ILO Programme and Budget for 2006–07 stated that there was a need to reorganize the statistical activities in the ILO under central management to ensure the quality of the products, the ease of access and usefulness of the statistics compiled and to avoid unnecessary and costly duplication of work. To this end, it was decided to appoint two external consultants to conduct an audit of ILO statistical activities relating to the production of statistics. The audit covered areas relating to international standards, ILO-sponsored surveys, technical assistance, data compilation (types and methods), storage and dissemination, statistical analysis, organization of statistical activities in the ILO and the measurement of decent work. A summary of the recommendations on those aspects of the audit of relevance to the Conference is presented below.

#### International standards

3. The audit commended the quality of research that goes into the preparation of documents for the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) and stated that the international standards in labour statistics have widespread recognition. It supported the plan to develop an indicator of labour underutilization as a supplement to the unemployment rate. It however called for a mechanism to be established to monitor the extent to which these standards are implemented at the national level, in addition to the formal mechanism for monitoring the application of ILO Convention No. 160 on labour statistics.

#### Compilation of statistics

4. The audit recommended the following:
  - establish and maintain contact at a personal level in national responding institutions;

- 
- improve and facilitate responses to annual questionnaires by: (a) direct simultaneous submission of questionnaires to all official national producers of labour statistics; and (b) more intensive use of ILO field structures;
  - improve the availability and organization of metadata;
  - collect statistics also from other reputable national sources and from international sources along with their relevant metadata, in addition to official statistics, but store such statistics separately for internal use and disseminate them only if they have the required quality and country approval;
  - go forward with use of the Statistical Data and Metadata Exchange (SDMX) protocol for the collection and dissemination of statistics;
  - strengthen and coordinate the IT services for statistical activities.

### Dissemination of statistics

**5.** The audit recommended the following:

- rationalize the *Yearbook* and *Key Indicators of the Labour Market (KILM)* publications to minimize overlap and improve relevance;
- abandon publication in print form of time series for all subjects except wages and consumer price indices (CPIs);
- abandon publication in print form of topics relating to wages, hours of work and labour costs in manufacturing;
- abandon annual publication in any form of topics on industrial disputes and occupational health;
- in addition to the International Labour Office database on labour statistics (LABORSTA), make publications such as the *Yearbook Country Profiles* downloadable.

### Technical assistance

**6.** The audit recommended the following:

- build up a pool of staff of national statistics offices and research institutions for use as consultants to deliver technical assistance;
- encourage technical assistance delivery to several countries jointly;
- continue the production and updating of manuals, especially one on establishment surveys;
- increase the number of ILO statistical staff in Geneva and in the field structures to support delivery of technical assistance, especially for the conduct of surveys.

### Institutional arrangements

**7.** The audit recommended that the Bureau of Statistics be the main statistical unit of the ILO with responsibility for assuring the quality of statistical outputs in the Organization. An internal “advisory committee” should advise on ILO statistical matters such as standard setting, data production, technical assistance and organizational aspects. A “quality

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committee” should decide on the identification of new and labelling of all ILO statistics for storage and dissemination in a core database. An “IT committee” should evaluate and decide on IT services for the statistical needs of the Organization as a whole, including the field structures. A “standing committee” should clear the procedures used to make estimates, imputations, projections and aggregations for world and regional statistics.

**(b) Review of employment statistics: United Nations Statistical Commission**

8. The United Nations Statistical Commission at its 38th Session in February 2007 requested the Office for National Statistics (ONS) of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland to carry out a review of labour statistics within the context of its programme of regular reviews of areas of statistics. The review covered areas relating to: (i) the compilation and dissemination of labour statistics; (ii) technical assistance; and (iii) standard-setting and developmental work. It examined the work of international agencies involved in these activities and made recommendations on areas where specific improvements could be made. A summary of the recommendations of the Review Report,<sup>1</sup> submitted to the Commission at its 39th Session in February 2008, and the decisions of the Commission<sup>2</sup> is presented below.

**Data compilation and dissemination**

9. The report identified the International Labour Organization, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat) as the three main international agencies involved in this activity. It called for: (i) agreement among all three agencies on a common set of indicators for the labour market; (ii) extension of the scope and coverage of the statistics included in the ILO-comparable programme; (iii) promotion of the SDMX protocol for compiling and disseminating labour statistics; and (iv) use by the ILO of a more flexible mechanism for data compilation by collecting any available data from countries with limited resources whilst continuing the use of its standard format for other countries.
10. The Statistical Commission endorsed this recommendation and suggested coordination between the relevant agencies through the auspices of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities (CCSA) to implement it.

**Technical assistance**

11. The review noted ILO activities in promoting technical assistance through missions, consultancies, correspondence, training and e-consultation. It also mentioned efforts by the ILO aimed at statistical capacity building in collaboration with the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the 21st Century (PARIS21). The report indicated that, in the survey of countries carried out during the review, technical assistance was identified by low-income countries as the most important role of international agencies.<sup>3</sup> Given the limited resources of the ILO, it was recommended that the ILO work with other agencies to review the process for implementing technical assistance. A particular effort should be made to

<sup>1</sup> <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/doc08/2008-2-Employment-E.pdf>.

<sup>2</sup> <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/doc08/Report-English.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> See the background document for the report at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/doc08/BG-LabourStats.pdf>.

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improve the availability of quality labour statistics in countries without a regular labour force survey.

12. The United Nations Statistical Commission acknowledged the importance of this recommendation and requested that its implementation should be considered within existing technical cooperation programmes and the overall coordination efforts of the CCSA.

#### Standard setting and developmental work

13. The report examined the process used for international standard setting in labour statistics and recommended that the ICLS should meet more frequently but for a shorter duration.
14. The United Nations Statistical Commission endorsed this recommendation and requested the ICLS to examine its method of operation, especially its frequency and duration (see section 6.5 in Chapter 6).
15. Developmental work was identified by both high- and middle-income countries as the most important work item for international agencies. The survey of countries conducted by the reviewers identified five broad, not necessarily mutually exclusive, areas for priority developmental work as follows:
  - (a) *Changing structure of the labour force* (highest priority for high-income countries): In some countries this could take the form of a less formalized labour force (more self-employment), an increase in part-time employment, high job mobility (decrease in number of lifetime jobs), flexible working time arrangements (home work, for example). In others, factors such as ageing, migration, youth employment and labour market mismatch (underutilized labour, for example) are key issues.
  - (b) *Informal employment and the non-observed economy* (highest priority for middle-income countries): The issue identified is the need to further explore the implementation of the 17th ICLS framework for informal employment to enhance comparability across countries of the statistics produced, as well as the links with the informal sector and the non-observed economy.
  - (c) *Productivity* (second highest priority for high-income countries): The point at issue is reconciliation of employment and earnings statistics from labour force surveys and from other sources for use in national accounts. The methods used for this reconciliation need to be standardized across countries to achieve greater coherence between these statistics.
  - (d) *Child and forced labour* as well as *employment in relation to poverty* were given the highest priority by low-income countries.
  - (e) *Extending the labour statistics framework*: Possible extensions include flow statistics, reconciliation of statistics on labour supply and demand, integration of family and household information, as well as other statistical information/policy domains.
16. The report recognized that further discussions with countries would be necessary to flesh out the details of the issues in these broad areas. It further noted that the work would need to be done through various mechanisms and not just through the ILO.
17. The United Nations Statistical Commission accepted, in principle, the thrust of this recommendation but noted that it was an ambitious programme. It therefore requested the ILO to propose a road map for its implementation that would prioritize the activities, take

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account of the resources available for their implementation, and include other relevant international agencies as well as city groups and task teams.

## **1.2. Developments in methods for specific topics of labour statistics**

### **(a) Millennium Development Goals indicators**

- 18.** During the last six years the ILO has been working at the technical and political levels to integrate the Decent Work Agenda into the UN Millennium Development Goals (MDGs). With the introduction of the Secretary-General's Report to the UN General Assembly in 2006, the ILO now has strong support to bring the issue of decent and productive work to the forefront with respect to the MDG initiative:

World leaders further agreed to several other important targets at the 2005 World Summit. I am therefore recommending the incorporation of these commitments into the set of targets used to follow up on the Millennium Declaration. This includes: a new target under Millennium Development Goal 1: to make the goals of full and productive employment and decent work for all, including for women and young people, a central objective of our relevant national and international policies and our national development strategies ... (General Assembly, Secretary-General's closing remarks, 61st Session, Supplement No. A/61/1).

- 19.** The acceptance of this new target by the international community is a major achievement as it establishes the priority of decent and productive work as a vehicle for poverty reduction. From a practical viewpoint, it brings new challenges to the ILO, most notably the responsibility of delivering indicators that measure progress towards the new target, and also explains the linkages between decent and productive work and poverty reduction. Following in-house and external consultations, it is generally accepted within the ILO that, because of the complex components of decent work, a set of indicators would be necessary to measure the multifaceted dimensions presented in the new MDG. "Full and productive employment" will be measured by: (a) employment-to-population ratios, total and youth (aged 15–24 years); and (b) labour productivity, measured as output per person employed. The agreed-upon, empirical-based approximations for "decent work" will be captured with indicators on: (c) vulnerable employment, measured according to status in employment as the sum of own-account workers and contributing family workers; and (d) working poverty or, specifically, the share of working poor (US\$1 a day) in total employment.<sup>4</sup>
- 20.** In addition to the new target on "full and productive employment and decent work", the ILO is responsible for monitoring the progress made, at the global and regional levels, towards achieving the MDG 3 ("Promote gender equality and empower women"), through Indicator 3.2 ("Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector"). This indicator shows the extent to which women have access to paid employment, which will affect their integration into the monetary economy. It also indicates the degree to which labour markets are open to women in the industry and services sectors, which affect not only equal employment opportunity for women but also economic capacity to adapt to changes over time.
- 21.** In order to improve the quality and reliability of regional and global estimates for this indicator, and also to deal with the problem of missing values, the ILO has developed and

<sup>4</sup> For more information on the new MDG and its related indicators, see "Decent employment and the Millennium Development Goals: Description and analysis of a new target", in ILO, *KILM*, fifth edition, Geneva, 2008 (available at [www.ilo.org/kilm](http://www.ilo.org/kilm)).

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tested various multi-level modelling techniques. The model selected is fitted separately for each region and takes into account the variation over time within, and between, countries. The missing values are predicted on the assumption that the data, which are available for a given country, are representative of the deviation of that country from the average trend across time, which is estimated based on the whole sample in the region. The ILO continues to work on improving both country and period coverage for this indicator and on the methodologies used to produce regional and global estimates.

22. Given the limitations of this indicator, the main one being that it reflects only one aspect of women's situation in the labour market, a proposal was made to expand the current indicator to cover employment in all sectors (formal and informal) and types of employment, including both wage employment and self-employment in agriculture and non-agriculture. To this end, a questionnaire was developed and sent to developing countries and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) countries. Although the number of countries, which reported data on all dimensions, was limited, a database on employment by country, sex, status in employment, type of job (formal versus informal), branch of economic activity (agriculture versus non-agriculture) and type of production unit (formal sector enterprises, informal sector enterprises, households) was established at the end of 2005. The objective was to make more and better statistics available on employment in the informal economy by gender. To enhance the capacity of countries to produce such statistics, a number of technical advisory missions were undertaken (see section 1.4).

**(b) Economic activity in population censuses**

23. With the aim of promoting the quality and consistency of statistics on economic activity collected in population censuses, the ILO has provided inputs to the revision of the UN *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*<sup>5</sup> and to the Conference of European Statisticians Recommendations for the 2010 Censuses of Population and Housing.<sup>6</sup> The ILO and the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) have also collaborated on the development of a *Handbook on Measuring the Economically Active Population and Related Characteristics in Population Censuses*, which should be released as a joint publication in 2008. The Handbook is based on a report entitled "Collection of economic characteristics in population censuses: Technical report", which was issued in draft form in 2002. The Handbook was reviewed by a group of experts convened by the UNSD and the ILO in November 2007. Based on relevant experiences of countries, the Handbook provides suggestions on the implementation of guidelines in the "Principles and Recommendations", with particular focus on the questions used and the requirements for processing responses. It is intended to provide census planners with a variety of approaches to assess the questions and methods of collecting economic characteristics used in their national census.

**(c) Informal employment and the informal sector**

24. In 2004 the Bureau of Statistics prepared a working paper on "Measuring the informal economy: From employment in the informal sector to informal employment" (Husmanns, 2005). The purpose of the paper was: (i) to explain the international statistical definitions

<sup>5</sup> UN: *Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses*, Rev. 2, Sales No. E.07.XVII.8 (New York, 2007).

<sup>6</sup> UN: Conference of European Statisticians Recommendations for the 2010 Censuses of Population and Housing, ECE/CES/STAT/NONE/2006/4, UNECE (New York/Geneva, 2006).

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of employment in the informal sector and of informal employment, which had been adopted by the 15th and the 17th ICLS in 1993 and 2003; and (ii) to illustrate the application in household surveys of these definitions by providing examples of their translation into survey questions. The examples were based on current country practices in the collection of data on employment in the informal sector and on informal employment.

25. In response to paragraph 38(1) of the “resolution concerning statistics of employment in the informal sector” adopted by the 15th ICLS (1993), and further to the endorsement of the *Guidelines concerning a statistical definition of informal employment* by the 17th ICLS (2003), the Bureau started the preparation of a *Manual on Surveys of Informal Employment and Informal Sector* at the end of 2005, in cooperation with members of the international Expert Group on Informal Sector Statistics (Delhi Group) and with financial support by the Government of India. The purpose of the Manual is to provide guidance to countries in the development of statistics on the informal sector and informal employment, based on the existing international standards and national experiences. The outline of the Manual was approved by the Delhi Group at its Ninth Meeting (New Delhi, 11–12 May 2006). The drafts of six chapters of the Manual were presented to the Delhi Group for discussion at its tenth meeting (Geneva, 8–10 October 2007), and the drafts of the remaining four chapters will be discussed by the Delhi Group during its 11th meeting (2009).
26. The informal sector had been identified as one of the issues to be taken into consideration for updating of the System of National Accounts (SNA) 1993, and it had been decided to include a chapter on the informal sector in the updated SNA (SNA 2008). The Bureau provided technical support and comments to the Advisory Expert Group on National Accounts on the various drafts of the chapter.
27. In preparation for the Tripartite Caribbean Employment Forum, the ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean, in cooperation with the Bureau of Statistics, developed a labour force survey module on the informal sector and informal employment to support future analysis and policy development in this area (Simons and Lake, 2006).

**(d) Child labour**

28. The Statistical Information and Monitoring Programme on Child Labour (SIMPOC) is the statistical arm of the International Programme on the Elimination of Child Labour (IPEC) of the ILO. Founded in 1998, it provides technical assistance to countries in the collection, processing, analysis and dissemination of child labour data and information. The main instruments of SIMPOC are national child labour surveys and a range of sector-, workplace- and location-specific surveys. More than 350 surveys in all world regions have benefited from technical and financial assistance by SIMPOC.
29. SIMPOC data enabled the ILO to publish global and regional child labour estimates for 2000 and 2004, and the first ever analysis of child labour trends for the 2000–04 period (Hagemann et al., 2006; ILO, 2006a). The latter provided estimations by: (i) age group; (ii) sector of activity; and (iii) major world region. A growing and increasingly sophisticated database underlies this effort. As part of the follow-up to the 1998 Declaration on Fundamental Rights and Principles at Work the ILO has the responsibility to issue a trend analysis on child labour every four years.
30. SIMPOC is continually pursuing the improvement and development of methods critical to child labour statistics. Field manuals are available on child labour data collection, child labour data processing, and child labour data analysis and reporting (ILO–IPEC, 2004a; ILO–IPEC, 2004b; ILO–IPEC, 2004c). In collaboration with the United Nations Children’s Fund (UNICEF), a manual on child labour rapid assessment methodology was produced (ILO–UNICEF, 2005). These manuals are available in Arabic, English, French,

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Russian and Spanish in published form<sup>7</sup> and can also be downloaded from the SIMPOC web site.<sup>8</sup> In addition, SIMPOC makes available a range of model questionnaires for stand-alone and modular child labour surveys.

31. Despite the important progress made over the last decade, a significant number of countries remain without reliable data on child labour, essential for guiding policy and operational activities. Lack of information on some of the worst forms of child labour constitutes a particularly vital gap. In order to remedy this, SIMPOC is engaged in developing methodologies for the estimation of specific worst forms of child labour as defined by ILO Convention No. 182.
32. SIMPOC works closely with a number of partner agencies such as the World Bank and UNICEF. An important part of its training and analytical work is carried out in cooperation with the “Understanding Children’s Work” (UCW) project,<sup>9</sup> which is a joint endeavour of the three agencies.

**(e) Employment in the tourism industries**

33. On the basis of an agreement which sets the framework for their cooperation, the ILO and the United Nations World Tourism Organization (UNWTO) are collaborating in the measurement of employment and decent work in tourism. The agreement was approved by the Governing Body of the ILO at its 301st Session (March 2008) and ratified by the General Assembly of the UNWTO. Prior to the agreement, a new chapter on employment in the tourism industries had been prepared and included in the *2008 International recommendations for tourism statistics*<sup>10</sup> (UNSD and UNWTO, 2008), which was a revised version of the *Recommendations on tourism statistics* (1994).
34. One of the areas covered by the agreement is the improvement of national methods of data collection on employment in the tourism industries. With this objective in mind, the two organizations launched a set of initiatives, one of them being the production of a joint publication, *Sources and methods, labour statistics: Employment in the tourism industries (special edition)*, which was issued in June 2008 (ILO and UNWTO, 2008). This publication provides users and producers of tourism statistics, and those interested in labour statistics in general, with a consolidated volume containing descriptions of the methods used by countries in the production of statistics on employment, wages and hours of work in the tourism industries. The descriptions refer to all major statistical sources, as well as methods used by countries to compute the above variables.

**(f) Employment situation of persons with disabilities**

35. There is strong policy interest in establishing and monitoring the impact of legislation to promote employment opportunities for persons with disabilities. However, useful data on the employment situation of this population group is rarely available at the required level of detail and periodicity; in a number of countries there are currently no data at all on employment status in conjunction with disability.

<sup>7</sup> A sampling manual for child labour surveys is forthcoming.

<sup>8</sup> See [www.ilo.org/ipec/ChildlabourstatisticsSIMPOC/lang--en/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/ipec/ChildlabourstatisticsSIMPOC/lang--en/index.htm).

<sup>9</sup> See [www.ucw-project.org](http://www.ucw-project.org).

<sup>10</sup> Available at <http://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/doc08/BG-TourismStats.pdf>.

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36. In collaboration with the Skills and Employability Department of the ILO, the Bureau of Statistics prepared a guide entitled *The employment situation of people with disabilities: Towards improved statistical information* (ILO, 2007i), which highlights basic knowledge from the fields of labour and disability statistics that has to be combined for a comprehensive description of the employment situation of persons with disabilities. It complements an earlier compendium, which describes the methodologies currently in use in 95 countries to compile *Statistics on the employment situation of people with disabilities: A compendium of national methodologies* (ILO, 2004a). The descriptions were based on information obtained from a special database containing the results of a worldwide survey, which had been conducted by the ILO in 2003 to gather methodological information on the statistics that are currently available at country level.
37. The results showed that countries usually used definitions of disability based on national legislation or developed by national statistical offices, ministries or non-governmental organizations concerned with disability; less than 50 per cent of the countries were using the relevant international standards dealing with statistics on disability. More work is needed at an international level to facilitate the comparison of data on disability across countries. To address these issues, the Washington City Group was established. The Group is planning to develop a set of general disability measures suitable for use in censuses, national sample surveys, etc., by using the International Classification of Functioning, Disability and Health (ICF) issued by the World Health Organization (WHO).

