



Quick Facts

► Independent high-level evaluation of the ILO strategies and approaches for the development and use of labour statistics, 2018-23

► October 2024



► Description and purpose of the evaluation

This high-level evaluation (HLE) assesses the ILO's efforts in developing and supporting labour statistics from 2018 to 2023 and their role in promoting decent work and social justice, with a focus on the statistical functions carried out by the Department of Statistics (STATISTICS) and various Policy Departments. The HLE offers forward-looking insights, sharing key findings, lessons learned, and emerging best practices to guide decision-making for the upcoming ILO Strategic Framework. Recommendations cover multiple organizational levels (global, regional, and country) to help the ILO improve its work in these contexts.

► Methodology

The evaluation followed [EVAL's high-level evaluation protocol for strategy and policy evaluations](#), and applied a theory-based and outcome-based evaluation approach to assess the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, likelihood of impact, and sustainability of the ILO's strategies and actions for the production and dissemination of labour statistics. The HLE was conducted by examining data from various sources:



Synthesis review of 33 project evaluations on statistics



Comprehensive review of ILO documentation



185 interviews (58% men, 42% women) with ILO staff, constituents, funding partners, the UN and other partners



7 case studies (4 in-depth country-based, 1 desk-based, and 2 thematic). Case studies included Pakistan, Paraguay, Senegal and Viet Nam (in-depth country-focused); Mozambique (desk-based); the ILO's Statistical Work on Informal Economy; and the ILO's Partnerships to Promote Labour Statistics (thematic)

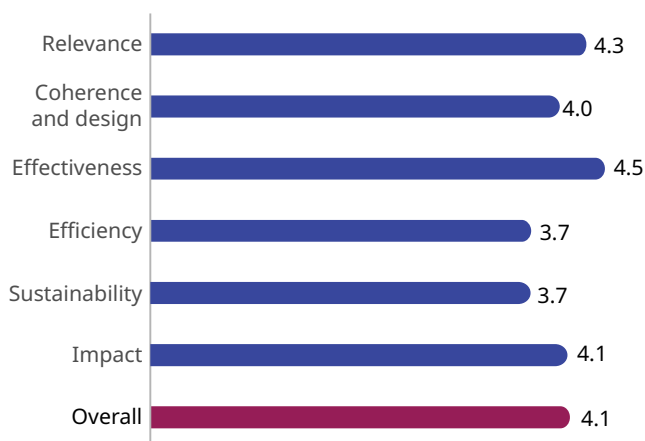


3 surveys of ILO staff (28% response rate), constituents (25% response rate), and partners (32% response rate)



► Overall Assessment

How did the ILO's work on labour statistics perform in terms of relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability?



6 = Highly satisfactory; 5 = Satisfactory; 4 = Somewhat satisfactory; 3 = Somewhat unsatisfactory; 2 = Unsatisfactory; 1 = Highly unsatisfactory



KEY FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS

1 The ILO is globally recognized for its leadership in labour statistics, acknowledged by stakeholders at all levels. Its statistical work is recognized as a means of advancing social justice through the ILO-led Global Coalition for Social Justice. Statistics produced by the ILO are used to support policy decisions. Governments (notably national statistical offices (NSOs) and ministries of labour), UN agencies, international financial institutions and research institutions are the most prolific users of ILO statistics.

2 While the ILO aligns its statistical activities with the International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) resolutions and strategy and policy frameworks, these documents do not serve as comprehensive support frameworks, notably for regional implementation. Furthermore, limited resource mobilization has led to an overreliance on already stretched regular budget resources, restricting the ILO's ability to meet the growing demand for statistical data and to ensure timely availability.

KEY FINDINGS

3 Resource constraints lead the ILO to prioritize promoting the adoption of ICLS standards by NSOs for the availability of high-quality, relevant and harmonized statistical data. However, there remains a considerable lag between the adoption and implementation of statistical standards at the national level.

