INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANIZATION

Department of Statistics **MESEU/2013**

Statistics of work and of the labour force

Report for discussion at the Meeting of Experts in Labour Statistics on the Advancement of Employment and Unemployment Statistics
(Geneva, 28 January–1 February 2013)

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Statistics of work and of the labour force: report for discussion at the Meeting of Experts in Labour Statistics on the Advancement of Employment and Unemployment Statistics (Geneva, 28 January-1 February 2013) / International Labour Office, Department of Statistics.- Geneva: ILO, 2013
vi, 62 p.

ISBN 9789221273530; 9789221273547 (web pdf)

International Labour Office and Dept.of Statistics; Meeting of Experts in Labour Statistics on the Advancement of Employment and Unemployment Statistics (MESEU/2013; 2013, Switzerland)

labour statistics / employment / unemployment / underemployment / working conditions / measurement / data collecting / international labour standards / role of ILO

13.01.1

ILO Cataloguing in Publication Data

Printed in Switzerland

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Part I

1. Introduction

1. International statistical standards covering employment, unemployment and related topics are meant to serve two purposes: to provide up-to-date guidelines for the development of national official statistics on the subject; and to promote international comparability of the resulting statistics. Regular revision and update of these standards are needed to ensure that they adequately reflect new developments in labour markets in countries at different stages of development, and that they incorporate identified best practices and advances in statistical methodology so as to best meet emerging policy concerns.

2. The current resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment (13th ICLS 1982), is recognized worldwide. Official national statistics for these topics are largely based on these standards. Not only do the standards define who is to be counted as employed and as unemployed, they also set the scope of measurement linked to working conditions, quality of employment, access to employment, etc. In turn, the resulting statistics play a central role in informing the design, implementation and monitoring of a broad range of macroeconomic, labour market, income and related economic and social policies at the national level. They also facilitate cross-country comparisons of economic growth, productivity and competitiveness, the structure of labour markets and decent work. At the regional and international levels, these labour force statistics have increasingly been looked to in setting targets and assessing progress towards the achievement of agreed social and economic development goals, as their inclusion in the United Nations Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) testifies.

3. However, the employment and unemployment statistics produced according to these standards have increasingly been found to fall short of fully describing the world of work. Their usefulness in providing comprehensive measures to assess economic activity and to monitor changing labour markets and labour absorption has thus been limited. These statistics also shed little light on how households allocate their labour resources and on the subsequent impact on livelihoods and on well-being. Classic economic indicators such as the gross domestic product (GDP) and the unemployment rate on their own are now widely being questioned as to their sufficiency as headline measures of social progress, of living standards, and even of economic performance (Stiglitz, 2009). Furthermore, the adequacy of labour force statistics to describe the variety of work patterns across countries is seen to differ according to the level of development and the institutional context, as well as between rural and urban environments and among different population groups, particularly regarding the work patterns of women as compared to men.

4. Reliance on an approach developed to serve specific macroeconomic purposes with few indicators cannot address the growing demand for statistics to inform a broader range of economic and social policies. The recent international financial crisis and its consequences on employment have sharpened the focus of policy-makers and commentators to monitoring labour markets on a global scale. At the same time, increasing public and policy concern about the impact of climate change and global warming on production and consumption patterns and the consequences for employment, income and food security has led to the realization that, in order for development to be more sustainable and equitable for all, stronger emphasis must be placed on macro-socio-economic approaches that encompass all work.

5. These developments have highlighted the need to review the current standards in order to broaden their scope so as to provide a more flexible body of statistics covering all forms of work and more comprehensive measures of labour underutilization for monitoring labour markets than are currently provided for.

Review and update process

6. In 2008, the 39th Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) considered a report on a programme review of labour statistics prepared, at the request of the Commission, by the Office for National Statistics, United Kingdom. The review included consultation with member States of the United Nations to identify priority areas in labour statistics for future work. Among the areas identified were: (a) the changing structure of the labour force; (b) an update of the labour statistics framework to address the dynamic aspects of labour markets; (c) the interaction between paid and unpaid work; and (d) the interaction between labour statistics and other domains of statistics. To facilitate the work, the review recommended the establishment of dedicated working groups under the overall coordination of the ILO and the holding of expert group meetings (UN, 2008a).

7. That same year the 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (ICLS) held extensive discussions on possible future work on the development of standards and methods in labour statistics, including the priorities highlighted in the review report. The Conference identified as priority areas for future work by the ILO a revision of the resolution of statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment (1982) and of the *International Classification of Status in Employment* (ICSE-93). It also adopted a resolution concerning the development of measures of labour underutilization that recommended that the ILO, in cooperation with interested countries and organizations, develop a set of measures of labour underutilization to supplement the unemployment rate, for discussion and possible adoption by the 19th ICLS in 2013 (ILO, 2008a).

8. Following the 39th Session of the UNSC and the recommendations of the 18th ICLS, the ILO Department of Statistics established a Working Group for the Advancement of Employment and Unemployment Statistics in 2009 as the main mechanism for carrying out the review and update of the standards. The Working Group is composed of experts in labour statistics from countries from all major regions of the world. Its mandate is to advise the ILO on the review process. Consultations with the Working Group were carried out through online discussions and meetings held in 2009, 2011 and 2012.

9. Furthermore, in 2011 for the third edition of Volume 3 of its *Statistical sources and methods*, the Department sent all member States a methodological questionnaire entitled *Statistics of the labour force and its components derived from labour force and/or household sample surveys* (ILO, 2012). This review of national practices documents the extent to which the concepts, definitions and operational guidelines contained in the standards are being implemented. Additional reviews were carried out to document national practices with respect to the implementation of the standards in the 2010 round of population and housing censuses, and to gain a better understanding of current national practices regarding the treatment in labour force statistics of specific groups, particularly persons producing goods mainly for own consumption, paid and unpaid trainees, apprentices and interns, and persons in employment promotion schemes. The full review of national practices is summarized in an accompanying room document and is referred to throughout this report.