**(g) International migration of workers**

38. The International Migration Branch of the ILO collaborated with the Bureau of Statistics in the development and implementation of a labour migration module for attachment to household surveys, particularly labour force surveys. Questions were developed to cover a wide array of migration topics, though special attention was given to the work situation of current and former migrants, as well as remittances sent to or received from abroad. The complete module contains approximately 200 questions, but smaller sets of questions can be used for specific purposes. Pilot tests of the module were carried out in Armenia and Thailand (2006) and in Ecuador and Egypt (2007), in cooperation with the national statistical agencies of these countries. Due to the response burden involved and the amount of funding available, only a limited number of questions could be tested; however, all pilot tests included questions on remittances.
39. In addition to remittances, questions have been developed to measure other dimensions of international migration, including basic information on country of birth, citizenship and previous residence. For immigrants, further information can be collected about migration history, migration networks, intent of duration of stay, pre-migration status and activity (e.g. characteristics at time of move, reasons for moving), arrival to country (e.g. visa status, employment information), fertility, language acquisition and current work situation. There are also separate questions for people who have moved back to their country of origin, and for those with household members living abroad. Because of limitations in funding and in the number of questions which could be added to the surveys, most of the questions of the labour migration module have not yet been tested in the field, though more could be tested at a later date.
40. The ILO and the International Household Survey Network (IHSN) undertook joint work to examine the methodologies used by countries for the collection of data on international labour migration. On the basis of current best practices, a harmonized set of questions was developed for inclusion in multi-purpose household surveys. Harmonization of questions helps to improve the validity, reliability and cross-country comparability of data on international labour migration. It is planned to include the harmonized set of questions and related documentation in the Question Bank of the IHSN. A paper on labour migration

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surveys was presented at the Workshop on Remittances and Household Surveys in Suitland, Maryland, United States, in January 2008.

41. As a key building block of the ILO–EU Project on Labour Migration as an Instrument for Development and Integration in the Maghreb, East Africa and West Africa (2004–06), the ILO conducted national assessment studies on labour migration statistics in nine countries of the Maghreb and West Africa, and produced three regional synthesis studies covering the East African Community (EAC), three central Maghreb and six West African countries. The four main purposes were to: (1) undertake a comprehensive review of the available sources of migration statistics in each country; (2) assess the nature, definitions, extent and quality of the available data, including an evaluative inventory of the institutions collecting and using the information; (3) identify the information gaps, data weaknesses and institutional constraints for providing a reliable information basis for national or regional policy decisions; and (4) recommend policy priorities and institutional actions for the improvement of information systems on labour migration. The methodology for the studies involved: obtaining and reviewing available primary and secondary data; consultations with national statistical offices, government ministries, social partners, research institutions and other key informants; expert analysis of data; and consultation with key stakeholders on the formulation of conclusions. The national studies and subregional synthesis studies on the collection and use of labour migration data and statistics were published by the ILO as *International Migration Papers*.<sup>11</sup>
42. To support future analysis and policy development regarding the migration of workers, a rapid assessment module was developed by the ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean in collaboration with the International Migration Branch of the ILO, focusing on the intra-Caribbean migration of workers. A publication on the current situation of workers' migration in the Caribbean was a related product (Pienkos, 2006).

#### **(h) Forced labour and human trafficking**

##### Global estimate

43. In 2005, the ILO estimated for the first time that 12.3 million people were in forced labour around the world, among which 2.4 million were victims of human trafficking. The estimate was published in the 2005 Director-General's Global Report entitled *A global alliance against forced labour*,<sup>12</sup> which called for improved national statistics on forced labour and human trafficking. A separate ILO publication has described in detail the methodology and the data sources used to compute the ILO global estimate (Belser, de Cock and Mehran, 2005). This methodology involved a capture–recapture sampling of reported cases of forced labour and human trafficking, and an assumption about the ratio of reported to unreported cases. The findings indicated that a majority of 80 per cent of modern forced labour is in the private economy, while only 20 per cent is imposed by state authorities.

##### Indicators and pilot work on national estimates

44. In order to inform policy-making and establish benchmarks to measure progress at national level, the ILO has engaged in activities aimed at supporting the improvement of national

<sup>11</sup> Available at [http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/migrant/info/imp\\_list.htm](http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/migrant/info/imp_list.htm).

<sup>12</sup> Available at [http://www.ilo.org/dyn/declaris/DECLARATIONWEB.DOWNLOAD\\_BLOB?Var\\_DocumentID=5059](http://www.ilo.org/dyn/declaris/DECLARATIONWEB.DOWNLOAD_BLOB?Var_DocumentID=5059).

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statistics since 2006. This work started with an expert meeting, which was held in Geneva in December 2006<sup>13</sup> with the financial support of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland Department for International Development (DFID) and the Netherlands. Subsequently, the ILO has worked jointly with the European Commission to identify clear indicators of human trafficking, and cooperated with the national statistical offices of a limited number of pilot countries throughout the world. Regarding the work on indicators, an electronic survey was implemented as part of the so-called DELPHI methodology to build a European expert consensus on appropriate indicators. Pilot activities on national estimates were carried out in Georgia, Republic of Moldova and Niger. In the Republic of Moldova, for example, the National Bureau of Statistics asked questions on forced labour and human trafficking to returned migrants as part of a labour migration survey attached to its standard labour force survey.

**(i) Impact of natural disasters on employment**

**El Niño phenomenon (Bolivia)**

45. In May 2007, a joint four-member team of the ILO and the Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) conducted an assessment of the impact on livelihoods caused by the El Niño phenomenon that ravaged Bolivia in early 2007 through flooding (lowland watershed areas) and freezing (highlands). A new methodology of the impact on livelihoods caused by natural disasters was tested through a series of interviews of sample households, business enterprises, community leaders and high officials in some of the most affected areas (Santa Cruz, Cochabamba and Beni departments), in combination with a baseline analysis based on population census data and poverty mapping in local (mostly departmental) areas. The ILO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean prepared an employment report which included baseline estimates and estimates of the impact of the disaster on the economically active population by department (with special emphasis on the most vulnerable segments), employment by sex, and wages as an input to the process of reconstruction and rehabilitation centred on strengthening the livelihoods of the affected population.

**Earthquake (Peru)**

46. Three special surveys to assess the impact of the earthquake in Ica (Peru) in August 2007 were executed by the ILO Subregional Office for the Andean Countries, with the support of the Ministry of Labour and Employment Promotion of Peru and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP). The three surveys – for households, businesses and qualified officials – were initiated two months after the earthquake and carried out from 14 October until 3 November. A total of 1,099 households, 358 businesses with ten or more employees, and 61 qualified officials from the urban areas of Ica, Pisco and Chincha participated in the surveys. The objective of this endeavour was to estimate the magnitude of employment loss, the increase of unemployment, the projected availability of labour and the labour needs for reconstruction. The process involved the elaboration of three specific questionnaires, training the personnel, field work and drafting the report. The final report has been presented and distributed to national and regional authorities as well as to the institutions related to the reconstruction of the affected region.

<sup>13</sup> Available at [http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed\\_norm/---declaration/documents/meetingdocument/wcms\\_081981.pdf](http://www.ilo.org/wcmsp5/groups/public/---ed_norm/---declaration/documents/meetingdocument/wcms_081981.pdf)

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**(j) Consumer price indices**

47. New international guidelines for statistics on CPIs were adopted in 2003 by the 17th ICLS in its resolution concerning CPI. The resolution recommended that a number of price indices should be produced, given the widespread use of CPI estimates for many different purposes. The resolution also provided guidelines on the appropriate conceptual basis depending on the main use of the CPI.
48. In parallel with the resolution, a manual entitled *Consumer price index manual: Theory and practice* (ILO et al., 2004) was developed as a joint effort of six international organizations (ILO, International Monetary Fund (IMF), OECD, Eurostat, United Nations Economic Commission for Europe (UNECE) and the World Bank) which are members of the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on Price Statistics (IWGPS), together with experts from a number of national statistical offices and universities. The manual provides considerably more detail, information, explanation and rationalization of CPI methodology and the relevant economic and statistical theory than could be included in the resolution. It also presents an overview of conceptual and theoretical issues that should be considered when making decisions on the various problems in the daily compilation of the CPI. The manual documents different practices currently in use and points out alternatives to existing practices whenever possible, along with their advantages and disadvantages. The manual was published by the ILO in 2004 and translated by the IMF into French, Spanish, Russian and Chinese. It is also available in Japanese.
49. The electronic version of the CPI manual<sup>14</sup> is intended to be a “living document”, which will be amended over time to address emerging issues in the future. The English online version of the manual has been updated, and the ILO web page contains the original version, errata and the latest corrected version. The non-English language versions have also benefited from the revision.
50. To obtain additional feedback on the usefulness and completeness of the CPI manual and on country experiences with the manual, the ILO, in cooperation with the UNECE, surveyed national statistical offices and other potential users of the manual. The report that summarizes the results of the survey is available on the web site of the ILO Bureau of Statistics.<sup>15</sup>
51. With a view to addressing the issues and needs of developing countries, a supplementary handbook to the CPI manual is being prepared by the ONS of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland, under the auspices of the IWGPS which has overall responsibility for the preparation of manuals on all types of price indices. The *Supplementary Handbook: Practical Guide to Compiling Consumer Price Indices* will focus on practical and implementation issues relevant to the compilation of the CPI in developing countries. To the extent possible, work on this Handbook benefited from the comments received on the usefulness and completeness of the CPI manual. It is expected that the work on the Handbook will be completed in 2008.

**(k) Working poor**

52. In preparation for the Tripartite Caribbean Employment Forum, a methodology to estimate the number of working poor in the Caribbean was developed by the ILO Subregional

<sup>14</sup> Available at <http://www.ilo.org/stat/index.htm>.

<sup>15</sup> See <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/download/cpi/survey.pdf>.

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Office for the Caribbean using the micro-data files of surveys of living conditions, household income and expenditure surveys and labour force surveys. A brief on the methodology was developed and a publication containing the results of the exercise was produced (Labour Market and Poverty Studies Unit, 2006).

**(l) Occupational safety and health**

53. As a follow-up to the resolution concerning statistics of occupational injuries, adopted by the 16th ICLS in 1998, the ILO Bureau of Statistics developed and published a manual on occupational injuries statistics from household surveys and establishment surveys.<sup>16</sup> The manual was prepared in close collaboration with the then ILO InFocus Programme on Safety and Health at Work and the Environment (SAFEWORK) aimed at developing new methodologies to fill the gap in the existing systems for the compilation of statistics in this field. The manual reflects the lessons learned from pilot testing of the new methodologies by the national statistical offices of Jamaica, Nigeria and the Philippines. The main aim of the manual is to provide technical guidance to those involved in the production of statistics on occupational injuries through household surveys and establishment surveys, when there is concern that the traditional systems for the notification of occupational injuries may have restricted coverage in terms of workers, activities or types of injuries. It is hoped that the manual will also be useful to those responsible for notification systems.

**(m) Social dialogue**

54. Regarding continuation of ILO work to advance statistics on trade union membership and collective bargaining coverage, the 17th ICLS concluded that, in view of the many other priority topics for the development of statistics, supplementary efforts by the Office would be premature. There was recognition of the need for reliable statistics on the two topics, in particular in view of their possible inclusion among potential indicators for decent work measures. This field of statistics is complex and the nature of the statistics and their collection has changed substantially since the adoption of the only currently existing international standard on the topic (i.e. the resolution concerning statistics of collective agreements) by the Third ICLS (1926).

55. To follow up on the conclusions reached by the 17th ICLS, the ILO published a Working Paper entitled *Social Dialogue Indicators, Trade Union Membership and Collective Bargaining Coverage: Statistical Concepts, Methods and Findings* (Lawrence and Ishikawa, 2005).<sup>17</sup> Should the 18th ICLS consider it useful that further research be carried out in order to prepare a comprehensive report on the measurement of social dialogue indicators (including trade union membership and collective bargaining coverage), it may wish to indicate a level of priority for such work.

**(n) Other developmental work**

56. Separate reports (including draft resolutions) have been prepared on the measurement of working time (Report II) and on child labour statistics (Report III).

57. Developmental work on the following topics is described elsewhere in this report:

<sup>16</sup> K. Taswell and P. Wingfield-Digby: *Occupational injuries statistics from household surveys and establishment surveys: An ILO manual on methods* (Geneva, ILO, 2008).

<sup>17</sup> The paper can be consulted online at: <http://mirror/public/english/bureau/stat/papers/index.htm>.

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- (a) Updating of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO–08) (see Chapter 2);
  - (b) Measuring and monitoring decent work (see Chapter 3);
  - (c) Indicators of labour underutilization (see Chapter 4); and
  - (d) Measurement of volunteer work (see Chapter 5).

### **1.3. Data collection, estimation and dissemination**

#### **(a) Data collection – General**

- 58.** Since its establishment almost 90 years ago, the ILO has been collecting and disseminating statistics on labour issues. This mandate is stipulated in article 10.1 of the Constitution of the Organization that requires the collection and distribution of “information on all subjects relating to the international adjustment of conditions of individual life and labour”.
- 59.** The main vehicles for collecting statistics on various labour topics have been the annual questionnaires for the *Yearbook of Labour Statistics* and the *October Inquiry*. In addition to the statistics collected through these questionnaires sent to national authorities (ministries responsible for labour, central statistical services, etc.), the ILO has gleaned statistics from official national publications and, increasingly, from national statistical web sites. The Bureau of Statistics also collects and disseminates the relevant national methodological information relating to the production of these statistics. All the information collected by the Bureau is stored in a series of databases which are used for printed and electronic publications (for more information see section 1.3(b) below), for data analysis, and for responding to users’ requests for statistics and methodological information on national statistical practices.
- 60.** The bulk of the work related to data collection and dissemination of labour statistics is necessarily of a continuing nature, involving the collection, processing and dissemination of statistics on the major labour topics covered in the *Yearbook of Labour Statistics*, *Bulletin of Labour Statistics* and the *October Inquiry*. A number of additional data collection activities, however, have been undertaken since the 17th ICLS (2003) and special databases established. These include databases on employment by hours of work, household income and expenditure statistics, informal employment, public sector employment, etc. (see section 1.3(d) below). LABORSTA as the main database of the Bureau has been extended to include the databases on public sector employment, working time, disability, household income and expenditure, and labour migration. These databases have all been restructured and homogenized to the general structure and format of LABORSTA. They now all have the same infrastructure: meta-information, documentation, consistency checks, editing and checking facilities, questionnaire generation and dissemination in a standard way, etc. Information regarding the updating of regular databases can be found at <http://laborsta.ilo.org>.
- 61.** Over the last five years the Bureau of Statistics has not only expanded the coverage of the topics as well as the coverage of the countries and territories, but it has also made significant efforts to improve the quality of the statistics collected and disseminated. A number of consistency checks within and across tables, and across various topics, have been carried out and appropriate corrections made. Moreover, data gaps in historical series have been reduced thanks to a close cooperation with countries and ILO field offices, sharing of population census data collected by the UNSD, and extensive use of data

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disseminated on national statistical web sites. It is worth noting that the downward trend in the response rate for the questionnaires for the *Yearbook of Labour Statistics* was reversed in 2008.

- 62.** In light of a growing demand for statistical data by international organizations, a number of initiatives have been undertaken to reduce the response burden put on national statistical agencies and ministries of labour: (i) in 2007, the Bureau of Statistics proposed that the three main organizations concerned with labour statistics (Eurostat, OECD and the ILO) get together and explore the possibility of joint, collaborative work on the development of data structure definitions (DSDs), and the exchange and sharing of data and metadata by using SDMX. Both Eurostat and the OECD expressed interest and readiness to embark on this project, which could eventually lessen the data reporting burden of countries. Some preliminary discussions on the steps to be taken have already been held; (ii) arrangements have been made to formalize the collaboration with the UNSD in respect of the sharing of statistics on the economically active population; and (iii) an agreement has been reached with Eurostat to collect jointly data on strikes and lockouts from the Member States of the European Union. The possibility of jointly collecting data on occupational injuries has been explored, but no agreement has been reached to date due to the differences in the definitions used. The possibility of a more systematic use of labour force survey data collected by Eurostat is also being explored.
- 63.** While taking care to minimize the reporting burden of countries, the Bureau of Statistics has continued to review its methods of data gathering, in order to improve the country coverage, increase the range of data obtained from each country, and reduce the lag between the time when these data are available in the country and the time when they are available to the ILO. The use of pre-filled electronic questionnaires, which are sent to countries as spreadsheets attached to an email, has substantially decreased the use of paper for the collection of data and reduced the reporting time. The spreadsheet questionnaires are sent out automatically to countries, which are informed that they can request paper questionnaires if the requested technology is not available for them to fill in the spreadsheet questionnaires. More than 90 per cent of the responses to the Yearbook questionnaire received in 2007 were in electronic format. The management of the statistical contacts database of the Bureau has been improved. Also, the procedures for collecting periodic data have been automatized, so that more than 80 per cent of the monthly series are now collected directly from the Web in a timely fashion. As a result, the time lag for the dissemination of new data has been decreased by about two months.
- 64.** For the other major data collection exercise of the Bureau, i.e. the *October Inquiry*, a data collection application was developed allowing countries to update pre-filled HTML forms through the Internet. Spreadsheet questionnaires and paper questionnaires are also available to countries upon request. Other computer tools, which allow an automatic update of the databases to be made from spreadsheet questionnaires, were also developed.
- 65.** In 2007, the ILO examined its statistical activities. An external audit was undertaken to review the ongoing statistical activities of the ILO and the entire data collection and dissemination programme, and to provide advice and options for the statistical measurement of decent work (see section 1.1(a) of this report). This audit was carried out in parallel with a review of labour statistics by the Statistical Commission which explored, among other issues, the adequacy and efficiency of the ILO statistical programme. It also identified priority areas for future work as summarized in section 1.1(b).
- 66.** The ILO is now planning to establish a technical task team to review and advise on: (a) the methods used for the regular compilation of data by the Organization, including the frequency of compilation of each series, the treatment of the data, the use of SDMX, the role of different ILO units, and the types of questionnaires used; (b) the nature of the data compiled in terms of official data (submitted by, or through, national statistical systems or

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extracted from official national publications, including the Internet, or from dissemination media of international agencies with clear links to official sources), semi-official data (obtained from other sources but with clear metadata) and other data; and (c) the storage and dissemination of the statistics. This will also include activities relating to estimation, imputation, projections and other forms of statistical analysis of data.

**(b) Data dissemination by the Bureau of Statistics**

67. The regular publication programme of the Bureau has been enhanced and extended. New applications were developed using new technologies (such as XML, XSL-FO, etc.) to produce in-house the master copies of its printed publications. These changes made it possible to produce the publications locally and to reduce production costs drastically. As a result, the Bureau was able to respond to a request from the Governing Body of the ILO to produce a new, more attractive publication. This resulted in the launching of the *Yearbook of Labour Statistics: Country Profiles* in 2006.
68. In parallel, the Bureau launched the publication of two CD-ROMs corresponding to its two major databases (LABORSTA and the *October Enquiry* results (LABOCT)). These CD-ROMs were launched in 2003 and continue to be produced since then. The Bureau also continued to improve its main dissemination tool, the LABORSTA dissemination web site (<http://laborsta.ilo.org>). In addition to the new data sets that have been added, the design has been continuously improved and enhanced. The site became trilingual (English, French and Spanish) in 2007. The coverage of meta-information published in the series “Sources and methods: Labour statistics” (S&M) has been extended to all three languages and to also cover past publications. Specific “entry points” have been defined allowing the ILO regional offices to access directly the information for the countries which they cover, so that they can serve their constituents better.

**(c) Sources and methods: Labour statistics**

69. To guide users about the statistics disseminated, the Bureau of Statistics collects and publishes detailed methodological information on the national sources of these statistics. The series entitled “S&M” was introduced in 1980 and, in general, gives details on the coverage, definitions, computation methods and other relevant characteristics of the published statistical series. The S&M series not only provides useful information for users to assess the published statistics, especially with respect to issues of comparability, but also represents a rich source of material for developing international standards and for other methodological work. Moreover, it gives an overview of national practices which may be useful for countries wanting to start their own data production.
70. New editions of Volume 3, *Economically active population, employment, unemployment and hours of work (household surveys)*, and Volume 4, *Employment, unemployment, wages and hours of work (administrative records and related sources)*, of the series S&M were issued in 2004 (in printed form, on CD-ROM and on the statistical web site of the Bureau).<sup>18</sup> New editions of Volume 5, *Total and economically active population, employment and unemployment (population censuses)*, and Volume 6, *Household income and expenditure surveys*, were also prepared but, due to financial constraints, could only be disseminated in electronic format.