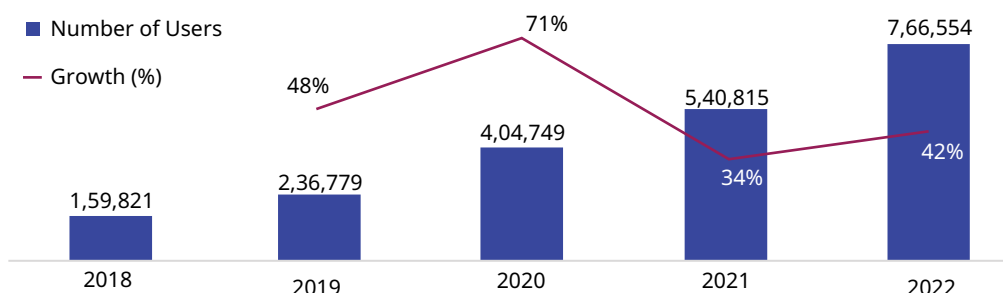
A strong emphasis on Labour Force Surveys (LFS) leaves gaps in support for other data sources, such as administrative and establishment data, creating unmet demand from key ILO departments like ENTERPRISES, OSHE, as well as ACTRAV, and ACT/EMP.

4 Since 2018, ILO's statistical efforts have transformed, resulting in improved data quality and availability through advancements in microdata processing and the consolidation of data on ILOSTAT. Despite various challenges in transitioning to the 19th ICLS, data availability using these standards in just over half of the Member States represents significant progress. Policy areas where statistics made significant progress include social protection, labour migration, disability inclusion and informality.

5 The ILO's work on Labour Market Information Systems (LMIS) enhances data integration and timeliness, helping to address critical gaps. However, the uneven promotion and implementation of LMIS across regions affect data accessibility and consistency.

6 The need for ILO support remains high, as it is the sole organization leading standard-setting, providing technical support for labour statistics, and supplying harmonized statistical data. ILO-produced labour statistics are increasingly used in national evidence-based policymaking; however, they are less relevant to the everyday challenges faced by workers' and employers' organizations. The absence of clear strategies for comprehensive support to all constituents, coupled with limited resources at both the ILO and NSOs hinders impact in the context of evolving ICLS standards.

► Number and growth of users on the ILOSTAT portal, 2018 – 22



KEY RECOMMENDATIONS

I Develop an organization-wide strategy for the ILO's statistical function to improve coherence among the statistical work across policy outcomes, ensure a more comprehensive response to constituents' evolving needs, and integrate different data sources and changing concepts in the world of work (e.g., platform economy, care work).

I Identify opportunities for internal cost recovery to ensure financial sustainability and optimize resources for the Department of Statistics, such as leveraging development cooperation projects to strengthen internal capacities and sustain statistical support services.

I Strengthen the resource mobilization strategy for labour statistics as limited Regular Budget resources is a major constraint, making it essential to mobilize additional resources to ensure comprehensive support for constituents. This could involve engaging with partners and submitting joint funding proposals.

I Decentralize statistical capacity building to the country or sub-regional levels, reinforcing labour and statistics institutions for long-term impact. Develop training programmes for ILO statistics users, including ILO staff and constituents. Create a communications strategy to tailor statistical information for different audiences, especially at the country level, and improve the user interface of ILOSTAT for better accessibility.

QUOTES

► Voices from constituents

"ILO statistical work has been well appreciated by the national government. More connection to and engagement of relevant ministries could help to enhance its relevance." (Government Official)

"Devoting more resources would improve the efficiency of producing, analyzing, disseminating, and using labour statistics." (Employers' Organization Official)

► Voices from ILO staff

"ILO's production and analysis of labour statistics is a critical work area for the office."

"Future work on statistics should include a clear strategy known to all offices, ensuring coordinated efforts between headquarters and the field, and incorporating an effective communication plan."