10. To geographically widen the technical consultations, in 2012 the Department also conducted five Regional Preparatory Meetings of Labour Statisticians for countries of the Americas, Asia and the Pacific, Sub-Saharan Africa, the Middle East and North Africa, and Europe and Central Asia. The meetings were organized in collaboration with the UN Regional Economic Commissions and other regional partners, including the African Development Bank, the African Union, Afristat, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the World Bank. These regional meetings were instrumental in identifying the main labour market issues and policy concerns of each region, with a view to ensuring that the revised standards address them adequately.

Structure of the report

11. This report summarizes the rationale underlying the full review and describes the main proposals to revise and update the international standards of statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment. It is structured in two parts:

(a) Part I covers the background to and scope of the review, including the role of international statistical standards and the revision process (Chapter 1); the current international standards (Chapter 2); the rationale for the review, including emerging policy concerns, developments in work patterns and labour markets, and the limitations of the current standards (Chapter 3); and the proposed scope of the revisions and the approach adopted (Chapter 4).

(b) Part II describes the draft proposed revisions to the standards in respect of: measurement objectives, scope and coverage of the statistics (Chapter 5); definitions and guidelines to measure different forms of work, including employment (Chapter 6); definitions and guidelines for the measurement of labour underutilization (or unmet need for employment) comprising time-related underemployment, unemployment and marginal attachment (Chapter 7); data collection programmes (Chapter 8); derived measures and indicators, tabulations and classifications (Chapter 9); and data evaluation, dissemination and reporting (Chapter 10).

2. International standards

12. The first international efforts to develop common standards on employment, unemployment and underemployment statistics date back to the 2nd ICLS held in 1925. Since then, under the auspices of the ILO, the ICLS has reviewed and adopted international resolutions or guidelines on labour force and related statistics on ten separate occasions.

13. The body of international standards in force is contained in the following resolutions and guidelines:

(a) resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment (13th ICLS, 1982);

(b) resolution concerning the measurement of underemployment and inadequate employment situations (16th ICLS, 1998);

(c) guidelines on the implications of employment promotion schemes on the measurement of employment and unemployment (14th ICLS, 1987);

(d) guidelines concerning the treatment in employment and unemployment statistics of persons on extended absences from work (16th ICLS, 1998); and

(e) resolution on the amendment of paragraph 5 of the resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment adopted by the 13th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (18th ICLS, 2008).

14. The resolution adopted by the 13th ICLS in 1982 sets out the conceptual framework for statistics of the economically active population and specifies the main objectives and uses of the statistics, as follows:

(a) to measure labour input into production for purposes of macroeconomic monitoring and human resource development and planning; and

(b) to measure the relationship between employment, income and other social and demographic characteristics for purposes of formulating and monitoring employment policies and programmes, income-generation and maintenance schemes, vocational training and other similar programmes.

15. To meet these objectives, the resolution defines the economically active population in terms of the production of goods and services as set forth by the System of National Accounts (SNA). The 2008 SNA defines two separate boundaries for economic production:

(a) firstly, it defines the *general production boundary*, based on the concept of *production* consisting of "an activity carried out under the control and responsibility of an institutional unit that uses inputs of labour, capital and goods and services to produce outputs of goods and services". This excludes "purely natural processes without any human involvement or direction" and activities that cannot be performed on one's behalf by another person; and

(b) it also defines for the purpose of compiling national accounts, a more restricted scope of production, commonly referred to as the SNA *production boundary*. Compared to the *general production boundary*, this excludes activities undertaken by households that produce services for their own final use.

16. Persons are considered economically active if they contribute or seek to contribute to the production of goods and services within the narrower SNA *production boundary*. This definition of the economically active population was introduced for the first time in the 1982 resolution to establish a direct link between labour force and production statistics, which did not exist previously.

17. The 13th ICLS resolution specifies that statistics of the economically active population should, in principle, cover all branches of economic activity, all sectors of the economy and all status groups. It also recommends the establishment of a dual data collection programme to produce statistics for short-term needs, i.e. to monitor trends and seasonal variations, and for long-term needs, including for structural in-depth analysis and as benchmark data.

18. For measurement purposes, the resolution establishes two alternative concepts: the currently active population and the usually active population. These have been subsequently implemented using alternative frameworks:

(a) the current activity framework (also referred to as the labour force framework) for producing the statistics in a short reference period, using an activity principle, priority rule and one-hour criterion to classify the population into three mutually exclusive and exhaustive groups: employed persons, unemployed persons and persons not in the labour force. The employed and unemployed together are referred to as the labour force or the currently active population. Persons not in the labour force are also referred to as the population not economically active;

(b) the usual activity framework for producing statistics of the usually active population based on a *main activity* status over a long reference period (e.g. the preceding 12 months or preceding calendar year). This concept and the associated framework were for use in settings, particularly in less developed countries, where it was not possible to measure the labour force at frequent intervals.

19. To measure the currently active population, the standards provide operational definitions for employment, unemployment and persons not in the labour force, along with guidelines for the treatment of specific groups.

Employment

20. *Persons in employment* are defined in terms of their status in employment categories, paid employment and self-employment, distinguishing between two main groups: persons in paid or self-employment at work and persons with a job or an enterprise but not at work. The employed thus comprise "all persons above a specified age who, during a specified brief period, either one week or one day, were in the following categories:

(a) paid employment:

(i) at work: persons who, during the reference period, performed some work for wage or salary, in cash or in kind;

(ii) with a job but not at work: persons who, having already worked in their present job, were temporarily not at work during the reference period and had a formal attachment to their job;

(b) self-employment:

(i) at work: persons who, during the reference period, performed some work for profit or family gain, in cash or in kind;

(ii) with an enterprise but not at work: persons with an enterprise, which may be a business enterprise, a farm or a service undertaking, who were temporarily not at work during the reference period for any specific reason".