<sup>18</sup> <http://laborsta.ilo.org>.

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## **(d) Special databases of the Bureau of Statistics**

### Employed persons by hours of work

71. The data set on the distribution of employed persons by hours of work was compiled from an ILO ad hoc inquiry to national statistical agencies around the world, which had been undertaken in 2005 to support various statistical activities, including ILO initiatives for measuring decent work,<sup>19</sup> the ILO Global Report, *Working time around the world: Trends in working hours, laws and policies in a global comparative perspective* (Lee, McCann and Messenger, 2007),<sup>20</sup> and ILO work relating to a revision of the current standards on statistics of working time adopted by the Tenth ICLS (1962).<sup>21</sup>
72. National statistical agencies were requested to report on the number of employed persons according to their weekly working hours, distinguishing between paid employment and self-employment. They were provided with a standard reporting form to facilitate and standardize the results to the extent possible. A set of specific guidelines on preferred responses was also provided. The results are disseminated at <http://laborsta.ilo.org>. The data may eventually become part of the regular series disseminated by the Bureau.

### Household income and expenditure statistics

73. Since 1967 the Bureau of Statistics has been collecting statistics on the level, composition and size distribution of household income and consumption expenditure, broken down by status in employment, household size and geographical areas. The data gathering is conducted every ten years from countries known to have household income and expenditure statistics. The latest one was in 2005.
74. The results of the 2005 data collection are disseminated at <http://laborsta.ilo.org>. The data set contains data from household income and expenditure surveys or similar household surveys conducted in about 60 countries, areas and territories during the period 1995–2004. It contains six basic tables: (i) characteristics of household income by expenditure class; (ii) distribution of household expenditure groups; (iii) distribution of households by age of household head and household size; (iv) distribution of household income by source; (v) distribution of households by household size and sex of household head; and (vi) poverty line and income/expenditure distribution.

### Public sector employment

75. The experimental data collection of statistics on public sector employment in 1999, 2000 and 2001, covering the years 1985, 1990 and 1995–2000, had proved to be very successful and had provided valuable information for a wide variety of users both within and outside the ILO. The Bureau of Statistics therefore included this topic among its regular data collection activities. Since 2005 the database on public sector employment has been updated with biannual periodicity, and is disseminated at <http://laborsta.ilo.org>. The database contains statistics for more than 140 countries and territories on total employment, employment in the private sector, and public sector employment by sex, by type of institutional unit, by level of government and by economic activity. Depending on

<sup>19</sup> See <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/integration/indicato/index.htm>.

<sup>20</sup> For a summary of findings, see [www.ilo.org/global/What\\_we\\_do/Publications/lang-en/docName--WCMS\\_082838/index.htm](http://www.ilo.org/global/What_we_do/Publications/lang-en/docName--WCMS_082838/index.htm).

<sup>21</sup> See <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/download/res/hours.pdf>.

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the country, the statistics are available for the years (close to) 1985, 1990 and 1995, as well as for 1996–2004.

#### Informal employment and employment in the informal sector

76. A database with statistics on employment in the informal sector was established by the Bureau of Statistics in 1998 to meet an increasing user demand for such statistics, and is available on request. It was updated in 2001, 2003 and partially in 2007. The database contains official national statistics on employment in the informal sector (or small or micro-enterprises or related concepts), as well as methodological information relating to these statistics, for more than 60 countries, virtually all of them being developing or transition countries.
77. Following the adoption of *Guidelines concerning a statistical definition of informal employment* by the 17th ICLS (2003), and a proposal by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on MDG Indicators to explore the possibility of expanding the MDG indicator “Share of women in wage employment in the non-agricultural sector” to all sectors and all types of employment including informal employment, a questionnaire was developed and sent to countries in 2005. Although the response rate was rather low due to the newness of the concept of informal employment, an experimental database was established. It contains statistics on informal employment by country, sex, status in employment, branch of economic activity (agriculture versus non-agriculture), and type of production unit (formal sector enterprises, informal sector enterprises, households). The objective was to make more and better statistics on the informal economy available at the international level.

#### Trade union membership

78. The Bureau of Statistics has carried on with its regular collection and dissemination of available national official statistics of trade union membership covering 49 countries, which are distributed upon request. Methodological information about each source is also prepared by the Bureau. Considerable variation exists among countries in data collection methods, coverage and definitions, as well as in the calculation of trade union density rates. All of these factors affect the use of the statistics and their comparability between countries and over time.

#### **(e) Estimates and projections by the Bureau of Statistics**

##### Estimates and projections of the economically active population

79. Starting in 1971, the ILO has been publishing estimates and projections of total population, economically active population and age/sex specific activity rates for all countries, territories, major geographical groupings, world, etc. The estimates and projections are based on the population projections of the United Nations Population Division. The fifth edition of the *Estimates and projections of the economically active population* was issued in 2005. It provides estimates and projections for the period 1980–2020 for 191 countries and territories and 29 economic and geographical groupings. The reference period for the estimates is 1980–2003 and for the projections 2004–20. The basic data are single-year activity rates by sex and 11 age groups in five-year age intervals, the last age group being 65 years and above. The data are available at the ILO main web site on labour statistics (<http://laborsta.ilo.org>).

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## ILO-comparable annual employment and unemployment estimates

- 80.** This data set of 11 indicators for 30 countries from all regions of the world continues to be published annually in the *Bulletin of Labour Statistics*. The time series start in 1981 and are now also disseminated through the statistical web site of the Bureau (<http://laborsta.ilo.org>). Ten-year time series of annual averages from 1994 to 2003 were published in printed form in 2004 (Lepper, 2004). The ILO comparable rates of labour force participation and of unemployment are computed and presented by sex for all countries covered, providing a quick insight into the relative labour market situation of men and women. Separate country tables describe the ILO-comparable methodology for adjustments to harmonize the indicators, the annual averaging method used and all available ILO comparable estimates, i.e. working-age population, total and civilian labour force and employment, employment and unemployment by age group and employment by industry.
- 81.** In early 2008, the Bureau of Statistics updated the ILO-comparable database. Recently, the Bureau has expanded the coverage of the countries included in this programme. It is expected that the next publication of the ILO-comparable estimates will include some 14 additional countries.

## Regional and global estimates of consumer price inflation

- 82.** The globalization of trade and production and the liberalization of markets have led to an increasing interest in global and regional estimates of price inflation. To meet the need for such information, the Bureau of Statistics, in collaboration with the Federal Reserve Bank of Cleveland, developed a procedure for estimating the regional and global consumer price inflation and changes in the prices of consumer goods and services. Aggregated measures of consumer price inflation are estimated for seven regions. These estimates, along with monthly and annual CPI figures for some 200 countries, areas and territories around the world, are disseminated at <http://www.clevelandfed.org.research/inflation>. The national CPI figures, both annual and monthly and including the CPI by expenditure groups, are collected by the Bureau of Statistics and disseminated on its web site (<http://laborsta.ilo.org>). Regional and global estimates of consumer price inflation have been included in the *ILO Yearbook of Labour Statistics* since 2006.

### **(f) Restructuring of the web site of the Bureau of Statistics**

- 83.** A revamped version of the web site of the Bureau of Statistics appeared at the beginning of 2008. The web site is now more visible within the ILO global web site at [www.ilo.org](http://www.ilo.org), which features statistics as one of seven main areas of work, allowing easy access to the main statistical databases of the ILO (most notably to LABORSTA), as well as to all other statistical resources. The information in the new web site is organized in a more user-friendly and functional way, and its structure is coherent with web sites of all other ILO departments. It has incorporated essential information on the activities of the Bureau, its history, the various topics of labour statistics that have been discussed at the ICLS since 1923, the international statistical standards themselves, as well as publications and information on previous and forthcoming meetings and events. The web site has become an essential tool for users interested in learning about labour statistics in general. It can be accessed at [www.ilo.org/stat](http://www.ilo.org/stat) in the three working languages of the ILO (English, French and Spanish).
- 84.** In response to an observation made at the 17th ICLS, the web site now provides some technical guidance on specific issues through a frequently asked questions (FAQ) system.

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**(g) Labour market information**

85. The Economic and Labour Markets Analysis Department of the ILO disseminates labour market information in reports that include the *KILM*, which is now in its fifth edition, and *Global Employment Trends*, which has been published since 2003.
86. The KILM is a comprehensive database and analysis of country-level data on 20 key indicators of the labour market from 1980 to the latest available year. In this context, the KILM serves as a tool for policy-makers and researchers in monitoring and assessing many of the pertinent issues related to the functioning of labour markets.
87. The annual publication, *Global Employment Trends*, has become a regular medium to inform ILO constituents, the research community and also a wider public on labour market trends at the global and regional levels. Data are based on the Global Employment Trends Models. On occasion, special editions are produced to analyse labour market trends for segments of the population such as youth (2004 and 2006) and women (2004 and 2007), or for certain regions (for example, *Global employment trends supplement for Europe and Central Asia*, 2005, and *African employment trends*, 2007).
88. The Labour Market Information Library (LMIL) is a project designed to improve the flow and exchange of labour market information between various users at ILO headquarters and regional offices. The project has been implemented in the following regions: Latin America, Asia, Central Africa, East Africa, Eastern Europe and the Middle East.
89. As part of a broader goal in the ILO to better inform policy-makers and researchers of the key trends in labour markets that ultimately determine the status and well-being of the world's workers, the Employment Trends Unit continues to develop and refine its methodology for producing *world and regional estimates* of labour market indicators. The Global Employment Trends Models are used to generate global and regional estimates on labour force participation rates, employment-to-population ratios, unemployment rates, sectoral employment estimates, status in employment, employment elasticity, labour productivity and working poverty. Where possible, the estimates are disaggregated by age and sex. The Economic and Labour Markets Analysis Department has a growing body of literature that describes the modelling techniques and aggregation methodologies used to generate these estimates, which are disseminated in the *Global Employment Trends* series.

**(h) Child labour**

90. SIMPOC collaborated with a large number of national statistical offices in the implementation of national child labour surveys. The reports of these surveys contain a wide range of statistics on working children and child labour, which are disseminated as printed publications and through the publicly accessible web sites of the respective countries and of SIMPOC.<sup>22</sup>
91. Since 2004, many national child labour surveys have been conducted with technical and financial assistance by SIMPOC. These include surveys in: Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Lesotho, Madagascar, Mali, Niger, Rwanda, Senegal and Togo in Africa; Bangladesh, Indonesia, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia and Sri Lanka in the Asian region; Jordan and Yemen among Arab countries; Azerbaijan and Turkey in the European region; and Argentina, Bolivia, Chile, Ecuador, Jamaica, Mexico, and Peru and Uruguay in Latin America and the Caribbean.

<sup>22</sup> [www.ilo.org/ipec/ChildlabourstatisticsSIMPOC](http://www.ilo.org/ipec/ChildlabourstatisticsSIMPOC).

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92. The ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific has created a model to estimate and project country-level estimates of the number and share of children who are vulnerable to child labour due to non-enrolment in schooling. The model currently produces figures for 29 Asian countries over the period 1991–2020, along with Asian regional and subregional estimates. The Regional Office is currently working with IPEC and SIMPOC to expand the model to produce country-level and regional estimates for the other regions in the world.

**(i) Labour migration**

93. The International Labour Migration (ILM) database of the ILO was developed in 1998 to make statistical information on international labour migration widely available. Data for European countries are based on the common questionnaire used by Eurostat, UNSD, ILO and the Council of Europe (COE). For other member States, especially countries of origin, the ILO obtains information periodically through a questionnaire used since 1998. Recent developments in this area include the following.

94. *Assessment of the ILM database and recommendation for improvement.* An evaluation of the ILM database was carried out covering the following issues: database structure and content, maintenance, presentation of data and hosting arrangements, and easy retrieval options. Based on the assessment, it was decided to drop one table and to include more specific data definitions and data sources in the questionnaire.

95. *Revision of the ILM questionnaire and collection of new data, through interaction with relevant actors.* Eurostat provided the data collected through the joint questionnaire for 2005–06. The ILO modified the complementary ILM questionnaire to reflect recommendations of the in-house review and circulated it to national statistical offices worldwide for collecting relevant statistics. New data received have been uploaded. The questionnaire was translated into Russian to facilitate data collection in CIS countries.

96. *Uploading of new data and verification of historical data in the ILM database.* Arrangements were made with the Bureau of Statistics for the uploading of available Eurostat data for the period 2005–07 and of new data received in reply to the joint questionnaire, and for the verification of historical data.

97. *Integration of the ILM database into LABORSTA.* New hosting arrangements for the ILM database were agreed upon with the Bureau of Statistics. As from 1 January 2008, the ILM database has been integrated in the ILO LABORSTA, which is operated by the Bureau.

98. *Subregional and national reviews.* A series of subregional and national reviews of migration statistics were produced and disseminated as described in section 1.2(g).

**(j) Forced labour**

99. The ILO has developed a database on forced labour, which relies on secondary sources and includes information on reported cases. In 2005, the database was used to calculate the first ILO global estimate of the total number of victims of forced labour in the world (see section 1.2(h)). While this database is still running, the ILO is now also focusing on technical cooperation for developing reliable national statistics at the country level and providing benchmarks by which progress can be measured over time.

**(k) Social security**

100. The Social Security Department of the ILO collects statistical data on social security mainly through four complementary tools: (i) the ILO Social Security Inquiry; (ii) the

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Social Protection Expenditure and Performance Reviews (SPERs) undertaken in various countries within technical cooperation projects; (iii) actuarial reviews and evaluation of various social security programmes in member countries by the International Financial and Actuarial Service of the ILO; and (iv) the microinsurance database (strategies and tools against Social Exclusion and Poverty (STEP) programme).

## ILO Social Security Inquiry

- 101.** The objective of the ILO Social Security Inquiry is to collect statistical data on social security around the world. This includes social security expenditure and receipts of social protection schemes as well as data on protected persons, recipients of social benefits and benefit amounts.
- 102.** The ILO has been collecting social security statistics for almost half a century. The Inquiry into the Cost of Social Security has been a unique source of comparative data for professionals in the field. The Office has carried out 18 Inquiries into the Cost of Social Security since 1949; results have been disseminated in the form of printed publications and on the ILO web site.<sup>23</sup> Data on receipts and expenditures have been collected within the framework of the ILO Social Security (Minimum Standards) Convention, 1952 (No. 102), and the ILO Income Security Recommendation, 1944 (No. 67), and the Medical Care Recommendation, 1944 (No. 69). In 1997, the methodology and framework of the inquiry were modified to take into account the wider range of social protection and to expand the coverage of institutions included in the inquiry. The data collected from 1990–96 through this inquiry can be consulted on the “cost of social security” web site.<sup>24</sup> Due to lack of resources, the inquiry was suspended in 1999.
- 103.** In a fresh effort to improve the knowledge base in the field of social security, the ILO has launched the ILO Social Security Inquiry. After taking stock of existing data sources, an integrated methodological concept and a method of data collection have been defined with valuable advice by a group of international experts in order to review the validity of the concept, the relevance of the data set and the effectiveness of data collection.
- 104.** While the new Inquiry draws heavily on the concepts used in the Inquiry into the Cost of Social Security, it takes a more comprehensive approach. While the former was limited to social security expenditure and financing, the new Inquiry covers the four key areas of social protection:
- (a) range of contingencies covered (scope of social protection);
  - (b) financing and expenditure;
  - (c) coverage of the population: beneficiaries and protected persons; and
  - (d) benefit levels.
- 105.** The contingencies, risks and needs covered in the Inquiry encompass those classified in ILO Convention No. 102, and ILO Recommendations Nos 67 and 69 (i.e. old age,

<sup>23</sup> In addition, in collaboration with the ILO, the EURODATA Research Archive at the Mannheim Centre for European Social Research (MZES), Mannheim, Germany, has produced a database (accessible online and on CD-ROM) that includes all the data from the ILO Inquiry into the Cost of Social Security for the period 1949–93 for most of the Western and Central European countries.

<sup>24</sup> See <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/secsoc/areas/stat/css/index.htm>.

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disability, survivors, sickness and health, unemployment, employment injury and occupational disease,<sup>25</sup> family/children and maternity), supplemented by those encompassed in the wider definition of social protection (i.e. housing, basic education, labour market programmes and other income support and assistance n.e.c./social exclusion). The Inquiry aims at covering both formal and informal social protection schemes which provide coverage against the above risks.

- 106.** The ILO Social Security Inquiry collects data at two levels: national data and scheme-level administrative data. *National data* are collected mainly from the ministry responsible for social security (e.g. ministry of labour and/or welfare), from the ministry of finance or from any other institution supervising social security policies. In parallel, for verification purposes, data on expenditure and revenue (when available) are imported from international sources of information (IMF, OECD and Eurostat databases). *Scheme-level information* is collected from the respective institution(s) administering social security schemes. This dual approach is necessary to access information which is rarely available at the national level, in particular in developing countries.
- 107.** There are at present several options for data collection: (i) the ideal case is where both national institutions and social protection schemes enter information directly online through the Internet interface with assistance from the ILO; (ii) the usual method of data collection, at least in the first phase, was through a national coordinator responsible for identifying schemes and looking for information; or (iii) inserting data from other sources (international sources such as OECD Social Expenditure Database (SOCX), where data are desegregated), and/or promoting the use of the social security inquiry tool by other organizations mainly through the development of partnerships.
- 108.** This approach was tested in a pilot inquiry in six countries in 2003 and since then expanded to other developing countries. Data are now available for more than 60 countries for at least some schemes. The ILO Social Security Database is now accessible through the Internet (with a restricted access for the time being) and provides a tool to collect, store and disseminate statistics on social security.

### Social Protection Expenditure and Performance Reviews

- 109.** A major focus in the area of social security statistics is the series of SPERs launched by the ILO. SPERs attempt to assess performance of social protection in a given country looking at how many resources from different sources (taxation, social security contributions, direct co-payments by households and user fees, investment income, donor funding) are allocated to social protection (inputs), and what are the outcomes in terms of coverage (number of persons protected, number of beneficiaries for different types of benefits, and levels and quality of benefits and services provided). SPERs also provide an in-depth account of various aspects of social protection. Based on existing statistics and new statistical methods, SPERs provide information on the structure and level of total social expenditure, the extent of coverage and exclusion from social protection, and other aspects of social protection coverage such as access to health care. In the first phase, a number of selected countries (Benin, Chile, Nepal, Philippines, Poland, Slovakia, South Africa and Thailand) were covered and detailed results and analyses were published for most of them. This process has been extended to additional countries such as Senegal, Zambia and the United Republic of Tanzania.
- 110.** The SPER framework also includes development of performance indicators with respect to the effectiveness, efficiency, population coverage and adequacy of benefit levels of the

<sup>25</sup> To facilitate reading, this function is referred to as the employment injury function in the text.

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national social protection systems, as well as a set of performance indicators for individual social protection schemes/programmes.

#### Actuarial and financial advisory services <sup>26</sup>

**111.** Through its International Financial and Actuarial Service, the ILO is involved in numerous national studies for the actuarial evaluation of existing social security programmes and their reform. The role of the Service is to respond to requests for evaluation received from countries, and at the same time transfer methods and technology. These studies concern only a limited number of countries. However, they are extremely detailed as they respond to a demand for technical assistance that requires a high level of precision and desegregation. They are based on in-depth and reliable statistical surveys. The information is not being used for international data collection, due to the selective and sometimes confidential nature of these often focused actuarial studies.

#### Microinsurance database

**112.** The STEP programme collects information on health microinsurance schemes in Africa and Asia. A first phase of information collection (particularly of statistical information) took place from 2003 to 2004 in 15 countries where inventories of microinsurance schemes were established. Information was collected through a common questionnaire for the 11 francophone African countries and an adjusted questionnaire for four Asian countries.