21. For employed persons at work, the 13th ICLS resolution stipulates that the notion of "some work" should be interpreted as work for at least one hour during the reference period. The application of the one-hour criterion to identify persons in employment was reiterated by the 14th ICLS (1987), which further specified that the resulting statistics should be routinely classified by appropriate working-time bands.

22. For employed persons not at work, separate guidelines are provided for the treatment of temporary absences from work among persons in paid employment and in self-employment. In the case of paid employment, the assessment is based on the notion of "formal job attachment", which is to be determined in the light of national circumstances according to one or more of the following criteria:

(a) the continued receipt of a wage or salary;

(b) an assurance of a return to work (with the same employer) following the end of the contingency, or an agreement as to the date of return; and

(c) the elapsed duration of absence from the job, which may be the duration for which workers can receive compensation benefits without the obligation to accept other jobs.

23. Several combinations of similar criteria to the above are recommended by the 16th ICLS resolution (1998) in the case of employees on maternity leave, on unpaid leave initiated by the employer and on other types of extended leave. Regarding seasonal employees not engaged in any kind of work during the off season, the 16th ICLS recommended that they be classified as employed if they have an assurance of a return to work with the same employer at the beginning of the following season and if the employer continues to pay all or a significant part of their wage or salary during the off season.

24. In the case of self-employment, no further guidance is provided on how to determine the existence of an enterprise during the absence. The 16th ICLS resolution, however, recommends that seasonal employers, own-account workers and members of producers' cooperatives, who are not engaged in any kind of work during the off season should be considered as unemployed or not economically active, depending upon their current availability for work, recent job-search activity and, possibly, their reason for not seeking work.

Unemployment

25. The *unemployed* are defined in the standards as comprising all persons above a specified age who during the reference period were:

(a) "without work", i.e. were not in paid employment or self-employment;

(b) "currently available for work", i.e. were available for paid employment or self-employment during the reference period; and

(c) "seeking work", i.e. had taken specific steps in a specified recent period to seek paid employment or self-employment.

26. The examples of active steps to seek work listed in the resolution include: registration at a public or private employment exchange; application to employers; checking at worksites, farms, factory gates, market or other assembly places; placing or answering newspaper advertisements; seeking assistance of friends or relatives; looking for land, building, machinery or equipment to establish one's own enterprise; arranging for financial resources; applying for permits and licences, etc.

27. Concerning "registration at a public or private employment exchange", the 14th ICLS guidelines (1987) specify that this should be considered an active step to seek work only when it is for the purpose of obtaining a job offer, as opposed to registration merely as an administrative requirement for the receipt of certain social benefits. The guidelines also provide recommendations on how to distinguish between seeking self-employment and the self-employment activity itself. They recommend basing this distinction on the point when the enterprise starts to exist formally, e.g. when the enterprise is registered, or at the point when the enterprise is ready to receive the first order, when financial resources have become available, or when the necessary infrastructure is in place.

28. Since it was recognized that the standard definition of unemployment, with its emphasis on the "seeking work" criterion, might be somewhat restrictive and might not fully capture the prevailing employment situation in many countries, the 13th ICLS introduced a provision which allows for relaxing that criterion in certain instances. The provision is confined to situations where "the conventional means of seeking work are of limited relevance, where the labour market is largely unorganized or of limited scope, where labour absorption is at the time inadequate, or where the labour force is largely self-employed".

29. In line with the principles of the labour force framework, the standards further state that students, homemakers, pensioners and other persons mainly engaged in non-economic activities during the reference period, who satisfy the abovementioned criteria of the definition of unemployment, should be regarded as unemployed on the same basis as other categories of unemployed persons. They should, however, be identified separately, where possible.

Persons not in the labour force

30. *Persons not in the labour force* is defined as comprising all persons, irrespective of age, including those below the age specified for measuring the economically active population, who were not employed or unemployed during the survey reference period and were hence not currently active, because of: (a) attendance at educational institutions; (b) engagement in household duties; (c) retirement or old age; or (d) other reasons such as infirmity or disablement, which may be specified.

31. The resolution also recommends that persons not classified as unemployed under the standard definition, who were available for work but not seeking work during the reference period, be classified separately as part of the population not currently active. Although the standards do not provide a full classification of persons not in the labour force, they recommend the development of classifications reflecting the relative strength of their attachment to the labour market.

Time-related underemployment

32. As defined by the 16th ICLS resolution (1998), *time-related underemployment* exists when the hours of work of a person are insufficient in relation to an alternative employment situation in which the person is willing and available to engage. Accordingly, persons in time-related underemployment comprise all those in employment who satisfy the following three criteria:

(a) were willing to work additional hours (i.e. wanted another job (or jobs) in addition to their current job (or jobs) to increase their total hours of work; to replace any of their current jobs with another job (or jobs) with increased hours of work; to increase the hours of work in any of their current jobs; or a combination of the above);

(b) were available to work additional hours (i.e. ready, within a specified period of time, to work additional hours, given opportunities for additional work); and who

(c) worked less than a threshold relating to working time, (i.e. persons whose hours actually worked in all jobs during the reference period were below a threshold to be chosen according to national circumstances).

33. The 16th ICLS resolution further suggests that countries may want to identify, among persons in time-related underemployment, those who usually work part-time schedules and want to work additional hours. This subgroup reflects longer term or structural situations of insufficient employment. The resolution also provides general guidance for producing estimates of the volume of time-related underemployment and for identifying specific groups of workers who may be underutilized because of a variety of inadequate employment situations, such as low income, inadequate use of skills and excessive hours.

3. Rationale for the review

Policy concerns

34. For several decades States have recognized the central role of employment as a means of improving livelihoods, reducing poverty and promoting overall social and economic development (UN, 1995). There has at the same time been growing recognition of the need to integrate all forms of work (e.g. care work, volunteer work) more fully into assessments of the economy, of labour markets and of well-being for the purpose of formulating economic and social policies (UN, 2005). Today, promoting the eradication of poverty, full and productive employment for all and social cohesion have become central goals to achieve sustained progress (ILO, 2008e).

35. New thinking on how to measure economic performance and social progress has also drawn attention to the need to shift the focus from measurement of economic production alone to measurement of people's well-being. To do so, emphasis is placed on individual and household income and consumption and on the comprehensive measurement of participation in all work activities, including paid and unpaid work, among other dimensions of well-being (OECD, 2010).

36. In line with these developments, the last 30 years have seen the rise and consolidation of evidence-based policy-making as a central approach to development planning. A number of indicator frameworks have emerged for assessing performance and monitoring progress at the national, regional and international level. Indicator frameworks such as the MDGs, Decent Work, Quality of Employment and the Better Life Index are emphasizing the need to measure not just the economic impact of employment but also its social implications for the well-being of all workers and their households.

37. With the rise of evidence-based policy-making, producers of official statistics have been facing a growing demand for frequent statistics from multiple users and for multiple objectives. In seeking to meet this demand, countries have been moving towards greater integration of their official statistical systems. Such integration requires coherence between the frameworks underlying different statistical domains, and this implies that labour force statistics need to be conceived in relation to other socio-economic statistics beyond production and income, notably participation and working time in forms of work other than employment, demography, migration, education and health.

Work patterns and labour markets

38. In market economies people's understanding of employment has become closely associated with remuneration. The vast majority of households have become dependent for their livelihood on income secured through employment, which is essential to purchase the goods and services needed. Since the adoption of the current standards, employment has undergone major changes in the context of globalization. While already visible prior to the 1980s, recent decades have seen a rise in "non-standard" forms of employment both in more developed and in less developed countries. These are attributable in part to the emergence of more flexible labour contracts, working time and working-time arrangements, as well as to the continuing existence of informal employment, both within and outside the informal sector (EC, 2010; ILO, 2010). Such changes, together with the internationalization of production, advances in information and communication technology and recent demographic trends (ageing in some countries, youth bulges in others) have resulted in the greater mobility of workers across jobs and economies (Van der Hoeven, 2010). This has also resulted in an increased need for persons to acquire, adapt and upgrade their skills and to become more specialized so as to enter or remain active in these complex and evolving labour markets.

39. The recent financial and job crises have accentuated the trend towards greater flexibility of labour markets and labour relations, with job recovery taking place disproportionately through the growth of part-time, informal and other types of casual employment (ILO, 2010). Limited job growth vis-à-vis population growth is having a major impact on the extent of unmet need for employment. This is evidenced in rising levels of underemployment (due to insufficient hours of work), unemployment and long-term unemployment. It has also increased the policy relevance of groups of persons “outside” the labour market whose interest in employment is strong, including persons on layoff, discouraged jobseekers and others facing social and economic barriers to employment.

40. While standards of living have improved globally, they have been accompanied by growing wage inequality, declining wage shares and a widening poverty gap between those living in areas integrated into growing regional or national markets and those relying primarily on local subsistence work for their own consumption (Dollar, 2004). Rising labour costs and technological change in industrialized settings are tending to reduce reliance on markets to secure domestic and personal services, such as cleaning, repair and maintenance, etc., while voluntary forms of work are serving to support communities and enterprises, especially non-profit institutions.

Limitations of current standards

41. Given the broader policy concerns and recent changes in labour markets and work patterns, some aspects of the current international standards for labour force statistics are now out of date. Several limitations in respect of these new developments have become evident. These limitations relate primarily to: (a) a lack of differentiation in the framework between forms of work; (b) incomplete coverage of all productive activities; (c) insufficient measures of labour underutilization; and (d) a lack of dynamic measures. In addition, the current standards pose problems of: (e) outdated terminology; (f) omissions in the scope of the guidelines; and (g) ambiguities or unnecessary complexity in some of the guidelines.

Broad activity scope of employment

42. The direct link between employment and production statistics was designed primarily to furnish information on labour input into SNA production for economic analysis. It has, however, limited the usefulness of labour force statistics in monitoring the performance of labour markets and informing comprehensive labour market policies. This is because a definition of employment based on the *production boundary* in the 2008 SNA leads to the inclusion of activities undertaken by quite a heterogeneous group of persons, comprising not only those working for pay, profit or family gain, but also persons producing goods mainly for their own consumption, paid as well as unpaid apprentices, interns and trainees and most types of volunteer workers. Treating these different forms of work as a single category results in a concept and measure of employment that is too broad to adequately inform policies and programmes aimed at promoting employment as a main source of income or to adequately assess the links between employment and poverty reduction.

Non-distinct forms of work

43. A corollary is that, at present, it is not possible to separately measure participation in different forms of work. Persons engage in multiple forms of work that serve a variety of purposes in society. Because the current framework does not distinguish between different forms of work, it is not possible to develop full measures of participation in each form of work (employment as an income-generating activity, own-production work, trainee work, volunteer work). As a result, it is not possible to examine the impact that participation in one form of work may have on others, including on employment to generate income, nor to develop comprehensive measures of labour input into SNA production.

Incomplete activity coverage

44. At the same time, the current labour force framework does not cover all forms of work. It excludes those activities that involve inputs of labour into the production of services within the SNA *general production boundary* but beyond the more restricted SNA *production boundary* (see paragraph 15). As a result, it is neither possible to examine links between participation in the labour force and in own-production of services, or in volunteer work in households that produce services for own consumption, nor to produce comprehensive measures of labour input into productive activities beyond the SNA *production boundary* and evaluate their monetary value and contribution to economies and to the well-being of households.

Optional treatment of specific worker groups

45. One way in which the current standards have sought to address some of the problems arising from the broad employment concept has been to allow for the optional exclusion of specific groups of workers, based on various thresholds determined by national circumstances. Hence an hour’s threshold may be used to exclude contributing family workers from employment. Persons engaged in own-production of goods may also be excluded if their production does not constitute an important contribution to the total consumption of the household. However, this treatment limits the comprehensive accounting of people’s participation in different forms of work and the working time associated with all activities, which affects the evaluation of working conditions among all workers as well as estimates of labour productivity.