**113.** The available statistical information relates to: (i) the type of microinsurance scheme; (ii) activities of the microinsurance scheme and the organization responsible for it; (iii) the target group for the insurance coverage; (iv) a description of the health insurance coverage; (v) financial information; (vi) the contributors to and beneficiaries of the insurance coverage; (vii) links of the microinsurance scheme with other organizations; and (viii) constraints and problems encountered. The data have been coded and entered into a database (SPSS, Excel) and can be analysed for all countries covered. The inventories as well as the results of the analyses are available online.

**114.** A new phase started in 2008 with the transition to online data collection. The online database of inventories, which is being developed, currently covers 127 insurance schemes in Africa and will later be extended to Asia and Latin America. Also, it is planned to include the information collected from health microinsurance schemes in the database of the Social Security Inquiry.

#### **(I) Latin American and Caribbean Labour Information System**

**115.** In coordination with the project “Labour Information and Analysis System” (SIAL), <sup>27</sup> the ILO Subregional Offices in Latin America and the Caribbean, the Bureau of Statistics, the Policy Integration Department and the Employment Trends Unit and the ILO Regional Office in Lima created the Latin American and Caribbean Labour Information System (LACLIS) Working Group, whose objective is to guide the development of regional labour statistics databases and define regional priorities for technical assistance in labour statistics with a view to harmonizing labour statistics in the region in line with ICLS

<sup>26</sup> See <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/protection/secsoc/areas/ilofacts/ilofacts.htm> for more information.

<sup>27</sup> In Spanish: *Sistema de Información y Análisis Laboral*.

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recommendations. The allocation of resources for statistical activities including publications, database development and technical assistance funded by the Regional Office and the Government of Panama (ILO–SIAL Project) remained nearly unchanged in nominal terms between 2004 and 2008; nonetheless, limited human and financial resources posed challenges to providing quality statistical products and technical assistance to stakeholders.

- 116.** With a few exceptions, the ILO Offices in the Latin American and Caribbean region generally collect secondary data in various forms. The ILO–SIAL Project, funded by the Government of Panama, continued to collect data annually in the form of micro-data household survey files (18 countries in Latin America), administrative records for a wide array of variables (for example, worker social protection coverage, union membership, collective bargaining coverage and occupational injuries), as well as estimates contained in official publications. The ILO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean collected current, officially published estimates on key labour market indicators in order to disseminate the most up to date country-level and regional estimates on employment indicators.
- 117.** At the request of data users, the ILO–SIAL Project produced statistical estimates on various labour market and social protection variables for Latin American countries using micro-data files from household surveys. In cases where no official estimate for a given variable existed, ILO–SIAL would construct algorithms which would allow the closest conformity with ICLS recommendations, thus achieving maximum uniformity in the definition of the variable for a set of countries; such was the case, for example, with the estimation of informal employment for five countries (Colombia, Ecuador, Mexico, Panama and Peru). In cases where official estimates did exist for a given variable, official definitions were applied by ILO–SIAL in constructing the algorithm.
- 118.** The Regional Office in Lima produced up to date and projected country-level and regional estimates for Latin America and the Caribbean based on official survey estimates (for example, urban unemployment rates and real wage change estimates) as well as estimates produced by ILO–SIAL (for example, urban employed population with health and/or pension coverage). It analysed these up to date regional estimates together with the underlying trends in its annual report *Labour Overview, Latin America and the Caribbean*.<sup>28</sup> This publication, which is disseminated in both Spanish (3,500 printed copies annually) and English (500 printed copies annually), also included a number of feature articles and boxes on a diverse set of labour topics focused on the region, including: a proposed strategy of growth with quality employment; international migration; the importance of raising labour productivity; extreme poverty, inequality and decent work; trends and challenges in measuring informality; and providing equal employment opportunity to indigenous people and people of African descent. Other regional publications containing statistical information and/or analysis produced between 2004 and 2008 are listed in the bibliography at the end of this report.
- 119.** The growing demand for labour statistics in the Latin American and Caribbean region has made essential the development of a user-friendly application for public use with reliable, timely, well-documented country-level statistics for indicators which are presented in a standardized format. In light of this, the LACLIS initiative in close collaboration with the SIAL Project has developed QUIPUSTAT as a user-friendly, public-use application. QUIPUSTAT is expected to be launched in mid-2008.

<sup>28</sup> Spanish title: *Panorama Laboral, América Latina y el Caribe*.

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**120.** The ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean collects current, officially published estimates on key labour market indicators from national statistical agencies in order to disseminate the most up to date country-level and regional estimates on employment indicators. Estimates are produced only for specific purposes and in case employment indicators are missing. The Subregional Office publishes the employment indicators on its web site and provides the Regional Office in Lima with the indicators for the *Labour Overview* and QUIPUSTAT.

#### **1.4. Technical cooperation, advisory services and training in labour statistics**

##### **(a) Introduction**

**121.** Technical assistance continues to be one of the three major activity areas of the Bureau of Statistics. These activities are undertaken from ILO headquarters as well as through the ILO field offices. The principal means have been: (a) technical advisory missions to countries upon their request; (b) national and international seminars and workshops; (c) backstopping of donor-funded labour statistics projects; (d) training courses in labour statistics; and (e) dissemination of ILO recommendations on labour statistics, manuals, training materials and other technical documents (see section 1.2).

**122.** The provision of technical advice to countries by technical staff members of the Bureau of Statistics is demanding in terms of the human and financial resources required. In an increasing number of cases, mission costs are therefore shared with ILO field offices, funded by donor agencies, or borne by the countries themselves. Also, countries may have to resort increasingly to the recruitment of consultants.

**123.** In the Latin American region, the ILO Regional Office and the Bureau of Statistics have successfully tried a new way to provide technical advice to countries: so-called “technical assistance days” (*jornadas de asistencia técnica*). This means that a specialist from the Bureau travels to Lima to advise senior officials of the national statistical offices of several countries on a specific topic of labour statistics, for which all of these countries had requested technical assistance from the ILO.

##### **(b) Technical cooperation and advisory services**

###### **Global**

**124.** The Bureau of Statistics backstopped a UNDP-funded project on “Technical Assistance to Azerbaijan in the Field of Labour Statistics and Regional Development”, which was completed in 2004. The main component of the project was to assist the State Statistical Committee of Azerbaijan in the design and implementation of a regular national labour force survey.

**125.** Between 2004 and 2008, the ILO carried out technical advisory missions on labour force surveys to the following countries: Brazil, Brunei, Chile, China, Ecuador, Ethiopia, Germany, Honduras, Kyrgyzstan, Lesotho, Liberia, Libyan Arab Jamahiriya, Mauritius, Republic of Moldova, Nepal, Oman, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Sierra Leone, South Africa, Sudan, United Republic of Tanzania, Turkey, Uganda and Viet Nam. The main issues, on which technical advice was provided, were the concepts and definitions being used, the design of survey questionnaires, the survey and sample designs (including sample rotation schemes) for continuous labour force surveys, and the analysis of labour force survey data.

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- 126.** Technical assistance on the identification of persons, who are employed in the informal sector or other forms of informal employment, through labour force surveys was provided to China, Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Kazakhstan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Panama, Peru, Serbia, Uruguay, Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela, Yemen and Zimbabwe. In the case of Kazakhstan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and Serbia, the assistance was provided in the context of the project “Improving gender statistics in SEE and CIS countries”, which was executed by the UNECE Statistical Division and funded by the World Bank. Technical inputs were also provided to a similar project covering Angola, Namibia and Zimbabwe, which was started in 2008 and is executed by the UNSD.
  - 127.** With a view to collecting data on decent work indicators through the attachment of decent work modules to national labour force surveys, technical advisory missions were undertaken to Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine.
  - 128.** It has been difficult for the Bureau to meet the demand for technical cooperation on classification matters due to limitations on resource availability and the need for staff members to focus on the work to update ISCO–88. Technical advice in relation to the development of national occupation classifications was provided to Ethiopia, Georgia and Malaysia. Technical advice on occupation classification of an informal nature has been provided on an ongoing basis to a number of other countries using email.
  - 129.** Technical advisory missions on wages statistics obtained from establishment surveys and/or labour force surveys were undertaken to China, Jordan, The former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Pakistan and Tunisia.
  - 130.** Technical assistance on CPI was provided to the national statistical offices of Mauritius, Namibia and Zambia. Following a proposal made by the IWGPS, the ILO conducted a survey on technical assistance missions where respondents were asked to evaluate the usefulness of the technical assistance received. However, as the response rate is rather low and responses are incomplete, it is difficult to derive clear conclusions from the survey.
  - 131.** Technical advisory missions on household income and expenditure surveys or on living standards surveys were carried out to Ethiopia and Ghana.
  - 132.** In the framework of the “French-funded programme on employment promotion and poverty reduction”, the Employment Trends Unit of the ILO has been responsible for the design, implementation and technical backstopping of the component on labour market information and analysis in Mali and Cameroon. The objective of this component is to improve the use of labour market information in the formulation and evaluation of policies through the enhancement of institutional and operational capacities to develop databases and produce relevant and reliable indicators. The ILO has also provided technical advisory services in the area of labour market information and analysis to Bhutan, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, Liberia, Namibia, Pakistan, Seychelles and the United Republic of Tanzania.
  - 133.** Over the last few years, SIMPOC has intensified its efforts to build national capacity in the generation and use of child labour data. There are three regional SIMPOC statisticians appointed to the ILO field offices in Delhi (for Asia), Dakar (for Africa) and Lima (for Latin America) to supplement the support provided from headquarters in responding to the technical assistance needs of countries in the collection of child labour statistics.
  - 134.** Under the technical cooperation project Migration and Development in West Africa (2003–04), the International Migration Department of the ILO organized an expert group meeting on labour migration statistics in the *Union Economique et Monétaire Ouest Africaine* (UEMOA) (the West African Economic and Monetary Union) countries, which was held in Bamako (Mali) on 26–27 February 2004. Experts from the following nine

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countries participated: Benin, Burkina Faso, Guinea Bissau, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal and Togo. A report of the meeting was produced.<sup>29</sup>

## Latin America and the Caribbean

**135.** Since 2004, in the Latin American and Caribbean region the ILO has given priority to technical cooperation activities, advisory services and training which: (1) improve the quality of labour statistics derived from national administrative records; and (2) enhance the harmonization and comparability of statistical indicators. Particular emphasis was given to collaborating closely with the ILO Bureau of Statistics in Geneva to help selected national statistical offices of the region with the questionnaire design of household surveys to capture information on informal employment as defined by the 17th ICLS, as well as on other basic labour force concepts defined by the ICLS. Examples of specific activities include the following:

- nine countries in Latin America (Bolivia, Costa Rica, Dominican Republic, Ecuador, Guatemala, Honduras, Nicaragua, Panama and Paraguay) received advisory services in their questionnaire design of household surveys to produce basic labour force statistics;
- in 2005, the LACLIS and SIAL projects organized the Technical Workshop on Processing Administrative Records aimed at improving the measurement of variables related to union membership, collective bargaining, occupational injuries and minimum wage in five countries of Latin America. Technical assistance to two of the countries (Nicaragua and the Dominican Republic) was provided in follow-up to the Workshop;
- in 2005, the LACLIS and SIAL projects provided technical assistance to the Southern Cone Common Market (MERCOSUR) Labour Observatory aimed at: (1) providing support to the conceptual and methodological review of household surveys; and (2) defining a set of employment indicators to be harmonized;
- in 2006, the ILO Regional Office in Lima, with the funding of the EUROsociAL–Employment Project and the LACLIS initiative, organized the Workshop on the Measurement of Labour Market Indicators, in which 37 participants from 18 Latin American countries took part. The objectives were: (1) to share experiences and best practices between the European Union (represented by Portugal) and Latin America in the conceptual and methodological harmonization of labour market indicators based on the application of ICLS recommendations; and (2) to improve the coordination between data producers and data users involved in the design of employment policies;
- in 2007, the LACLIS and SIAL projects, in collaboration with the ILO Bureau of Statistics, organized an information/advisory session on the measurement of employment in the informal sector (as defined by the 15th ICLS) and the measurement of informal employment (as defined by the 17th ICLS) for six countries in Latin America (Dominican Republic, Guatemala, Honduras, Peru, Uruguay and the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);
- in 2007, the ILO Regional Office in Lima, through funding of the LACLIS and EUROsociAL–Employment projects, organized the Workshop on Production and

<sup>29</sup> ILO: Report of the *Réunion d'experts en matière de statistiques des migrations de main d'œuvre dans les pays de l'UEMOA*, Bamako, Mali, 26–27 February 2004 (Mar. 2004).

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Management of Labour Statistics to Contribute to Employment Policy-making in Latin America, in which 39 participants representing 19 Latin American countries took part. The objectives of the Workshop were to share the progress made and best practices between the European Union (represented by Spain) and Latin America regarding: (1) the harmonization of employment indicators; (2) standard international classification systems used in the production of labour statistics; (3) the measurement and dissemination of labour statistics on vulnerable groups including women, youth and indigenous people and people of African descent; and (4) the coordination between data producers and data users involved in the design and implementation of employment policies.

**136.** During the period 2004–08, the ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean provided technical assistance on labour market information – including labour statistics – in collaboration with the Bureau of Statistics and the Employment Trends Unit of the ILO. The Caribbean Labour Market Information Systems (CLMIS) Project, that effectively started in 2002 and was closed in October 2004, was a major effort to provide the countries of the subregion with technical assistance to develop their labour market information. The project was a major technical assistance effort, funded by the United States Department of Labor. It combined training with technical assistance and limited funding for the establishment or enhancement of existing data sources. A training component, which emphasized “learning by doing”, was integrated into the technical assistance component. The project was a response to the variety of needs of the 13 ILO member States and eight non-metropolitan areas covered by the Subregional Office for the Caribbean. Technical assistance and training were provided in the following areas:

- *Labour force surveys.* Four countries (Barbados, Grenada, Jamaica and Saint Kitts) completed survey designs (sample design, questionnaires and other aspects of the survey) to either enhance or establish a labour force survey. In the process, experts from the national statistical offices received training and mentoring in concepts and definitions, sampling and questionnaire design, with the support of the ILO Bureau of Statistics and the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- *Occupational wage surveys.* Seven countries (Antigua and Barbuda, Bahamas, Barbados, Cayman Islands, Dominica, Guyana, Jamaica and Saint Lucia) completed survey designs (sample design, questionnaires and other aspects of the survey) to either enhance or establish an occupational wage survey. In the process, experts from the national statistical offices received training and mentoring in concepts and definitions, sampling and questionnaire design, with the support of the ILO Bureau of Statistics and the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics.
- *Relevance of administrative records of the national insurance systems for estimates of employment.* With support from the ILO Bureau of Statistics, the national insurance systems of seven countries (Bahamas, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Netherlands Antilles, Saint Lucia, and Saint Vincent and the Grenadines) were reviewed and recommendations were made in the respective national reports.
- *Dissemination of labour statistics.* With support from the Employment Trends Unit, a subregional and related generic national “labour market information libraries” were developed in seven countries.

**137.** Follow-up projects to the CLMIS project were identified in four areas. However, the expected continuation of the programme did not materialize as new priorities redirected flows of bilateral development aid to the region, in particular those funds targeted to labour market information. Without extra-budgetary funds the level of technical assistance provided by the Subregional Office was drastically reduced and in 2005 the priorities set for available technical resources were shifted to other areas. In 2007, a new impetus was

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given to the work on labour statistics through an increase in the requests for technical assistance as well as the joint initiative of the ILO Regional Office in Lima and the Subregional Office to harmonize the labour force surveys in the subregion.

- 138.** In 2005, the Subregional Office collaborated with the Caribbean Regional Technical Assistance Centre (CARTAC) on brainstorming for the methodological approach and a project proposal for a new round of household income and expenditure surveys, with support from the ILO Bureau of Statistics. In 2005, the Subregional Office also collaborated with the Planning Institute of Jamaica to implement the Youth Transition from School-to-Work Survey, which was completed in 2006.
- 139.** In 2007, activities to harmonize employment indicators from labour force surveys and to establish a harmonized subregional series of indicators were initiated with support from the Regional Office in Lima. Six countries in the subregion have been implementing a labour force survey without interruption and, up to now, five national statistical offices have participated in the project (Pember, 2007). The initial harmonization measures and the first submission of harmonized indicators are expected to be completed by the end of 2009. An integral part of the harmonization effort is the introduction of indicators on the informal sector and underemployment in the regular output of the labour force survey. Technical assistance was provided to Suriname in adding a module to the labour force survey for the measurement of informal employment and to establish an occupational wage survey as part of the process of introducing a minimum wage.
- 140.** Only three of the Caribbean countries served by the Subregional Office have a national classification of occupations. With the support of the ILO Bureau of Statistics, a limited update of the national occupational classifications of Barbados, Jamaica, and Trinidad and Tobago was completed as part of the CLMIS project. In addition, as a follow-up, the fully developed Internet-based Caribbean Occupational Information Exchange Facility (COIEF) has been prepared and is ready to become operational. The system would open up the occupational classifications of the three countries to the public, and use of a “crosswalk” would allow easy comparisons. However, the approval of the national custodians, which is needed to open the use of the copyrighted material to the public, has never been formalized.

## Africa

- 141.** The ILO Subregional Office for West Africa supported the Inter-African Association for the Prevention of Occupational Risks (IAPRP) (in French: *InterAfricaine de Prévention des Risques Professionnels*) in setting up a subregional observatory of occupational accidents and diseases at the National Social Protection Fund (CNPS) (in French: *Caisse Nationale de Prévoyance Sociale*). The IAPRP covers the French-speaking countries of sub-Saharan Africa. The Office supported the member countries of IAPRP in the development of a yearbook of health and safety at work. Some of the countries have already produced the first, 2006, edition of their yearbook.
- 142.** The employment problem is nowadays one of the major concerns of the African continent, as shown by the organization of the Extraordinary Summit of the Heads of State and Government of the African Union on employment and the fight against poverty, which was held in Ouagadougou from 8 to 9 September 2004. According to the recommendations and action plan of the Summit, employment and the fight against poverty have to be at the centre of the priorities for the economic policies of African countries. The process of follow-up to the Summit, as well as national employment policies, the implementation of the Decent Work Country Programme for Africa 2007–15, which was adopted by the African countries during the 11th African Regional Meeting of the ILO held in Addis Ababa in April 2007, imply: (i) the identification of relevant indicators which allow a periodic measurement to be made of concrete results of actions undertaken; and (ii) the

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strengthening of LMIS. To strengthen LMIS, the ILO Subregional Office for West Africa supported the creation and implementation of observatories of employment and vocational training in some countries, such as Burkina Faso, Guinea Bissau, Madagascar and Niger.

- 143.** In collaboration with the UEMOA, the ILO Subregional Office for West Africa is considering the implementation of a subregional observatory of employment and vocational training for the UEMOA area. A project for strengthening the LMIS in the countries of the UEMOA and for creation of a subregional observatory of employment and vocational training was developed by the Office and adopted by the eight member countries of the UEMOA.
- 144.** During the period 2004–08, the work of the ILO Subregional Office for East Africa in the area of labour statistics centred on providing technical advisory services for promoting the development and use of labour statistics and establishing LMIS consistent with the mandate of the ILO, especially the Decent Work Agenda. These activities were undertaken both at the subregional level as well as at the country level and in the framework of the UN system, as summarized below.
- 145.** The ILO has established good working relationships with the new African Centre for Statistics (ACS) of the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (ECA), which is supporting African countries to design national strategies for the development of statistics (NSDS). NSDS are being developed as part of the implementation of the Reference Regional Strategy Framework (RSSF) for Statistical Capacity Building in Africa, adopted by the Forum for African Statistical Development (FASDEV)<sup>30</sup> in February 2006.
- 146.** Two major developments took place within the ECA in 2007–08, i.e. the creation of the ACS to coordinate statistical development initiatives in Africa and the establishment of the Statistical Commission for Africa (STATCOM–Africa).<sup>31</sup> With these two institutions, the statistical activities in Africa have taken a new dimension and momentum, for the better.
- 147.** The ILO was invited to, and participated in, the first meeting of STATCOM–Africa, held in January 2008 in Addis Ababa. The theme of the meeting was “Scaling up statistical development in Africa”. Accordingly, the topics discussed ranged from the requirements for MDG monitoring, the International Comparison Programme (ICP) for Africa, implementation of the RSSF for Statistical Development in Africa, to the improvement of basic economic statistics and national accounts.
- 148.** Making the case for labour statistics, the ILO strongly argued that improving employment statistics and indicators requires that: (a) the NSDS in Africa incorporate labour statistics; (b) countries should aim at conducting regular and frequent labour force surveys and labour demand surveys and the regular production of statistics on human capital development, and exploit administrative sources, population censuses, industrial surveys

<sup>30</sup> FASDEV is a forum sponsored by PARIS21, the World Bank, the French Government and other donors for the main purpose of supporting statistical development in Africa. It meets annually, involving heads of central statistical offices, regional statistical training institutes, and regional and international organizations to review progress and funding opportunities and constraints. Since its inception in 2004, FASDEV has met three times, the last being in January 2008.