Inconsistencies with related standards

46. Although the current standards strive for a direct link between the concept of employment and the SNA *production boundary*, in practice the optional exclusions referred to above introduce inconsistencies with other international statistical standards, especially the SNA. The 2008 SNA recommends that countries include all production of goods for own consumption as labour input into production. For practical reasons, however, it recommends recording such production only when the amount of a good produced within households is believed to be quantitatively important in relation to the total supply of that good in the country, which differs from the guidelines provided in the standards adopted by the 13th ICLS and described above. There are also inconsistencies in the treatment of volunteer workers, who are mentioned by the 13th ICLS standards only as a subcategory of the population not usually active.

Insufficient measures of labour underutilization (unmet need for employment)

47. Given the priority principle embodied in the labour force framework, such a broad concept of employment has resulted in a concept of unemployment that is very narrow. In many developing countries where unemployment benefits and other state-organized social safety nets are limited or non-existent, large segments of the population have to turn to subsistence activities to survive, and volunteer work is used as an important support mechanism for households, enterprises and communities. Under the current framework, subsistence workers and most volunteer workers do not qualify for inclusion in unemployment, even if they are seeking and available for employment, because they are classified as employed. As a result, the current measure of unemployment does not adequately capture its intended target group, namely, persons without any income-generating work who are seeking and available for work to generate income.

48. Furthermore, the unemployment rate is not a comprehensive measure of the potential supply of labour. While it aims to capture a very specific target group for policy-making purposes, it does not cover all persons with an unmet need for income-generating work. Another outcome of limited unemployment benefits and other safety nets is that persons will take any available jobs or create their own. The measures of time-related underemployment and inadequate employment situations introduced by the 16th ICLS resolution sought to address the need for additional measures of labour underutilization (see paragraphs 32–33). However, the guidelines have been found to be somewhat ambiguous, and this has led to significant differences in their implementation at the national level.

49. In addition, there are at present no specific guidelines for identifying those groups among persons outside the labour force that may also form part of the potential supply of labour. The current standards allow a relaxation of the "seeking work" criterion to measure unemployment in specific situations (see paragraph 28). When implemented, this option results in the inclusion in the measure of unemployment of groups of persons who would otherwise be classified as not in the labour force. While capturing a broader group of persons with an attachment to the labour market, this practice has tended to confuse users and has limited the international comparability of unemployment statistics.

Lack of dynamic measures

50. The current standards do not provide guidelines that enable countries to examine labour market dynamics and do not highlight their policy relevance. Some countries have started to produce statistics on flows in order better to understand transitions from one labour force category to another; they have also begun to study employment stability and to develop typologies of workers by degree of labour market attachment. While practices are still in their early years, demand for this type of information is strong. There is a need to start integrating the foundations that would enable further methodological developments in this area of statistics.

Other limitations or clarifications

51. The current standards do not provide guidance with respect to the reference population(s) or the setting of age limits for the production of labour force statistics. Treatment within the labour force framework of volunteer workers and of unpaid or paying apprentices, trainees and interns is not specified, nor are there guidelines for determining formal job attachment among self-employed persons who are absent from employment.

52. At the same time, the guidelines for the treatment of temporary and long-term absences from employment have been found to be too complex. Ambiguities have been identified with respect to the purpose and operational implementation of the "availability" criterion for the measurement of unemployment. Likewise, the list of active search methods for the measurement of unemployment needs to be updated to reflect new developments arising from technological change and increased geographic mobility. Finally, some of the terminology used in the standards is now outdated.

4. Scope of revisions and proposed approach

Scope of revisions

53. In light of the broader policy needs and limitations identified and described in Chapter 3, the revisions and proposed approach aim to:

(a) better meet the demand for labour force statistics to monitor labour markets, including labour underutilization, and to inform employment creation, income and related social policies;

(b) enable the comprehensive measurement of participation and labour input into all productive activities and of the contribution of different forms of work to economic and social development and to the livelihoods and well-being of households;

(c) improve the integration of labour force statistics with other work statistics and with statistics in other domains;

(d) promote the international comparability of statistics of work and of the labour force; and

(e) encourage the development of dynamic measures of labour markets in the future.

54. An important concern throughout the review has been to ensure, to the extent possible, the historical continuity of labour force statistics. To this end, the proposals incorporate identified good practices that enhance the international comparability of the statistics and address specific gaps and concerns regarding the implementation of the standards. Those elements of the current standards that have proved to be sound and essential to guarantee the internal consistency of labour force statistics and their coherence with other statistical domains remain unchanged. Notable among these is the labour force measurement framework based on the activity principle, priority rule, one-hour criterion and short reference period of measurement.

55. Overall, the revisions propose:

(a) a comprehensive, yet flexible, general framework for *work* statistics that distinguishes between employment and other forms of work, including own-production work, volunteer work and trainee work;

(b) a more refined concept and definition of *employment* that focuses on work to generate income, to serve as the basis for the production of labour force statistics;

(c) general definitions and operational guidelines for measuring participation and time spent in forms of work other than employment;

(d) more detailed operational guidelines for the measurement of employment and unemployment;

(e) general guidance for developing classifications of persons outside the labour force for different purposes, including the assessment of their labour market attachment;

(f) measures of labour underutilization that focus on problems related to insufficient absorption of available labour, to be disseminated at par with the unemployment rate; and

(g) general guidance for developing a rational programme of work and labour force statistics to provide for short- and long-term needs, taking account of national context and resources.