<sup>31</sup> STATCOM–Africa has been established as the apex statistical body at the continental level to which all statistical capacity-building initiatives shall report. It is to operate within the framework of the policies and procedures of the United Nations and subject to the general supervision of the ECA Conference of Ministers of Finance and Economic Development. STATCOM–Africa is, therefore, to provide a forum for discussion and decision-making on all aspects of statistical development in Africa.

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and censuses, etc.; and (c) there is effective leadership by national statistical offices of the national statistical systems. It was reiterated that the ILO would continue to provide technical advisory services through consultancies, missions and training, using its technical expertise in the region and at headquarters, as well as making available technical manuals, which member countries can adopt or adapt.

- 149.** The ILO and the ACS have pledged to cooperate closely to promote statistical development in Africa, recalling the previous arrangement where an ILO statistics expert was seconded to ECA for some time. The need to strengthen the cooperation between the Centre and the ILO through exchange of information was agreed. It was observed that while this was already being done, it was on an ad hoc basis and needed to be formalized. It was therefore agreed that a Memorandum of Understanding would be signed between the two parties.
- 150.** The EAC originally comprised three countries: Kenya, United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda. It has been expanded since June 2007 to include Rwanda and Burundi. In the course of 2005 and 2006, the ILO was approached by the partner States for technical assistance to design national manpower surveys. The need for such surveys was motivated by the desire to formulate a comprehensive human resources development and utilization strategy. The revival of the EAC and the move to a common market and political integration have also added to the impetus, especially the planned free movement of labour in East Africa that will follow the implementation of the Common Market Protocol of the EAC.
- 151.** Accordingly, the first EAC Meeting of the Ministers of Labour and Employment, held in Kampala (Uganda) on 28 August 2006, recommended, inter alia, that the EAC secretariat undertake a regional manpower survey to be carried out simultaneously by partner States as a matter of priority. The ILO was requested to prepare a subregional concept paper/project proposal for the manpower survey. The concept paper was endorsed by the partner States and forms the basis of a US\$15 million programme to be implemented in the course of 2008–09. The ILO has already provided technical assistance on the design and implementation of national manpower surveys to the United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda.
- 152.** In April 2004, the Eastern Africa subregion joined the Global Labour Market Information Library Network, funded by the World Bank for the purpose of facilitating compilation and dissemination of labour market indicators and creating a platform for sharing information and experiences. Under this project, a subregional tripartite technical workshop was held in April 2004 in Addis Ababa, drawing participants from Ethiopia, Kenya, Mauritius, United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda. The main outcome of the workshop was the action plan prepared by each country (on indicators, data collection and setting-up of a system for data flow among users and producers).
- 153.** Another training course on “Labour Market Information and Policy Formulation” was successfully held from 4 to 8 April 2005, drawing 19 participants from Ethiopia, Malawi and the United Republic of Tanzania. The training deliberately involved participants from ministries of finance and economic planning and ministries of education in addition to those from central statistical offices and ministries of labour. The importance of labour statistics and employment as an integral part of economic policy planning and programming was particularly emphasized during the course.
- 154.** The implementation of these action plans resulted in the availability of new labour market indicators for the participating countries, which were uploaded to the central database at ILO headquarters in Geneva. Simultaneously, to enhance dissemination of labour market indicators in the subregion, in 2006 the ILO Subregional Office for East Africa developed an online database application system (web site) for the dissemination of labour market

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information and indicators for Eastern Africa, starting with Ethiopia, Kenya, United Republic of Tanzania and Uganda. It will be expanded to cover other countries in the subregion as data become available. As part of the implementation of this initiative, country focal points were trained. The country focal points are responsible for compiling new labour market data and indicators at the source and then uploading them to the system on a regular and continuous basis.

## Asia and the Pacific

**155.** The ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific and the secretariat of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) co-organized the ILO-sponsored ASEAN Regional Workshop on Labour Statistics and Labour Market Information, which was held in Putrajaya (Malaysia) from 29 to 31 October 2007. The Workshop provided a rapid yet thorough scan of the status and developments in the production, dissemination and use of labour and employment statistics in the ASEAN region in the context of providing statistical support toward the realization of decent work and the ASEAN integration process. Specific activities included:

- taking stock of existing and potential statistical activities/data systems, including instruments and methodologies for generating labour and employment statistics and available sources;
- assessing available labour and employment statistics with respect to identifying priority indicators, given the context of regional integration, thereby allowing the identification of data gaps and relevant quality issues, and exploration of possible measures to address the problems;
- determining possible key areas of common interest for technical cooperation and development coordination among ASEAN member countries; and
- drawing up ideas on the way forward while highlighting possible mechanisms for regional cooperation.

The major outcome of the meeting was a recommendation to establish an ASEAN regional cooperation on LMIS and statistics. The overarching goal of the cooperation is improved and sustainable collection, harmonization and dissemination of country labour statistics designed towards the achievement of the MDGs, decent work and ASEAN community goals including regional integration and a common labour market.

**156.** In April–May 2007, the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics, with technical and financial support from the ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific, conducted a national occupational wage survey which gathered data on earnings, weekly hours of work, type of industry and occupation, education completed, age, sex and geographic location for 60,347 individuals. This represents the largest ever occupational wage survey in the country. The survey results were disseminated by the Bangladesh Bureau of Statistics. The ILO Regional Office subsequently produced a report on wage determinants and the gender wage gap in Bangladesh.

## **(c) Training**

**157.** In order to promote the international standards on CPI adopted by the 17th ICLS, the ILO Bureau of Statistics conducted, on its own or in collaboration with other interested organizations, training courses on CPI. The first of these courses was held in March 2004 for Southern African Development Community (SADC) countries, the second and third ones for Asian and Pacific countries in September 2005 and June 2006, and the fourth for CIS countries in October 2005. In December 2005, a training workshop on household

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income and expenditure surveys for Eastern Caribbean countries was conducted by the Bureau in collaboration with the ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean.

158. Staff of the Bureau also participated as resource persons in international, regional, subregional or national training courses, seminars or workshops on: introduction to labour statistics; labour force surveys; population censuses; wages statistics; collection and use of labour market information; mainstreaming gender in labour statistics; data and indicators to monitor progress towards the MDGs.
159. A large-scale programme of regional and subregional training for national counterparts is an ongoing feature of the work programme of SIMPOC. Regional training courses on the collection and analysis of child labour data were conducted for Asia (China, Indonesia, Nepal, Pakistan, Thailand and Viet Nam), Anglophone Africa (Botswana, Eritrea, South Africa, United Republic of Tanzania, Uganda, Zambia and Zimbabwe), Francophone Africa (Benin, Burkina Faso, Côte d'Ivoire, Guinea, Mali and Senegal), Latin America (Bolivia, Colombia, Ecuador, El Salvador, Mexico, Paraguay, Peru and Uruguay), and North Africa and the Middle East (Egypt, Jordan, Lebanon, Palestinian occupied territories, Sudan, Turkey and Yemen). Moreover, training of survey field staff is an essential component of the survey process in countries, where SIMPOC-supported national child labour surveys are carried out. The *Training Modules on Child Labour Data Collection, Processing, Analysis and Reporting* have been published in English, French and Spanish (ILO-IPEC, 2005). SIMPOC has also initiated a series of regional training courses in the application of rapid assessment and baseline survey methods for child labour data collection. The first of these courses was organized for Asia in September 2008 in collaboration with the UN Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific.
160. The ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean and the Caribbean Community and Common Market (CARICOM) secretariat have agreed to organize a training session on ISCO-08 as part of the preparations for the 2010 round of population censuses.
161. To enhance the technical capacities of LMIS of countries in the subregion, the ILO Subregional Office for West Africa provided training to the producers of labour statistics in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cape Verde, Côte d'Ivoire and Niger. As from 2005, the ILO Subregional Office has introduced a training module on labour statistics at the Statistics School in Dakar, which receives students from the countries of the subregion. The ILO gives this course during the first quarter of each year.
162. During the period 2004-08, the International Training Centre of the ILO (Turin) organized between six and eight annual regional, subregional or national training courses on labour market information and/or labour market analysis. Staff of the Bureau of Statistics participated in some of these courses as resource persons.

### **1.5. Status of the Labour Statistics Convention, 1985 (No. 160)**

163. The Labour Statistics Convention, 1985 (No. 160), and Recommendation (No. 170), together with the resolutions of the International Conferences of Labour Statisticians, comprise the current international standards on labour statistics.<sup>32</sup> They provide the basic framework under which the ILO Bureau of Statistics operates, and within which countries

<sup>32</sup> See ILO: *Current international recommendations on labour statistics*, 2000 edition (Geneva, 2000).

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may progressively develop their systems of labour statistics in accordance with their economic and social circumstances and resources.

- 164.** Convention No. 160 was adopted by the International Labour Conference in 1985. At the time of writing this report, the Convention had been ratified by 46 member States (see the appendix); five non-metropolitan territories had also declared their acceptance (with or without modifications) of its obligations. Convention No. 160 replaces the earlier Convention concerning Statistics of Wages and Hours of Work, 1938 (No. 63). It sets out the basic scope of information concerning labour that is required for national planning and policy-making in the form of a minimum list of nine topics on which ratifying countries are required to collect, compile and publish statistics: the economically active population; employment, unemployment and underemployment; wages and hours of work (average earnings and hours of work, and time rates of wages and normal hours of work); wage structure and distribution; labour cost; CPI; household expenditures and household income; occupational injuries and diseases; and labour (industrial) disputes. The Convention gives guidance on the coverage of the statistics and requires that the latest standards and guidelines established under the auspices of the ILO be taken into consideration, and that representative organizations of employers and workers be consulted when statistical concepts, definitions and methodology are designed or revised. Ratification of the Convention is facilitated by the possibility of accepting the obligations with respect to only one of the nine topics. The Convention is supplemented by Recommendation No. 170, which deals with the periodicity of collection and compilation of the statistics, and the ways in which they are to be classified. It also gives guidance on statistical infrastructure.
- 165.** Member States that have ratified the Convention are required to report in detail to the ILO, the year following the entry into force of their ratification, on the measures that have been taken to give effect to the provisions of the Convention. A second detailed report on its implementation is required two years later and subsequent reports at five-year intervals, according to the reporting schedule established for the Convention. The reports are examined by the ILO Committee of Experts on the Application of Conventions and Recommendations at its annual sessions.
- 166.** ILO action to ensure that the international labour standards contribute fully to the development effort includes the following: direct contacts to respond to requests by governments wishing to resolve specific difficulties; technical cooperation projects on standards themselves in order to make them known and assist directly in their implementation; dissemination of information on what is happening concerning standards in other countries; and links with ILO technical cooperation projects. The Bureau of Statistics plays an active role in these activities. In 2001, it initiated a series of tripartite seminars to promote Convention No. 160 and Recommendation No. 170.<sup>33</sup> The second national tripartite seminar on the Convention and Recommendation was held in Cairo (Egypt) in November 2007 in collaboration with the ILO Subregional Office for North Africa, and the third one was held in Cotonou (Benin) in May 2008 in collaboration with the ILO Subregional Office for the Sahel Region.

<sup>33</sup> The first tripartite seminar was held in December 2001 in Addis Ababa (Ethiopia) for English-speaking African countries, in collaboration with the then ILO Multidisciplinary Advisory Team for East Africa (EAMAT).

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## 2. Updating of the International Standard Classification of Occupations

### 2.1. Background

**167.** Work on updating ISCO–88 was mandated by a resolution of the 17th ICLS (2003).<sup>1</sup> The ILO was requested to update ISCO by late 2007 and convene a tripartite Meeting of Experts on Labour Statistics to adopt the classification and make appropriate recommendations to the Governing Body.

**168.** The timing of completion of the work was required to allow for the updated classification, or national adaptations of it, to be available for use in the 2010 round of national population censuses. The original request that the ILO timetable for the revision of ISCO should meet the needs of the next census round was made at the 34th Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission in March 2003.

**169.** The main purposes and uses of ISCO are to provide:

- a basis for the international reporting, comparison and exchange of statistical and administrative data about occupations;
- a model for the development of national and regional classifications of occupations; and
- a system that can be used directly in countries that have not developed their own national classifications.

**170.** Occupation classifications are used in national contexts for the collection and dissemination of statistics from population censuses, household surveys, employer surveys and other sources. They are also used by governments and companies in activities such as matching jobseekers with job vacancies, educational planning, reporting of industrial accidents, administration of workers' compensation and the management of employment-related migration. Globalization of the labour market is increasing the demand for internationally comparable occupational information for both statistical and administrative purposes, and highlights the need for a robust and contemporary framework for the reporting and exchange of information about occupations.

### 2.2. Conduct of the updating work

**171.** In conducting the work to update ISCO, the ILO consulted as widely as possible with stakeholders and interested parties. This was achieved mainly by means of two questionnaires that were sent to all countries through their ministries of labour, national statistical offices, employment services, vocational training institutes, and employers' and workers' organizations. Successive drafts of the updated classification structure were made available for comment. The ILO also consulted with a range of specialized agencies, employers' and workers' organizations, and stakeholders with an interest in those occupational groups where most updating was needed.

<sup>1</sup> ILO: Report of the Conference, doc. ICLS/17/2003/4, 17th ICLS, Geneva, 24 November–3 December 2003 (Geneva, 2004).

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**172.** An important element of the work was the establishment of the Technical Expert Group for updating ISCO (TEG–ISCO), to provide the ILO with advice on and assistance with the updating work. This group is made up of national experts in occupation classification from all regions of the world, as well as experts from relevant international agencies. It is intended that the TEG–ISCO will continue to function and will provide advice to the ILO on issues associated with implementation of ISCO and on the need for further updates or revisions, as well as providing a focal point for international discussion on issues associated with occupation classification.

**173.** The work undertaken by the ILO also benefited from the valuable advice provided by the United Nations Expert Group on International Economic and Social Classifications. Reports on progress and draft classification structures were presented and discussed at the meetings of this group held in June 2005 and April 2007. Progress reports were also provided to the United Nations Statistical Commission.

**174.** Major issues that were addressed in the updating work include, but are not restricted to:

- the impact of information and communications technology (ICT) on the occupational structure of the labour market;
- the need for improved coverage of health occupations;
- user requests for more detail in agricultural, forestry and fisheries occupations;
- the need to improve the groupings for managerial occupations;
- concerns that ISCO–88 was very detailed for some technical and manufacturing occupations but had much less detail, especially at intermediate levels of aggregation, for clerical and service-related occupations where a large percentage of employed persons are female;
- concerns about the existence of parallel groups at different skill levels for occupations that involve the performance of similar or identical tasks;
- the need for improved coverage of occupations that predominate in the informal sector and with lower skill level requirements;
- the need to refresh and update definitions of all categories; and
- the need for the ISCO index to be improved and updated.

### **2.3. Main changes introduced for the International Standard Classification of Occupations, 2008**

**175.** In line with the mandate from the ICLS for an update rather than a major revision of ISCO, the conceptual model underpinning ISCO–08 remains essentially the same as that used in ISCO–88. There have been some changes, however, in the way this model is used to design the classification. In determining the skill level of an occupation, the nature of the work performed has been given more emphasis than formal education and training required. As a result there is no need for parallel groups in different major groups to cater for cases where the education and training requirements differ between countries.

**176.** Wherever possible, efforts were made to ensure that the level of detail provided is appropriate and useful considering the main purposes of an international classification. Given the nature of the occupational distribution of the labour market at the international

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level, however, and the variety of uses of ISCO, the issues of the size of groups and differing levels of detail in different parts of the classification were seen as important, but not overriding, considerations.

**177.** In cases where there were concerns that it was not feasible to make distinctions between certain categories in ISCO–88 on a consistent basis internationally, adjustments were made that aim to improve international comparability and consistency of reporting.

**178.** Some of the more significant changes are summarized below.

- the sections of the classification dealing with managerial occupations have been reorganized, so as to overcome problems with the distinction between “corporate managers” and “general managers” experienced by users of ISCO–88;
- occupations associated with ICT have been updated and expanded, allowing for the identification of professional and associate professional occupations in this field at the second level of the classification;
- there is improved coverage of health services occupations, providing sufficient detail to allow ISCO–08 to be used as the basis for the international reporting of data on the health workforce to the WHO and other international and intergovernmental organizations;
- the section of the classification dealing with clerical support workers has been reorganized to reflect the increasing impact of ICT on the organization of clerical work, and to provide more meaningful detail for occupations in which large numbers of women are employed;
- the aggregate groups for sales and service workers have been reorganized and include new groups at the second level of the classification for personal service, personal care and protective services workers;
- there is more detail and greater clarity in the treatment of some occupational groups involved in agriculture; and provision is made to allow separate identification at the second level of the classification of skilled agricultural workers from forestry, fishery and hunting;
- more detailed categories are available for occupations involved in the provision of information and services to clients, including those related to tourism;
- the groups for plant and machine operators have been rationalized, in response to concerns that this part of ISCO–88 was too detailed and out of date in some areas;
- there is extended coverage of occupations that are significant in informal employment and an associated increase in the number of sub-major groups in ISCO Major Group 9, Elementary occupations;
- thematic (or alternative) groupings will be provided based primarily on the goods or services produced, independently of skill level.

#### **2.4. Adoption of the International Standard Classification of Occupations, 2008**

**179.** The Tripartite Meeting of Experts on Labour Statistics on updating the ISCO was convened by the Governing Body of the ILO in Geneva from 3 to 6 December 2007. The

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deliberations at the Meeting were based on a report prepared by the ILO in English, French and Spanish.<sup>2</sup> The Meeting evaluated a final draft updated ISCO and made amendments to the draft. It passed a resolution recommending adoption by the ILO Governing Body of the amended classification as an international statistical standard.<sup>3</sup> The resolution was endorsed by the Governing Body at its 301st Session in March 2008.<sup>4</sup> The classification structure and other information about ISCO–08 can be found on the ISCO web site.<sup>5</sup>

## **2.5. Ongoing and future work**

- 180.** The ILO plans to provide support for implementation of the updated ISCO from 2008 onwards so that ISCO–08, or national adaptations of it, can be used in the 2010 round of national population censuses and other relevant statistical collections.
- 181.** These plans include: publication of ISCO–08 as a book in English, French and Spanish, and its release in electronic form on the ILO web site; preparation of a manual and training material on how to adapt the updated classification for use in national and regional settings; provision of training on a regional basis through a series of regional workshops; provision of technical assistance and advice directly to countries; and assistance with, and review of, correspondence tables between national classifications and ISCO–08. The exact timing of these activities will be dependent on resource availability.
- 182.** Explanatory material describing the conceptual framework of the classification, definitions of categories, an updated index and correspondence table between ISCO–88 and ISCO–08 were produced in draft form as part of the development work. They will be finalized in close consultation with the TEG–ISCO, and will be included in the publication as well as on the ISCO web site.
- 183.** The final draft definitions of categories have been loaded onto the ILO web site progressively for comment before they are finalized in English. French- and Spanish-language versions will be made available once translations are completed. The ILO will seek opportunities to work collaboratively with relevant national and international agencies to produce translations of ISCO–08 in other languages.
- 184.** The existing ISCO–88 index in English has been mapped to the final draft classification structure, as part of the process of finalizing the classification structure. A number of redundant entries have been removed and commonly used terms, that were not included, have been added, including cases where there are new titles for new and emerging occupations. As a result, the index will be as up to date and comprehensive as possible and will serve as a model for the development of national occupational coding indexes. A similar exercise is being conducted for the French- and Spanish-language versions.

<sup>2</sup> ILO: “Updating the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO)”, report for the Tripartite Meeting of Experts on Labour Statistics, Geneva, 3–6 December 2007, doc. MEL/2007 (Geneva, 2007).

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*

<sup>4</sup> GB.301/14.

<sup>5</sup> <http://www.ilo.org/public/english/bureau/stat/isco/index.htm>.

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### **3. Measuring and monitoring decent work**

#### **3.1. General framework of decent work**

- 185.** With its Decent Work Agenda the ILO brings together the goals of employment, social protection, social dialogue and rights at work in a consolidated, gender-sensitive vision which guides economic and social policies across the board. Decent work has been defined as “opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity” (ILO, 1999).
- 186.** In 2002, the ILO proposed a core set of statistical indicators for measuring decent work. They cover the abovementioned four pillars of decent work and relate to employment, earnings, hours worked, security of work, fair treatment in employment, safe work environment, social protection, social dialogue and workplace relations, and unacceptable work such as child and forced labour (Anker et al., 2002).
- 187.** The ILO decent work framework and decent work statistical indicators were presented to the 17th ICLS (ILO, 2003), and discussed at the Working Group on Decent Work Indicators organized by the Conference (ILO, 2004b).
- 188.** The ILO tripartite constituents (governments, trade unions and employers’ organizations) have debated the intricacies of finding a measurement framework that takes full account of the multidimensional nature of decent work on several occasions, most notably in the Governing Body.<sup>1</sup> In its March 2008 session, the Governing Body approved a tripartite meeting of experts to provide further detailed advice on the viability of the options available to the Governing Body, and to provide guidance on the various possible ways of measuring the dimensions of decent work in order to prepare comprehensive recommendations for consideration by the Governing Body.
- 189.** In its preparation towards the discussions at the experts meeting, the ILO has been using a pluralistic approach in developing decent work measures, as decent work indicators should generally gauge actual outcomes and conditions, which may differ from person to person, country to country and region to region. The content of this chapter reflects this pluralism, reporting the different approaches to measuring the various dimensions of decent work developed by ILO headquarters and regional offices.

#### **3.2. Work accomplished since the 17th International Conference of Labour Statisticians**

- 190.** As a result of its discussion on decent work indicators, the 17th ICLS recommended, inter alia, that: (i) more work should be carried out by the Office in formulating acceptable indicators; (ii) the indicators should be selected such that their trends would signal unambiguously and correctly a movement towards or away from the goal of reducing decent work deficits; and (iii) a tripartite meeting of experts on measuring the dimensions of decent work should be held.

<sup>1</sup> GB.289/STM/6; GB.300/20/5; GB.301/17/6.

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**191.** In line with the above recommendations, the Office has undertaken a significant amount of research into various methods of measuring the multifaceted dimensions of decent work. More specifically, the Office has:

- (i) carried out tests of some of the proposed indicators in pilot countries, leading to a seminar on the use of labour force surveys for the collection of the corresponding data;<sup>2</sup>
- (ii) undertaken several thematic and regional compilations of statistics and statistical indicators for measuring the dimensions of decent work (ILO, 2005; ILO, 2006b; ILO, 2007a; Lawrence, Ishikawa, 2005);
- (iii) carried out pilot experiments in measuring both quantitative and some of the qualitative aspects of decent work (e.g. modular decent work surveys attached to labour force surveys, collection of data on decent work by integrating supplementary questions in the core questionnaires of regular labour force surveys (see also Kucera, 2007);
- (iv) established a task team, coordinated by the Bureau of Statistics, to consolidate the various proposals for relevant indicators into an integrated set;
- (v) published, in 2003, a special issue of the *International Labour Review* devoted to measuring decent work;<sup>3</sup>
- (vi) collaborated with the European Foundation for the Improvement of Working and Living Conditions (Ritter, 2005);
- (vii) collaborated with the UNECE, the European Commission and Eurostat in the development of measures of the quality of employment, which encompass some of the dimensions of decent work. Joint Seminars on Measurement of the Quality of Employment/Work were held in May 2000, May 2002, May 2005 and April 2007. The ILO chaired the Task Force on the Quality of Employment during 2005–07 (UNECE; Eurostat; ILO, 2007) and has been a member of the new Task Force Steering Committee from 2007 until now (UNECE, 2007);
- (viii) discussed the possibility of a joint ILO–European Commission project on “monitoring and assessing progress on decent work in developing countries” to strengthen the capacity of ILO member States to improve the collection and analysis of statistics on decent work;
- (ix) launched a joint ILO–European Commission project on “enhancing the understanding of decent work issues by developing decent work indicators” to study the links between the ILO “decent work” and the European “quality of employment” frameworks and measures;
- (x) prepared the Tripartite Meeting of Experts on Measuring the Dimensions of authorized by the Governing Body that took place in Geneva from 8 to 10 September 2008 to discuss a template of indicators across the four pillars of decent work (employment, social protection, social dialogue and rights at work) that could be

<sup>2</sup> ILO International Seminar on the Use of National Labour Force Surveys for Collecting Additional Labour-Related Statistics, Geneva, 24–26 October 2005.

<sup>3</sup> ILO: “Measuring decent work”, in *International Labour Review*, 2003, Special issue, Vol. 142, No. 2.

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used in the assessment of progress towards decent work at the country level (ILO, 2008). The conclusions and recommendations of the Meeting are being presented to the 18th ICLS.

### **3.3. Major outputs**

#### **(a) ILO headquarters<sup>4</sup>**

- 192.** In the view of the Office, the main value of measuring the various dimensions of decent work would be to assist constituents in assessing progress at the national level towards the goal of decent work against a set of indicators that are also available for other countries. The measurement of the dimensions of decent work would be of particular value for assessing progress in countries with Decent Work Country Programmes alongside the more specific data related to programme targets and outcomes. This work would thus also contribute to results-based management and it could strengthen the knowledge base and analytical capacity of the Office (ILO, 2008).
- 193.** Work at ILO headquarters has thus concentrated on furthering and refining the conceptual framework for statistical measures of decent work, and testing the proposed indicators in selected countries (e.g. Azerbaijan, Bahrain, Kazakhstan, Mali, Republic of Moldova, Philippines, Russian Federation and Ukraine) through a series of pilot experiments in measuring both quantitative and some of the qualitative aspects of decent work. The major vehicles were the regular national labour force surveys, using a set of supplementary questions integrated in their core questionnaires or fully fledged decent work modules attached to the surveys, covering quantitative and qualitative aspects of labour.
- 194.** Additionally, data from relevant establishment surveys and administrative records as well as governmental reports were examined and included in thematic compilations of statistical indicators for measuring dimensions of decent work.
- 195.** Based on the statistics collected, the Office carried out research and analytical studies of decent work dimensions in a number of pilot countries and assisted some of them (e.g. Azerbaijan, Bangladesh, Ghana, Republic of Moldova and Ukraine) in preparing decent work fact-finding studies and decent work reports.
- 196.** A national workshop was held in Kiev (Ukraine) in April 2005, where the report “Decent work in Ukraine: Conceptual approaches and particularities of measurement” (Hrygorovych, Tkachenko, 2005), based on the findings of the decent work survey (which had been attached to the labour force survey of the Ukraine), was presented and decent work deficits discussed.
- 197.** Also, a number of subject-specific working papers have been produced addressing the development of statistics and indicators intended to measure various qualitative aspects of decent work. Such work has mainly been focused on the construction of “qualitative” indicators of decent work, particularly regarding labour standards, and econometric and social accounting matrix analysis. The data used for these types of analysis include statistics on earnings inequality, gender differences in earnings and employment, economic

<sup>4</sup> The activities described in this section refer to the work carried out by the Policy Integration and Statistics Department. Work by the Employment Trends Unit of the ILO to develop indicators for the new target “full and productive employment and decent work” under MDG 1 is reported in section 1.2(a).

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growth and macroeconomic policies, international trade, formal and informal employment, and minimum wages.

**198.** The Tripartite Meeting of Experts on Measuring the Dimensions of Decent Work took place in Geneva from 8 to 10 September 2008. Based on an Office report,<sup>5</sup> the Meeting discussed the following three aspects of the work by the Office on the development of a methodology to measure progress towards decent work, in support of the global Decent Work Agenda (ILO, 2008):

- the identification of a global template of qualitative and quantitative indicators that can be used to measure progress towards decent work at the country level;
- the collection of statistical data and qualitative information related to selected decent work indicators;
- the analysis and interpretation of decent work indicators and statistics to identify both country-specific patterns as well as a global dynamic picture.

Each of these steps is briefly discussed below:

**199.** *Decent work indicators:* Decent work indicators should capture all four dimensions of the concept of decent work, namely: (1) fundamental principles and rights at work, and international labour standards; (2) employment and conditions of work; (3) social security; and (4) social dialogue. At the same time, decent work indicators should also reflect country-specific circumstances and priorities, as expressed in the Decent Work Country Programmes or other policy documents. Hence, it was proposed that a tripartite meeting of experts should take stock of decent work indicators discussed in the existing literature, and identify the most relevant indicators under each of the four dimensions of decent work. The list of indicators could then be examined in a limited number of member States in the context of a tripartite dialogue. The objective would be to establish a template of international relevance that nevertheless could be adapted to reflect national circumstances.

**200.** *Data collection:* Countries would be encouraged to collect statistics related to the decent work indicators identified at the country level. National statistical offices could be encouraged to broaden or adjust their existing statistical instruments to measure the decent work indicators. Administrative data collection efforts, such as databases from labour inspection services for example, could also be adjusted if necessary. For decent work indicators, which are inherently qualitative (such as social dialogue, for example), meaningful assessments of progress at the country level could be made through other methods such as textual analysis of authoritative reports, including reports submitted to, or produced by, the ILO supervisory system, local surveys or administrative data (Kucera, 2004).

**201.** *Country analysis:* To be useful for policy-making, trends need to be identified and the data must be interpreted and correlated with policy variables. With a large number of qualitative and quantitative indicators this can be difficult. It is often highlighted that the most tangible added value of the concept of decent work is that “it encapsulates an integrated approach, ensuring that the strategic objectives are addressed together and as effectively as possible” (ILO, 2007b).

<sup>5</sup> ILO: “Measurement of decent work”, discussion paper for the Tripartite Meeting of Experts on the Measurement of Decent Work, Geneva, 8–10 September 2008.

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**202.** This suggests that the measurement of decent work should go beyond the collection of a disparate set of labour market indicators. At the same time, it is unreasonable to expect aggregation of qualitative and quantitative indicators. It is thus suggested that the Office shall intensify work on the development of methodologies to assess, at the country level, progress over time towards achieving decent work objectives. Such progress may be recorded in “country profiles” maintained by the ILO using, as far as possible, a standard methodology and a standard list of indicators on which information would be compiled.

**(b) ILO regional offices**

**203.** The mission of the ILO today is to promote opportunities for women and men to obtain decent and productive work in conditions of freedom, equity, security and human dignity. This mission is pursued through the introduction of comprehensive programmes (Decent Work Country Programmes) that aim at an integrated approach to achieve the four strategic objectives of the ILO: the promotion of rights at work; employment; social protection; and social dialogue. Decent Work Country Programmes bring governments, employers and workers together to respond to the demand for decent work put to them by individuals, families and the international community.

**204.** The regional offices provide support to ILO field offices and constituents in their respective region in the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of Decent Work Country Programmes. They facilitate the sharing of experiences and good practices throughout the region to ensure a coherent approach. The regional offices also undertake and coordinate research on decent work in the region, and publish the results of such research in the form of working papers and through their web sites.

**Regional Office for Africa**

**205.** In the African region, the provision of technical assistance aimed at building or enhancing the technical capacity of national data producers to measure progress towards decent work in African countries has been the priority for the ILO during the period 2004–08. To this end, ILO technical staff members carried out over 30 technical missions and provided assistance through consultations, workshops or training seminars to some 35 African countries. Two African countries (Ghana and Mali) were selected to pilot test core statistical measures of decent work being developed by the ILO.

**Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific**

**206.** The ILO Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific has been working to strengthen the regional information base pertaining to decent work, while assisting countries to establish benchmarks and monitor progress towards decent work-related goals and initiatives during the Asian Decent Work Decade. A key part of this activity was the provision of technical support to national statistical offices. Country papers on national decent work indicators were completed in Bangladesh, Cambodia, India, Indonesia, Islamic Republic of Iran, Pakistan, Sri Lanka and Viet Nam.

**207.** The Regional Economic and Social Analysis Unit (RESA) of the Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific publishes annual reports entitled *Labour and Social Trends in Asia and the Pacific*, which provide information on trends in the labour markets of different countries and subregions in Asia, an analysis of selected topics of current interest related to labour markets in Asia, and a detailed statistical annex with the latest labour market data for the region.

**208.** A special edition of the report, *Labour and Social Trends in Asia and the Pacific*, released in May 2007, focused on the ASEAN region. The report includes the first ever ASEAN

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regional estimates of labour market indicators, including employment, unemployment, youth unemployment, employment by sector and status, informal employment, labour force participation, labour productivity and working poverty.

- 209.** The Regional Office for Asia and the Pacific commissioned the production of the *Guidebook on Decent Work Indicators for Asia and the Pacific*, which is intended to serve as a basic, non-technical information resource for policy-makers and researchers on indicators for measuring decent work. A draft of the Guidebook has been prepared and is being revised for publication.
- 210.** In Sri Lanka two workshops were conducted with the tripartite constituents to discuss and validate the “core set” of 22 decent work indicators suggested by the internal task force set up by the Director-General of the ILO. It was pointed out during the workshops that the different socio-economic conditions of countries in the region made it difficult to compare progress towards decent work across countries.

#### Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia

- 211.** The ILO Regional Office for Europe and Central Asia has been cooperating closely with the Commission of the European Communities in the implementation of Decent Work Country Programmes in the context of the European Union development strategies. The Bureau of Statistics has actively participated in this process by working with both the Directorate-General, Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of the European Commission and the UNECE Statistical Division.

#### Task Force on the Measurement of the Quality of Work

- 212.** Quality of employment is an integral part of the decent work paradigm of the ILO. Quality of employment relates to security of job tenure and prospects for career development, working conditions, hours of work, safety and health at the workplace, fair wages and returns to labour, opportunities to develop skills, balancing work and family life, gender equality, job satisfaction and recognition, and social protection.
- 213.** The ILO Bureau of Statistics, through close collaboration with the UNECE Statistical Division and the Conference of European Statisticians, has been contributing to the work carried out in the region on developing a statistical framework relating to the quality of employment, and testing statistical indicators proposed to measure the qualitative aspects of labour, which largely converge with relevant ILO decent work dimensions. The Bureau was responsible for the conceptual structure and technical content of the Third and Fourth Joint UNECE–Eurostat–ILO Seminars on the Quality of Work (Geneva, 11–13 May 2005 and 18–20 April 2007), and contributed as a resource agency to their discussions.
- 214.** At the request of the Third Seminar, the ILO chaired the Task Force on the Measurement of the Quality of Work established by the Conference of European Statisticians, and led the work on development of a conceptual framework for measuring the qualitative dimensions of employment and of a set of statistical indicators underpinning it. The Fourth Seminar discussed the framework and indicators proposed by the Task Force and accepted that the framework addressed the primary needs of policy users and laid the foundation to support further work and refinement. The seminar, therefore, agreed that further work needed to be done in order to improve and validate the list of quality of employment indicators, and proposed the creation of the new Task Force on the Measurement of the Quality of Employment. The new Task Force includes representatives of the national statistical agencies of Canada (Chair), Finland, France, Germany, Hungary, Israel, Italy, Netherlands and Poland, as well as representatives of the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, the Directorate-General, Employment, Social Affairs and Equal Opportunities of the European Commission, Eurostat, the UNECE Statistical

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Division and the ILO Bureau of Statistics. The ILO, Eurostat and the UNECE are members of the Steering Committee of the Task Force. Since its creation, the Steering Committee of the Task Force has had four teleconferences and held one meeting with the Task Force members (Paris, 12–13 June 2008). A progress report of the Task Force will be distributed to the participants of the 18th ICLS as a room document.

#### Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean

- 215.** In order to improve the availability and quality of labour statistics, as well as to establish a single set of regional decent work indicators and related statistics, the ILO Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean, in collaboration with the subregional offices, launched the LACLIS in 2004. From the beginning, the LACLIS aimed to organize, store and seek greater harmonization of statistical information for a set of labour indicators consistent with international statistical standards, in particular those adopted by the ICLS, in an integrated system together with the corresponding metadata. It sought to ensure data consistency, accuracy and timeliness, and also to provide technical assistance to national institutions, which produce labour statistics, with the aim of improving data quality for a set of decent work indicators.
- 216.** The conceptual framework used to classify the decent work indicators in the LACLIS is based on the four strategic objectives of the ILO, i.e. labour standards, employment, social protection and social dialogue. Initially, the project focused on reviewing studies and concept papers related to decent work prepared by the ILO, and in particular those on the subject which had been developed in the region, in order to define the universe of indicators from which to select the LACLIS indicators. The selection process was participatory, involving the input from various ILO specialists both from the region and headquarters. The progressive selection of indicators (reaching a total of 21 to date) was carried out according to a set of criteria, which took into consideration the importance of the indicator at the subregional level, conceptual relevance, availability of information, ease of comprehension and representation within the four strategic objectives.
- 217.** Some of the ILO offices launched initiatives to develop country-specific decent work indicators. For example, in collaboration with the Ministry of Labour and Employment and the Inter-Trade Union Department of Statistics and Socio-Economic Studies (DIEESE), the ILO Office in Brazil has been discussing decent work indicators for Brazil, in accordance with the Decent Work National Agenda. A first exercise was developed to define indicators for the United Nations Development Assistance Framework (UNDAF) and for a joint ILO–UNDP–ECLAC study on human development and decent work, which was to be released before June 2008. Decent work indicators were also one of the questions discussed by academics during two major national congresses held in 2007.

### 3.4. Future work

- 218.** Future work of the ILO on measuring and monitoring decent work will be guided by the recommendations emanating from the Tripartite Meeting of Experts on Measuring the Dimensions of Decent Work (Geneva, 8–10 September 2008).

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## 4. Indicators of labour underutilization

### 4.1. Introduction

**219.** The ILO Bureau of Statistics has launched a project aimed at developing an indicator of labour underutilization. The intention is not to replace the unemployment rate, which is a key economic indicator, but to supplement it with an indicator of labour underutilization for description and analysis of social issues. An ILO internal task team has been set up to advise the Bureau on the technical aspects of the project. The project will take into consideration the work that has already been carried out by the national statistical offices of some countries (e.g. Australia, Canada, Ireland, Mexico and the United States) to develop “supplementary measures of labour underutilization”, “supplementary measures of unemployment”, “indicators of potential labour supply”, “complementary indicators of open unemployment”, or “alternative measures of unemployment and other forms of labour resource underutilization”.

### 4.2. Background

**220.** In developing countries, in particular, unemployment (as defined by the standard definition of unemployment adopted by the 13th ICLS in 1982<sup>1</sup>) tends to be low, and is often lower than in many industrialized countries. However, a low unemployment rate in developing countries cannot be taken as an indicator of the economic well-being of those countries, or as an indicator that people’s aspirations for work are largely met. Rather, more probably, it means that the concept of unemployment, as defined by the 13th ICLS, is of limited relevance in describing the employment situation in developing countries. In these countries, most people cannot afford to be unemployed for any length of time, because there are no unemployment insurance or other social protection schemes from which they can claim benefits, and because their families are too poor to support them. Moreover, in many cases the expectations that people out of work have concerning job opportunities are not sufficiently high to make them seek work actively, or conditions are such that the conventional means of seeking work are of limited relevance, or that there is simply no labour market. In such situations, most people are ready to take any job that is available, or to create their own employment (mainly in the informal sector). Thus, in terms of a labour market model, the excess supply of labour gets absorbed through a decrease in earnings or productivity, rather than an increase in the number of unemployed persons. Most of the persons who cannot find work or create any job for themselves join the ranks of the economically inactive rather than of the unemployed.