Proposed approach

Work statistics framework

56. The proposed conceptual framework for work statistics must meet certain criteria, notably:

(a) *comprehensiveness* − the framework should encompass all forms of work, identifying their commonalities and at the same time establishing boundaries to exclude other activities that do not constitute work. To remain comprehensive, it should also enable the future integration of emerging forms of work according to their policy relevance;

(b) *relevance* − the framework should facilitate the production of statistics of work and of the labour force that meet all user needs. In particular, the framework should serve to highlight the economic and social dimensions of the different forms of work and should be applicable to jobs, persons, households and the economy as a whole;

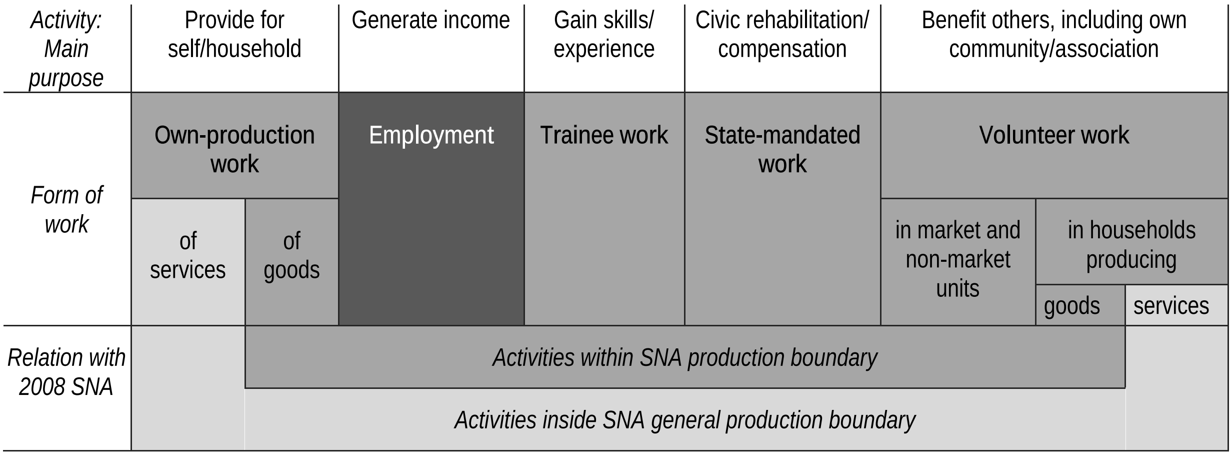
(c) *coherence* − to the extent possible, the framework should use concepts, definitions, units and classifications that enable its integration with other bodies of statistics, particularly with statistics on production, agriculture and population;

(d) *comparability* − the framework should allow for consistent treatment of different forms of work in all socio-economic and institutional contexts, as well as of population groups for purposes of cross-country comparisons; and

(e) *flexibility* − the framework should be flexible and adaptable at the national level to support the progressive development of an integrated system of statistics of work and of the labour force that takes into account the capacity of countries to collect and disseminate statistics, the prevalence of the different forms of work, the respective policy priorities, and human and financial resources.

57. Taking into account the above criteria, a framework is proposed that sets the activity scope of the concept of work. In addition the framework uses a building-block approach to distinguish different forms of work on the basis of their main purpose. As described below, each form of work constitutes one building block; when taken together these blocks can be aggregated to arrive at the general concept of work. Such an approach provides consistency in measurement as well as flexibility in implementation in different contexts, so as to meet the needs of different users (see diagram 1).

Diagram 1. Conceptual framework for work statistics



Activity scope

58. The framework identifies activities falling within the scope of the concept of work in a manner that is consistent with, but not dependent on the scope of productive activities included inside the *general production boundary* as currently defined in the 2008 SNA. The use of an activity-based approach places emphasis on the economic dimensions of work and ensures continued coherence, in particular, with national accounts and, more generally, with economic statistics, as well as with working-time and time-use statistics. It also permits continuity with the existing labour force measurement framework that classifies persons as employed, on the basis of activities performed in a specified reference period.

Forms of work

59. The framework further distinguishes between four main forms of work (and makes reference to another, state-mandated work, that is not defined):

(a) own-production work;

(b) employment;

(c) trainee work; and

(d) volunteer work.

60. The distinguishing feature between each form of work is its main purpose as it relates to how households and society allocate labour to attain different purposes or ends, beyond producing goods and services. These may include self-provisioning, generating an income, job-related skills acquisition and training, benefiting others, as well as civic rehabilitation, reintegration or compensation. Main purpose should not be confused with the individual reasons or motivations for a particular person to undertake a particular job or activity that, for example, might include gaining recognition or power, profiting, establishing social networks, contributing to a specific cause, maintaining a particular identity or cultural practice or achieving self-reliance.

61. Based on the main purpose of the productive activity, employment is work carried out with the main purpose of generating income. By contrast, own-production work is where the main purpose is to produce goods and services directly for own consumption. Trainee work is primarily to acquire skills or experience in the workplace. Volunteer work generally serves to benefit others, while state-mandated work is used as a form of rehabilitation, reintegration or civic compensation (e.g. community service imposed by courts of law, schemes that mandate participation in work activities as a condition for continued receipt of social assistance). Operational definitions for the statistical measurement of each of the four forms of work are provided in Chapter 6.

62. Distinguishing between the different forms of work on the basis of their main purpose addresses the need for data that highlight the social dimensions of work. In particular, the distinction makes it possible to examine how households allocate work among members as part of their livelihood strategies and how economies utilize available labour to achieve the multiple objectives embodied in the main purpose: fostering work as an income-generating activity, promoting skills development for labour-market entry, encouraging social cohesion and civic engagement, among others.

63. The proposed framework strives to go beyond some of the oppositions and dichotomies characteristic of the existing literature on the subject. These dichotomies include paid/unpaid, formal/informal, public/private and market/non-market work and are closely associated with the socio-economic context. This leads to inconsistent classification across different countries and sub-population groups, of work activities of a similar nature (e.g. differential treatment of apprentices based on whether the programme is formal or informal, paid or unpaid). Approaches based on dichotomies have emerged as a way to redress the exclusion of certain work activities (performed particularly by women, informal activities, or within the household, and for final use by the household) from mainstream economic theory and hence from the statistics. For these very reasons, the existing dichotomies are often based on characteristics associated with the activities left out of consideration or measurement, rather than on their intrinsic or substantive differences (Swiebel, 1999). Use of dichotomies, in addition, is often criticized for masking the interactions between different forms of work and for portraying the world of work as comprising parallel or independent systems for the allocation of labour (Glucksmann, 2005).