**221.** In paragraph 10(2) of its resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment, the 13th ICLS allowed countries to relax the criterion of seeking work in the definition of unemployment. While a certain number of developing countries make use of this provision, questions arise as to the reliability of the unemployment statistics thus obtained. This is because definitions of unemployment, which exclude the criterion of seeking work, rely heavily on the criterion of current availability for work, which is difficult to measure objectively. Some countries use a relaxed definition of unemployment in parallel with the standard definition. However, the use of different indicators of unemployment in parallel often confuses the media and other statistics’ users.

<sup>1</sup> See paragraph 10(1) of the resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment.

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**222.** Twenty-six years after its adoption by the 13th ICLS, the international statistical standard definition of unemployment is being used by the vast majority of countries in the world, either alone or in combination with a relaxed definition. As a result, internationally comparable statistics of unemployment exist based on the standard definition. Many countries have long time series of data based on the definition. At least in the short run, it is thus unlikely that an international agreement on any major change of the definition can be reached, if such a change were desired. In any case, no single indicator such as the unemployment rate would be able to capture the complexity of labour markets, and it would be unfair to criticize the unemployment rate (as currently defined) for not being what it was not meant to be: a comprehensive measure of labour underutilization.

### **4.3. Methodological approach**

**223.** The project seeks to develop an indicator of labour underutilization as a supplement to the standard unemployment rate. Policy-makers, journalists, advocacy groups and the public at large are likely to prefer a composite indicator of total labour underutilization to a range of supplementary indicators, in which each indicator would refer to a single, specific aspect of labour underutilization. Nevertheless, for deeper analysis and research purposes it will be important that the composite indicator can be broken down in its various components.

**224.** In addition to the unemployed, the new indicator should factor in various groups of persons, who are not included among the unemployed (standard definition) because they are classified as employed or as not economically active in labour force statistics. In this connection, it is recalled that the standard definition of unemployment adopted by the 13th ICLS only includes persons who are: (i) without work; (ii) available for work; and (iii) actively seeking work. A person is considered to be “without work”, if (s)he was not employed at all during the reference period. The criterion defines unemployment as a situation of total lack of work (zero hours of work). As the definitions of employment and unemployment complement each other, the criterion of “without work” in the definition of unemployment leads to employment being defined as work for at least one hour during the reference period.

**225.** The definition of unemployment as total absence of work is understandable and useful for macroeconomic analysis and policies, as it ensures that employment can be defined to include all labour input into production. However, the resulting definition of employment does not fit in with people’s perception of employment. People usually consider themselves as employed when they can have aspirations of a long-time engagement attached with some reasonable conditions of employment. Thus, to look into social issues of exclusion, poverty and alienation, it is necessary to consider the employment relationship at the individual level and to take account of the individual’s perception of employment, which goes beyond economic considerations. The definition of unemployment thus does not completely reflect the well-being of people or the extent to which their aspirations for employment are not being met.

**226.** This definition also results in the employed population including a certain number of persons with marginal and inadequate employment, such as those in time-related underemployment or other forms of inadequate employment like skills-related inadequate employment or income-related inadequate employment. These are the persons whose perceptions of their employment situation are most likely to differ from their assignment of a labour force status under the current statistical framework.

**227.** The changing nature of work and improvements in technological facilities mean that the third category, i.e. persons not economically active, is no longer associated with students, housewives, retired persons and disabled persons to such an extent. There are some in this

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group who are becoming more attached to the labour force than previously, and who may not perceive themselves as “not being active”.

**228.** Among *employed* persons, the following groups may be considered for inclusion in a measure of labour underutilization:

- *Persons in time-related underemployment* as defined by the 16th ICLS. Time-related underemployment refers to a situation of partial lack of work. The inclusion in a measure of labour underutilization of persons in time-related underemployment would thus eliminate the effect that the criterion of “without work” has on the number of unemployed persons (i.e. persons in total lack of work). Taking into account the number of additional hours available for work, the measure of time-related underemployment can be made more useful in converting the number of persons in time-related underemployment to full-time equivalents.
- *Persons with low hourly earnings*, who may be defined as persons earning less than half of the median hourly earnings for employees (cf. Anker et al., 2002). Low hourly earnings are deemed to reflect low labour productivity. However, reliable data on earnings per hour may not be available when labour underutilization is measured through labour force surveys. In this case, data on monthly earnings can be used as an approximation, distinguishing between part-time workers, full-time workers and persons working long hours (see below).
- Among the above, a subgroup of special concern includes *persons working long hours and still earning little*. Persons working long hours may be defined as persons whose usual hours of work in all jobs exceed 48 hours per week.
- *Persons whose skills are underutilized*, who may be defined as persons whose educational level (International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED)) exceeds the skill level required by their current job (ISCO).
- *Persons holding more than one job* for economic reasons.
- *Involuntary part-year workers* or, as an approximation, *persons with non-permanent jobs* of a duration of less than 12 months.
- *Persons seeking another or an additional job* for economic reasons.

**229.** It should be noted that: (i) data may not always be available to identify all of these groups; and (ii) persons may belong to more than one of the groups. For these reasons, box 1 presents a possible definition of mutually exclusive groups based on classificatory variables, which are likely to be available in the labour force surveys of a large number of countries.

**230.** In respect of economically inactive persons, the measure of labour underutilization should aim at including groups of persons, who are involuntarily inactive or have a strong attachment to the labour market. To identify them, a classification of economically inactive persons needs to be developed. An example of such a classification is given in box 2. On the basis of an analysis of data for a representative sample of countries, a decision would have to be made as to which groups or subgroups of economically inactive persons should be included in the indicator “labour underutilization”. As a minimum, persons in subgroup 1.1 (which includes the so-called “discouraged workers”) should be included and, as a maximum, persons in groups 1–3 (i.e. all inactive persons who want to work).

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**231.** Either the labour force (enlarged by the number of economically inactive persons included in the measure of labour underutilization) or the population of working age (e.g. 15 years and older) should be used as denominator for the new indicator.

#### **4.4. Points for discussion**

**232.** The Conference may want to discuss:

- (a) the usefulness, at the international level, of developing an indicator of labour underutilization as a supplement to the unemployment rate;
- (b) technical aspects of the methodological approach outlined in this chapter.

##### **Box 1**

##### **Groups of the employed population by labour utilization**

Groups marked by an asterisk (\*) are considered to represent underutilized labour, either because they do not work the number of hours that they are willing and available to work, and/or because the remuneration that they receive per hour is low or very low, and/or because their skills are higher than those required by their current jobs.

- 1.\* Persons in time-related underemployment (16th ICLS)
- 2. Persons not in time-related underemployment
  - 2.1. Voluntary part-time workers (< 40 hours per week)
    - 2.1.1.\* Skills: underutilized
    - 2.1.2. Skills: not underutilized
  - 2.2. Full-time workers (40–48 hours per week)
    - 2.2.1.\* Monthly earnings: low (less than half of the median earnings of employees)
    - 2.2.2. Monthly earnings: not low
      - 2.2.2.1.\* Skills: underutilized
      - 2.2.2.2. Skills: not underutilized
  - 2.3. Persons working long hours (> 48 hours per week)
    - 2.3.1.\* Monthly earnings: low (less than half of the median earnings of employees)
    - 2.3.2. Monthly earnings: not low
      - 2.3.2.1.\* Skills: underutilized
      - 2.3.2.2. Skills: not underutilized

## Box 2

### Groups of the economically inactive population by degree of labour market attachment

As the serial number of the groups below increases, the labour market attachment of the persons belonging to these groups decreases, i.e. persons in group 1 can be considered to have the strongest labour market attachment and persons in group 4 the lowest.

Note that persons in subgroup 1.1 would be included among the unemployed if the seeking work criterion were *partially* relaxed, while all persons in group 1 would be included among the unemployed if the seeking work criterion were *completely* relaxed.

1. **Persons wanting work and available for work, but not seeking work**
  - 1.1. Economic reason for not seeking work
    - 1.1.1. Discouraged workers
    - 1.1.2. Persons with another economic reason
  - 1.2. Other reason for not seeking work
    - 1.2.1. With recent previous work experience
      - 1.2.1.1. Stopped working for economic reason
      - 1.2.1.2. Stopped working for other reason
    - 1.2.2. Without recent previous work experience
2. **Persons seeking work but not available for work**
  - 2.1. Main activity before starting to seek work: employment
  - 2.2. Main activity before starting to seek work: other than employment
    - 2.2.1. With recent previous work experience
      - 2.2.1.1. Stopped working for economic reason
      - 2.2.1.2. Stopped working for other reason
    - 2.2.2. Without recent previous work experience
3. **Persons wanting work, but neither seeking work nor available for work**
  - 3.1. Economic reason for not seeking work
  - 3.2. Other reason for not seeking work
    - 3.2.1. With recent previous work experience
      - 3.2.1.1. Stopped working for economic reason
      - 3.2.1.2. Stopped working for other reason
    - 3.2.2. Without recent previous work experience
4. **Persons not wanting to work**

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## 5. Measurement of volunteer work

### 5.1. Introduction

233. This chapter outlines a body of work that the ILO has undertaken in cooperation with the Johns Hopkins Center for Civil Society Studies and the United Nations Volunteer Programme to develop a methodology for measuring volunteer work through labour force or other household-based surveys. In preparation for the discussion of this work, the chapter addresses five principal questions: (1) What is volunteer work? (2) Why measure volunteer work? (3) Why use labour force surveys to measure volunteer work? (4) Can the measurement of volunteer work be integrated successfully into labour force surveys? (5) What approach is being proposed for such measurement?

### 5.2. What is volunteer work?

234. For the purposes of this chapter, volunteer work is defined as “activity willingly undertaken without pay to advance a cause or produce a benefit that primarily helps someone other than one’s own household or immediate family”. To be within scope, the activity must therefore:

- *Constitute work*, i.e. have some economic value for someone other than the performer. Playing a musical instrument for one’s own enjoyment is therefore not volunteering but playing for old people’s homes is.
- *Be unpaid*. Reimbursement of expenses, and provision of modest honoraria significantly below the market value of this type of work in the region or country where the work is performed, will not disqualify an activity. However, if a person receives cash or in-kind compensation that is equivalent or higher than the market value of this type of work in the region or country where the work is performed, the activity is not volunteering, even if the compensation is small.
- *Not primarily benefit one’s own family*. While the volunteer or his or her family may reap some reward, even in the form of satisfaction, from the volunteer work, someone outside the household or immediate family must also benefit.
- *Be non-compulsory and involve a significant element of choice, even if a social obligation is involved*. Court- or nationally mandated unpaid work, alternative service related to a military draft, or unpaid internships required for graduation from educational institutions would be excluded.
- *Be either volunteering to or through an organization or volunteer work done directly for individuals outside the household and not to or through an organization*. The institutional setting is therefore not part of the definition, though it is a characteristic of the volunteering about which information would be gathered.

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### **5.3. Why measure volunteer work?**

- 235.** The argument for creating a system to measure volunteer work rests on several pillars. <sup>1</sup>
- 236.** Volunteer work is a major form of unpaid labour, which has become a focus of increased attention by policy-makers throughout the world.
- 237.** Volunteer work is quite sizeable and creates significant economic value. Translated into full-time equivalent workers, volunteers account for an estimated 45 per cent of the labour force of non-profit organizations in countries around the world (Salamon, Sokolowski et al., 2004). Statistics Canada recently put the value added of volunteer work at 1.4 per cent of gross domestic product (GDP), roughly equivalent to the share of GDP contributed by Canada's agriculture and forestry industries. Volunteer work also provides employment training, offers a pathway into the labour force, delivers health services, builds social capital and offers a sense of self-fulfilment.
- 238.** The current treatment of volunteer work in statistical systems is not only seriously incomplete but also inconsistent. Currently, only volunteer work that leads to the production of goods or to the production of services for market enterprises or for non-profit enterprises receiving fees is considered within the SNA production boundary and, in principle, counted as "employment". This excludes volunteers providing services for non-profit enterprises supported mostly by philanthropy.
- 239.** A growing number of international organizations have come to recognize the contribution and importance of volunteer work and have underlined the need to measure it more systematically. This includes the UN General Assembly, UNDP, UNSD and the ILO. In fact, a recent UN General Assembly resolution specifically calls on member States to enhance the knowledge base about volunteer work and to "establish the economic value of volunteering". <sup>2</sup>

### **5.4. Why use labour force surveys to measure volunteer work?**

- 240.** Labour force surveys provide a cost-effective statistical platform for measuring volunteer work, for a number of reasons. They: (a) cover all other aspects of work; (b) are household based; (c) are professionally managed; (d) occur regularly; (e) gather demographic as well as labour data; and (f) utilize large samples, which reduces error rates.
- 241.** The major disadvantage of using labour force surveys to measure volunteer work is the constraint this places on the size of any feasible module on volunteering, making it difficult to examine all facets of the volunteer phenomenon. However, even a highly restricted set of questions will vastly improve the current state of knowledge about this important phenomenon.

<sup>1</sup> For further elaboration of the points identified here, see the document "Measuring volunteer work through labour force surveys: Background paper for the ICLS", available at [www.jhu.edu/ccss/volunteering](http://www.jhu.edu/ccss/volunteering).

<sup>2</sup> UN: General Assembly Resolution A/Res/56/38, 2001, annex.

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## 5.5. Can the measurement of volunteer work be integrated into labour force surveys?

242. Labour force and other household-based surveys have been successfully used to measure volunteer work in a number of countries, including Australia, Canada, United Kingdom and the United States, without known negative effects on the labour force surveys.
243. The major problems encountered result from the constraints that such surveys place on the number and variety of prompts that can be used, and the range of issues surrounding volunteer work that can be explored (e.g. motivations to volunteer, consequences of volunteering). Experience in the United States and Canada indicates that the use of additional prompts increases the scale of volunteer work that respondents recall. This means that labour force surveys, because they use fewer questions, would likely understate the true extent of volunteer work, though the extent of that understatement is difficult to ascertain with precision.
244. Various techniques are available to minimize or reduce this problem. In addition, countries that want to deepen their understanding of volunteer work may choose to supplement their use of labour force surveys with various types of stand-alone, or time-use, surveys, as has been done in Australia, Canada and the United Kingdom.

## 5.6. What approach is being considered for the measurement of volunteer work through labour force surveys?

245. With the aid of a Technical Experts Group (TEG–VOL) composed of labour force statisticians and experts on volunteering, a *Manual on the Measurement of Volunteer Work* through official labour force surveys and a suggested draft Volunteer Measurement Survey Module are being developed. They are being submitted as room documents to the ICLS.
246. At its inaugural meeting in July 2007, the TEG–VOL discussed and agreed on the definition of volunteer work, the variables of interest, the measurement approach, the classifications to be used, and the valuation principle, as well as on the outline of the proposed manual.<sup>3</sup>
247. Key principles guiding the development of the manual include the following: (i) design consistency with labour force surveys; (ii) use of existing occupation and industry classifications to sort volunteer work; (iii) reliance on a *replacement cost approach* keyed to occupations to impute a value to volunteer time; and (iv) use of a limited recall period to capture volunteer work and minimize recall error.
248. Variables proposed for measurement through the draft survey module include: the number of volunteers; the hours volunteered; the locus of volunteering: directly for individuals or for or through an organization; and, if the latter, the type of organization; the main fields or industries of volunteering; and the types of job performed.
249. The proposed module is meant to supplement rather than replace existing surveys that measure volunteering, though countries currently measuring volunteering, via labour force survey supplements or other methods, are urged to consider evaluating their existing

<sup>3</sup> The meeting report is available at: [www.jhu.edu/ccss/volunteering](http://www.jhu.edu/ccss/volunteering).

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surveys in light of the proposed recommendations in the suggested ILO manual to allow for greater international comparability.

## **5.7. Conclusion**

- 250.** Volunteering has emerged as a critical “renewable resource” for social and environmental problem-solving throughout the world. While policy-makers are increasingly looking to volunteer work to supplement paid work in a wide variety of fields, from health care to disaster assistance, their ability to access this resource effectively is seriously hampered by the absence in most countries of even the most basic data.
- 251.** The ILO has now put in place a process to address this lack of basic data by integrating the collection of data on volunteer work sensitively into periodic labour force surveys. In the process, this effort will bring a significant part of unpaid work into focus.
- 252.** The ILO seeks the concurrence of national statistical offices in the further development of this system. The Conference is requested to provide comments with respect to: (i) the importance and feasibility of measuring volunteer work in labour force or other household-based surveys; (ii) the proposed definition of volunteer work; (iii) the module proposed; and (iv) the draft manual.

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## 6. Future work of the ILO in labour statistics (2009–13)

### 6.1. General

**253.** Twenty-six years after the adoption of the resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment by the 13th ICLS (1982), the time seems to have come to start reflecting upon a possible revision or update of the resolution. The parts of the 13th ICLS resolution dealing with underemployment have already been substituted by the resolution concerning the measurement of underemployment and inadequate employment situations adopted by the 16th ICLS (1998). Other parts of the earlier resolution have been supplemented with *Guidelines on the implications of employment promotion schemes on the measurement of employment and unemployment*, endorsed by the 14th ICLS (1987), and *Guidelines concerning the treatment in employment and unemployment statistics of persons on extended absences from work*, endorsed by the 16th ICLS. (1998). There may also be a need to examine the desirability of adapting the conceptual basis of statistics on employment and unemployment, as defined by the 13th ICLS resolution, as a whole, in order to reflect current thinking on their relevance for economic and social policies and the description of labour markets. A seminar has been organized for the second-last day of this Conference to discuss the issue.

**254.** Pending the discussion on a possible general revision or update of the 13th ICLS resolution, a need has emerged to amend a specific paragraph of the resolution. This refers to paragraph 5, which defines the economically active population in terms of the production boundary of the SNA which was in force in 1982 (SNA 1968):

The economically active population comprises all persons of either sex who furnish the supply of labour for the production of economic goods and services as defined by the United Nations systems of national accounts and balances during a specified time-reference period. According to these systems the production of economic goods and services includes all production and processing of primary products whether for the market, for barter or for own consumption, the production of all other goods and services for the market and, in the case of households which produce such goods and services for the market, the corresponding production for own consumption.

**255.** The material production system of accounts and balances mentioned in the above definition has been discontinued, and the production boundary was extended in the SNA 1993. The extension of the production boundary will remain unchanged in the SNA 2008. In several places, the SNA refers to the ICLS definition of economically active population; however, it is not desirable for the SNA 2008 to refer to a definition linked to a production boundary that has become out of date for national accountants. In practice, labour force statisticians already base current definitions of employment on the production boundary specified in the SNA 1993 instead of that of the SNA 1968. Such practice is however based on a tacit understanding rather than an internationally agreed recommendation.

**256.** For these reasons, it is suggested to replace paragraph 5 of the 13th ICLS resolution by the following text:

The economically active population comprises all persons of either sex who furnish the supply of labour for the production of goods or services, as defined by the latest version of the System of National Accounts (SNA), during a specified time-reference period. According to the SNA 2008, the relevant production of goods and services includes all production of goods, the production of all services for the market, and the production for own final consumption of household services produced by employing paid domestic staff.

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The Conference is invited to review and adopt the amended definition.

- 257.** Future work of the ILO on the measurement of working time and on child labour statistics has been addressed in the respective Reports II and III prepared for this Conference, and in the draft resolutions attached to these reports. Suggestions for future work, which emanated from the audit of ILO statistical activities and the review of employment statistics by the United Nations Statistical Commission, have been summarized in sections 1.1 and 1.2 of the present report. Future work of the ILO on the publication, promotion and implementation of the ISCO–08 has been outlined in section 2.5; on the measurement and monitoring of decent work in section 3.4; on the development of an indicator of labour underutilization in section 4.1; and on the measurement of volunteer work in section 5.7.
- 258.** Proposals for future work of the ILO in other areas of labour statistics are presented in sections 6.2–6.4 below.
- 259.** Due to resource constraints it is unlikely that during the next five years or so the Office will be able to work on all of these topics. The Conference is therefore invited to express its views regarding priorities for the future statistical work of the ILO.