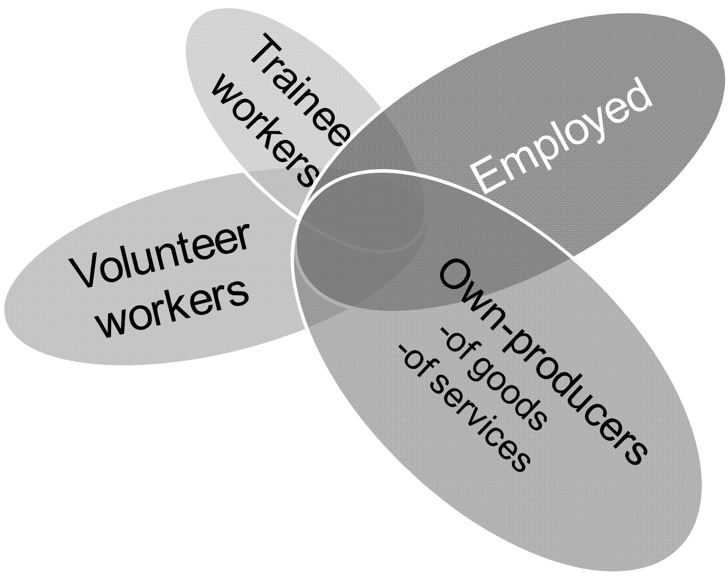
64. While employment is widely viewed as an income-generating activity, a distinction based on remuneration or payment alone is not adequate, because the existence of payment in exchange for labour is closely linked with the socio-economic context, the existence of labour legislation specifying which forms of work are to be remunerated and the extent of its implementation in a country. As a result, work activities serving a similar purpose may be classified differently from one country to another.

65. Instead, the proposed approach allows the abovementioned dichotomies to be treated as analytical characteristics that are relevant to all forms of work and provide important information about the conditions associated with such work. The proposed framework also avoids making a distinction between the social and economic dimensions of work by recognizing that all forms of work carry economic and social implications and by enabling their joint assessment. Thus, it is possible not only to examine how each form of work contributes to the organization of society and to the well-being of households and to what extent the different forms of work are prevalent in countries around the world, but also to quantify how much each form of work contributes to economic outcomes such as production and income.

Observation units and multiple job-holding

66. An activity-based framework also facilitates the production of work statistics with reference to two main observation units: the person and the job. The building-block approach, in addition, recognizes that persons may engage in multiple forms of work. Persons may work in employment to generate income and also in own-production of goods – growing vegetables or fetching firewood and/or as volunteers for an organization or for the community. At the same time they may provide services for own consumption by the household – managing bills, cleaning, cooking, making repairs, caring for children or elderly members. It is thus possible to measure comprehensively the total number of persons and/or jobs in each form of work, to assess multiple job-holding in each form of work, and to examine the impact that participation in one form of work has on another (see diagram 2).

Diagram 2. Participation in different forms of work and multiple job-holding



Relation with the SNA

67. A common feature shared by different forms of work is that they all involve inputs of labour into productive activities (i.e. they contribute to production). To the extent that participation in each form of work (i.e. each building block) is measured, then the framework will enable the comprehensive measurement of labour input into all productive activities, or of the volume of work, both within and beyond the SNA *production boundary*.

68. A building-block approach thus permits full integration of work statistics and production statistics. Thus, in line with the 2008 SNA, work activities comprised:

(a) *within the SNA production boundary are:* own-production of goods, employment, trainee work, and volunteer work in market enterprises, in non-market enterprises and in households that produce goods for own consumption; and

(b) *beyond the SNA production boundary but within the general production boundary are:* own-production of services, and volunteer work in households that provide services for own consumption.

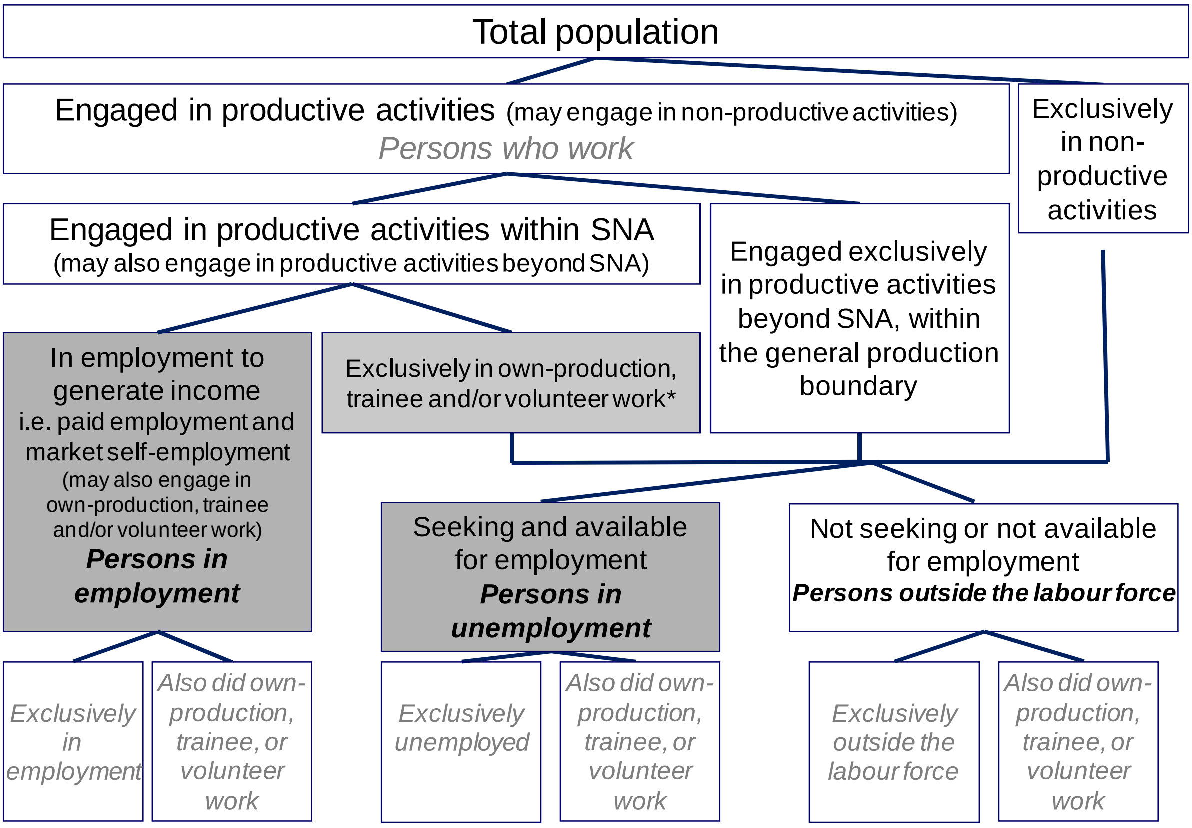
Labour force (employment and unemployment) in the framework