## **6.2. Development of methods**

### **(a) *International Classification of Status in Employment***

- 260.** The International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE–93) was adopted through a resolution of the 15th ICLS (1993). It classifies jobs with respect to the type of explicit or implicit contract that is held by the person holding the job with the economic unit in which the person is employed. There is concern that the categories specified in the ICSE of employees, employers, own-account workers, members of producers’ cooperatives and contributing family workers may not provide sufficient information to adequately monitor the changes in contractual arrangements that are taking place in many countries, especially among workers whose status in employment is unclear or who are in informal employment.
- 261.** The 15th ICLS resolution provides guidance on the statistical treatment of particular groups including owner–managers of incorporated enterprises, employees with fixed-term contracts, workers in casual employment, “contractors”, subsistence workers and several others. These groups are not organized into a coherent classificatory framework, however, and the guidance is not definitive about the treatment of some groups. There may, therefore, be a need to review the range of existing national practices and user requirements with respect to statistics on status in employment and other aspects of contractual arrangements, so as to identify ways in which either the existing ICSE could be modified, or other standard variables could be developed as a complement to status in employment, in order to better reflect contemporary realities and economic and social concerns.

### **(b) *Harmonized framework for wages statistics***

- 262.** Currently there are international statistical standards on a number of employment-related income concepts, which were adopted by the ICLS or for the SNA. These include the concepts of wage rates, earnings, employment-related income, labour cost and compensation of employees. These concepts include different sets of often overlapping income components (for example, overtime pay, bonuses, payment in kind, social security

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benefits). As a consequence, they are all related between themselves. However, the various income components are not always defined in a coherent way in the various international instruments, and in some cases they are not defined at all. As a result, it is not possible to relate them unambiguously. A clarification of the various income components would allow a harmonized framework for wages statistics to be developed. It would also make it possible to ascertain whether or not some of these concepts need to be revised.

**(c) Social security**

- 263.** To improve the availability of data on social security/social protection at the national level (which determines to a large extent the data that can be made available at the international level), a concerted international effort needs to be undertaken, which includes the further development of international methodological standards. A possible revision of the resolution concerning the development of social security statistics adopted by the Ninth ICLS (1957) should be considered. A thorough review of the resolution would help to identify sections, which need to be updated in view of recent developments, as well as measures to be taken to promote a better implementation of the resolution.
- 264.** To complement administrative data and their limited coverage, the use of household survey data and household survey methods of data collection should be explored.

**(d) Administrative data**

- 265.** For the European and Central Asian regions, it has been suggested to develop a shared methodology at the regional level for the collection and analysis of administrative data collected by the public employment services and the institutes of social security.

**6.3. Data collection, estimation and dissemination**

- 266.** The growing demand for internationally comparable statistics emphasizes the importance of the programme on “ILO-comparable annual employment and unemployment estimates”, which has been described in section 1.3(e). Future work of the Bureau of Statistics will seek to continue increasing the number of countries covered by the programme and, possibly, to include additional indicators.
- 267.** So far, meaningful statistics on *employment in the tourism industries* have been collected in a handful of countries only. In accordance with the 2008 International Recommendations for Tourism Statistics, such statistics should be collected and published for a larger number of countries.
- 268.** Experience with data collection through the ILO Social Security Inquiry has revealed that the required statistical information is often lacking at the national level, and that there are deficiencies in the data production and collection methods, in particular in developing countries. The information is often patchy and incomplete, and difficult to compare across countries due to differences in the concepts and definitions used. In view of the growing need for reliable indicators on social protection in a global perspective, the ILO will continue to develop its statistical database on social security. Increased efforts in data collection, particularly through the development of partnerships with other international agencies and the promotion of ILO methods and tools to be used by others, should be made. The ILO is ready to offer its Social Security Inquiry database with its online questionnaire for use by any agency interested in such cooperation. Data collection on social security systems is costly and time consuming. It cannot be afforded by any single international agency and requires a joint effort. The ILO has already initiated a process of

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cooperation and coordination with other international agencies (OECD, Asian Development Bank, International Social Security Association and the World Bank).

**269.** In the area of statistical information on health microinsurance systems, the STEP programme of the ILO is planning to develop a database on the frequency and cost of using health services, including performance indicators of health insurance systems. At the same time, the database on health microinsurance systems will be extended to include additional Asian countries (Cambodia, India, Laos and the Philippines) as well as the English-speaking African countries. The tools for online data entry and consultation will be adapted to cover the countries of Latin America.

**270.** In the Latin American and Caribbean region, the following activities will be conducted by the ILO:

- The different intervention areas outlined in the Agenda for Decent Work in the Americas, which was adopted by the tripartite constituency of the ILO during the 16th Regional Meeting of the Americas in Brasilia in May 2006, require a broad array of statistical information. For this reason, the ILO will continue to collect micro-data household survey files from the national statistical offices in the region, the most up to date published employment statistics, as well as labour data derived from administrative records. This collection activity requires not only strengthening of institutional relationships between the ILO and national data producers, but also reviewing and updating conceptual and methodological aspects of the respective statistical process.
- In order to achieve an effective social dialogue – a key general policy area of the Agenda for Decent Work in the Americas – it is essential that the social actors have access to a broad base of information on the labour market and the labour situation. To this end, the activities related to the dissemination of statistical information will be strengthened through the enhancement of the annual publication *Labour Overview, Latin America and the Caribbean*, while at the same time the quality and timeliness of the regional statistical database system in a user-friendly, web-enabled format will be improved.
- Special emphasis will be given to the development of indicators that allow the Regional Office for Latin America and the Caribbean to monitor the progress made in the area of the four strategic objectives of the ILO and towards the objectives outlined in the Agenda for Decent Work in the Americas.

**271.** The ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean expects that with the establishment of harmonized series for six employment indicators obtained from labour force surveys the challenges with respect to the collection and dissemination of employment-related indicators for the region will have largely been met by the end of 2009. A major effort will be launched in the coming two years to enhance the labour statistics produced from the administrative records of ministries of labour, including statistics on industrial relations. In most cases the Governments will be the major drivers of the process as they are willing to provide the ongoing funding for these activities. However, international development funding will be required to initiate the modernization of these administrative records. As part of the efforts to enhance the availability and quality of statistics on social security, the Subregional Office will collaborate with the secretariat of the Organisation of Eastern Caribbean States (OECS) to implement the recommendations of the CLMIS report on national insurance systems.

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#### **6.4. Technical cooperation, advisory services and training**

- 272.** Taking into consideration the available human and financial resources, the ILO will continue to provide member States with technical assistance and training on the various topics of labour statistics. The need to have evidence-based policies and effective monitoring and evaluation systems has brought back the need for labour statistics on the development agenda. This opportunity is in itself a challenge. Unless the ILO is prepared to respond in a timely manner and with the necessary financial and technical support, it may be considered to be less relevant, even when countries know the expertise is available. The challenge will therefore continue to be how the ILO will be capable of mobilizing sufficient financial and technical resources to meet the increasing demand for labour statistics.
- 273.** Only few ratifications of the Labour Statistics Convention, 1985 (No. 160), have been registered during recent years. Efforts should therefore be made by the ILO to promote the ratification of the Convention through advocacy and training.
- 274.** The ILO will collaborate with the IHSN to develop a handbook which will guide countries in the implementation of the recommendations made in the resolution concerning household income and expenditure statistics adopted by the 17th ICLS (2003). The ILO will also collaborate with the IHSN in the development of questionnaire modules for the collection of labour force statistics through multi-purpose household surveys.
- 275.** The ILO will continue to support improvement of national statistics on forced labour and human trafficking through technical cooperation, training and advisory services. The pilot experience with a limited number of national statistical offices undertaken over the period 2004–08 will be published, and good practice will be made available for other countries that wish to produce national estimates of forced labour and human trafficking as benchmarks to inform policy and to measure progress.
- 276.** The ILO in Latin America and the Caribbean will carry out the following activities:
- In close coordination with the Bureau of Statistics, the ILO Regional Office will provide technical assistance to countries of the region as regards the application of concepts and methods developed by the ICLS, in order to improve the quality of data and variables related to the world of work and move forward towards a greater harmonization of statistics in the region.
  - Training sessions will be developed relating to various topics in labour statistics, targeted at officials from national statistical offices and labour ministries in order to strengthen human resources in charge of the collection, estimation and dissemination of labour statistics and information.
- 277.** The ILO Subregional Office for the Caribbean will carry out the following activities:
- In collaboration with the OECS secretariat and in close coordination with the Bureau of Statistics and the Skills and Employability Department of the ILO, technical support will be provided to countries seeking to establish basic data sources for labour statistics.
  - In collaboration with the CARICOM secretariat two projects will be completed: harmonization of labour force surveys and dissemination of a set of harmonized employment indicators, and linking ISIC with the harmonized trade classification of the CARICOM States to allow analysis of indicators on employment by industry (ISIC) and trade indicators.

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278. The ILO Subregional Office for West Africa plans to conduct a training module on statistics of occupational injuries (resulting from occupational accidents) at the universities of Abidjan (Côte d'Ivoire), Cotonou (Benin) and Dakar (Senegal).

279. The International Training Centre of the ILO in Turin will continue its training courses on labour market information and analysis. It also plans to organize training courses on the analysis of data on child labour and youth employment, the analysis of gender disparities in labour markets and the analysis of working conditions

## 6.5. Organization, frequency and duration of the International Conference of Labour Statisticians

### (a) *Background to the International Conference of Labour Statisticians*

280. The ICLS has met generally every five years since the first Conference in 1923; hence this Conference is the 18th ICLS. The Conferences adopt international standards on labour statistics in the form of resolutions and guidelines that are then formally approved by the Governing Body of the ILO and presented to the United Nations Statistical Commission. Proposals for resolutions and guidelines are developed by the ILO, as secretariat for the ICLS. The development process can take between three and eight years for resolutions, and two and four years for guidelines. In addition to a thorough review of national practices, it includes extensive consultation with the statistical services of governments as well as with other key stakeholders such as employers' and workers' organizations, other international and supranational agencies, and experts in academic and research institutions. This is done through bilateral discussions, participation at meetings and correspondence. In particular, a tripartite meeting of experts on each topic is generally held late in the development phase. Topics for standard setting at an ICLS are identified by the ILO, based on recommendations of the previous ICLS, consultation with governments and other partners, as well as the policy and programme needs of the ILO itself. Usually, these are intentionally limited to two or three topics so as to allow time for in-depth discussion of these issues. The ICLS also advises the ILO on its future work programme in statistics.<sup>1</sup>

281. The ICLS is a statutory conference of the ILO that is convened by the Governing Body of the ILO and guided by Standing Orders.<sup>2</sup> The secretariat of the Conference is appointed by the Director-General of the ILO whilst the Officers of the Conference, consisting "of a Chairman, up to three Vice-Chairmen and the chairmen of committees set up by the Conference"<sup>3</sup> are elected by the Conference. The composition of each Conference is determined by the Governing Body of the ILO and consists of government representatives and representatives of employers' and workers' organizations as delegates, and international organizations and non-governmental organizations as observers.

282. Participation at the Conferences has increased from about 50 participants at the First ICLS in 1923 to about 287 participants at the 17th ICLS in 2003, reflecting not only the trend in

<sup>1</sup> For more details, see "ILO statistical standards: 85 years of setting international guidelines for labour statistics", ILO Bureau of Statistics, in *Bulletin of Labour Statistics*, 2008–1.

<sup>2</sup> Standing Orders for International Conferences of Labour Statisticians, ILO, Geneva, 1982.

<sup>3</sup> *ibid.*, art. 4.

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membership of the ILO but also increased statistical awareness around the world. This participation is however not proportional to regional membership of countries in the ILO. (In 2003, at the 17th ICLS, regional participation rates ranged from 75 per cent for countries in Europe to 26 per cent for countries in Latin America.) This is due mainly to the costs of participation, which particularly affect developing countries, as countries are directly responsible for their own costs. Also, some countries, because of their lack of experience in international meetings, choose not to participate. Another key factor affecting effective participation of countries is that the Conference usually discusses several topics but that they can, at best, afford to send only one representative.

**(b) *The issues***

**283.** The current fast changing pace of social and economic issues in the world has two negative impacts on the organization and frequency of the ICLS. Firstly, it implies that the time lag of five years between Conferences is too long. Guidelines on measuring new and changing features in the world of work are needed by countries and the international statistical community much faster. An example of this was the updating of the ISCO which needed to be done in a shorter period than the five years between the 17th ICLS in 2003 and the 18th ICLS in 2008. Secondly, work in national statistical offices and other statistical services has become so demanding that senior staff in these institutions cannot afford to spend eight–ten working days at one Conference, especially as there are many such engagements. Hence the United Nations Statistical Commission recommended that the ICLS review the duration and frequency of its meetings (see section 1.1(b) of this report).

**284.** Some ancillary factors that should also be considered are: (a) the holding of the ICLS always in Geneva; and (b) the interpretation of all sessions of the Conference into all seven working languages of the ILO (English, French, Spanish, German, Russian, Arabic and Chinese). Rotation of the Conference venue between regions could impact positively on attendance from developing countries, but would be a logistical challenge for the ILO. Also, it might put into question the nature of the ICLS as a statutory international conference of the ILO. Reducing the number of languages used for interpretation to the three official languages (English, French and Spanish) could save costs. This would, however, be contrary to ILO procedures for international conferences.

**(c) *Other standard-setting mechanisms***

**285.** Standard setting at the international level in almost all other areas of statistics, apart from the regulatory system of Eurostat, is based on proposals by a group of experts, which are then formally adopted by a policy conference or meeting or directly by the international organization. This is the case with standards adopted by the United Nations Statistical Commission. It uses expert groups, city groups or inter-secretariat working groups to develop technical proposals which are then formally adopted by the Commission. The United Nations Statistical Commission has only 24 elected countries as members, although other countries can participate with an observer status. Thus, this process seemingly limits the extent to which the wider community of countries can influence the standards adopted. However, it is worth noting that recently the number of observer countries at the United Nations Statistical Commission sessions has increased dramatically, which greatly enhances the influence of countries in the decision-making of the United Nations Statistical Commission but reduces the extent of in-depth technical input in the discussion at the session. Recent examples of this method are the adoption of the SNA 2008 and the International Standard Classification of Industrial Activities. The UNSC meets annually for four days.

**286.** Specialized agencies like the WHO and the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) use ad hoc expert groups to advise the secretariat in the

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development of statistical standards. These are then submitted to their general conferences for formal adoption. The extent of technical consultation with a wide group of countries is not ensured. Other international agencies have an informal process of consultation with countries. It is not clear whether any formal body of countries approves the final decisions, which detracts from their ownership by member States.

**(d) Options**

**287.** In considering options to present to the Conference, the secretariat wishes above all to retain three key features that make the process of standard setting in labour statistics through the ICLS mechanism so unique. These are: (a) its wide consultative approach; (b) its ownership by member States; and (c) its high level of technical inputs.

**288.** Two options are presented for discussion.

Option 1

**289.** Increase the frequency of the ICLS to three yearly, reduce the number of topics for standard setting to one, and limit the duration of the ICLS to four or five working days.

*Advantages:*

- faster response to changing situations in the world of work due to the increased frequency;
- easier participation of senior staff from statistical services due to the shorter duration;
- retention of the character of the ICLS as a technical conference;
- more effective participation of those countries that can only afford to send one representative, due to the reduction of the number of topics to one;
- only one meeting of experts will be required in preparation for the ICLS, thus reducing the total cost of the process.

*Disadvantages:*

- possible increase in travel costs for countries may outweigh the reduction in costs from a shorter duration. This could impact negatively on the already difficult participation situation of developing countries;
- time lag for consulting countries and other partners in the preparation of new standards may be too short and so impact negatively on the quality and ownership of the standards;
  - This disadvantage could be overcome by staggering the topics identified for standard setting. The present ICLS could propose two topics, one of which is already far advanced in the development process. This is the topic that would be presented to the next ICLS in 2011, whilst the second would be presented to the following ICLS in 2014. Thus the second topic would in fact be developed over six years. Thereafter, each topic identified by an ICLS would be for presentation to the ICLS after next.
- the cost to the ILO could increase to such an extent that the Governing Body would not be in a position to agree to it.

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- Whilst the cost for the participation of the employers' and workers' representatives might increase (this is however not certain as the duration would also decrease), the ancillary costs of translation, interpretation and document preparation should go down. Also the reduction of meetings of experts from two to one, already recognized as an advantage, would further reduce the costs.

## Option 2

**290.** Keep the frequency of the ICLS five yearly as at present, but have the ICLS delegate its authority to adopt standards to some other mechanism such as meetings of experts, city groups and so on. (This was the method used for the updating of ISCO.) The duration could be shortened by again limiting the number of topics for standard setting at the ICLS itself to one since the other topic(s) would have gone through the fast-tracking adoption process. Indeed, all topics could go through this fast-tracking process, and the ICLS could limit itself to policy issues like the Commission and thereby further reduce its duration.

### *Advantages:*

- as the duration of the ICLS will be reduced, costs for countries and the ILO may also decrease;
- the ICLS could retain its status as a technical conference, if it still has direct responsibility for adopting standards on one topic.

### *Disadvantages:*

- the nature of the proposed alternative mechanisms is such that it may not be possible to consult countries widely in adopting standards, due both to the costs of participation in these mechanisms and the fact that they often will have no interpretation and translation facilities. This could have negative consequences for the sense of ownership of the standards and may make them inadequate for use in some regions, as developing countries are more likely to be affected than developed countries;
- the authority of the ICLS could be diluted.
  - One way to address this problem would be to establish a Bureau of the Conference with powers to act on behalf of the ICLS. The decisions of the alternative mechanisms could then be submitted to the Bureau for approval. The duration of five years for such a Bureau may however be too long and the attrition rate may be high.

## A suggestion for both options

**291.** Hold regional conferences, staggered in between the ICLS, to supplement the ICLS or to prepare for discussions at the ICLS.

### *Advantages:*

- all countries will be better placed to participate more efficiently in the ICLS;
- regional priorities will be better reflected in international standards.

### *Disadvantages:*

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- the cost to the ILO for the ICLS process will greatly increase, and thus the suggestion will be unlikely to be favoured by the Governing Body of the ILO;
  - the time available to cover all five regions is limited, particularly with respect to Option 1 above.

**(e) Decision**

**292.** In reaching a decision, the Conference may wish to take into account that: (a) the capacity of the secretariat to engage in developmental work; and (b) the ILO budget allocation for the ICLS are both unlikely to be increased.

**293.** The Conference is invited to consider the way it functions and is organized in order possibly to make a recommendation to the ILO Governing Body on these matters. The Conference may wish to set up an advisory group to advise it on this issue.



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## Appendix

### Ratification of the Labour Statistics Convention, 1985 (No. 160) (as at 26 May 2008)

Country	Ratification date
Armenia	29.04.2005
Australia	15.05.1987
Austria	03.06.1987
Azerbaijan	19.05.1992
Belarus	12.10.1990
Benin	06.04.2000
Bolivia	14.11.1990
Brazil	02.07.1990
Canada	22.11.1995
Colombia	23.03.1990
Costa Rica	13.02.2001
Cyprus	01.12.1987
Czech Republic	01.01.1993
Denmark	22.01.1988
El Salvador	24.04.1987
Finland	27.04.1987
Germany	25.04.1991
Greece	17.03.1993
Guatemala	07.04.1993
India	01.04.1992
Ireland	27.10.1995
Italy	08.11.1989
Republic of Korea	08.12.1997
Kyrgyzstan	31.03.1992
Latvia	10.06.1994
Lithuania	10.06.1999
Mauritius	14.06.1994
Mexico	18.04.1988
Netherlands	05.10.1990
New Zealand	06.11.2001
Norway	06.08.1987
Panama	03.04.1995
Poland	24.04.1991
Portugal	08.12.1993
Russian Federation	27.08.1990

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<b>Country</b>	<b>Ratification date</b>
San Marino	01.07.1988
Slovakia	01.01.1993
Spain	03.10.1989
Sri Lanka	01.04.1993
Swaziland	22.09.1992
Sweden	22.09.1986
Switzerland	07.05.1987
Tajikistan	26.11.1993
Ukraine	15.08.1991
United Kingdom	27.05.1987
United States	11.06.1990

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