69. Using the proposed conceptual framework for work statistics, it is possible to define the scope of employment for the production of labour force statistics and to develop guidelines for the treatment in the labour force of persons engaged in other forms of work.

70. Specifically, the reference for the measurement of the labour force becomes employment whose main purpose is to generate income in the form of wage, salary, profit or family gain, paid in cash or in kind. Compared to the current standards, the new proposed scope of employment is narrower. It excludes persons who are engaged in own-production of goods (including for subsistence), volunteers in market and non-market enterprises and in households that produce goods for own consumption, as well as apprentices, trainees and interns. These groups of workers would be included in accordance with the 2008 SNA.

71. An improvement over the current standards is that, in the new framework, persons engaged in any other form(s) of work but not in employment as newly defined (i.e. own-production work, trainee work, volunteer work, state-mandated work) become eligible for inclusion among the unemployed or among persons not in the labour force, subject to their active search and availability for employment (see diagram 3).

Diagram 3. Revised classification of persons in the labour force framework



** New treatment based on proposed revised scope of employment.*

Expected impact of revisions on labour force statistics

72. The proposed narrower scope of employment thus captures a more homogeneous group of workers and is more in line with common perceptions of employment as work to generate income. It also allows measurement of unemployment in relation to employment to generate income, thus reflecting more closely perceptions of unemployed persons as persons who are looking for work opportunities in paid employment or in self-employment in market-oriented enterprises. Employment and unemployment in respect of income-generating work are the main targets of labour market policies that seek to promote employment as a means of securing a livelihood. It is thus expected that the proposed narrower scope of employment would improve the relevance of labour force statistics to labour market policies by enabling indicators such as the unemployment rate, the rate of time-related underemployment and the rate of discouraged jobseekers to capture the unmet need for income-generating work more accurately.

73. The ILO review of country practices shows significant differences in the treatment in the labour force of persons engaged in own-production of goods, trainee work and volunteer work. Nonetheless, at present most countries collecting labour force statistics partially or fully exclude these forms of work from the scope of employment. Countries that already exclude these groups of workers from the scope of employment would not see changes in their labour force statistics as a result of this proposed revision. Changes would, on the other hand, be seen in countries where large segments of the population are engaged in own-production of goods (particularly for subsistence), in trainee work or in volunteer work and these groups have been included in the scope of employment. It is precisely in many of these countries that the current measures of unemployment or time-related underemployment provide only limited information to monitor labour market performance.

Measures of labour underutilization (unmet need for employment)

74. In addition to introducing an improved measure of unemployment by refining the concept of employment, the proposed approach to revising the current standards promotes the regular production of additional measures for use – together with the unemployment rate – as headline indicators of overall labour market performance for general use by policy-makers and the public.

75. The concept of unemployment has its roots in macroeconomic analysis and policies. Its main objective has been to signal deficiencies in the use of available labour resources by capturing situations of total lack of employment among persons who are seeking and available for employment. As such, it has been used as a headline indicator of overall labour market performance. Responses to labour market downturns, however, are more varied than unemployment alone and depend on factors such as availability of unemployment insurance or other social protection schemes, as well as opportunities for and infrastructure to seek employment.

76. In more developed countries, economic downturns generally lead to increases in unemployment and reduced working hours or pay. In less developed countries, where there may be limited social protection and other safety nets, people more commonly take any job that is available, supplement their income or hours with second jobs, create their own work through self-employment, engage in subsistence work or emigrate. In addition, where conditions are such that the conventional means of seeking work are of limited relevance, where expectations regarding employment are not matched by the available vacancies, or where there is simply no labour market, people may become discouraged or remain outside of the labour market.

77. Given the range of possible responses to labour market downturns, a single indicator cannot be expected to capture all forms of unmet need for income-generating work, or be used alone as an overall indicator of labour market performance. There is a need, therefore, to complement the unemployment rate with measures of unmet need for income-generating work among persons in employment and among persons not in the labour force.

78. Various attempts have been made at the national and international level to develop such measures. These include measures of visible and invisible underemployment, of time-related underemployment and inadequate employment, of relaxed unemployment, of labour shortage, of labour reserve, and so on. Regular use of such types of indicators in conjunction with the unemployment rate has only recently become more widespread in countries and at the regional level. These indicators generally try to capture similar groups of persons that share some characteristics with the unemployed but who are included in the statistics among the employed and those outside the labour force. However, differences in their measurement and construction limit their cross-country comparability.

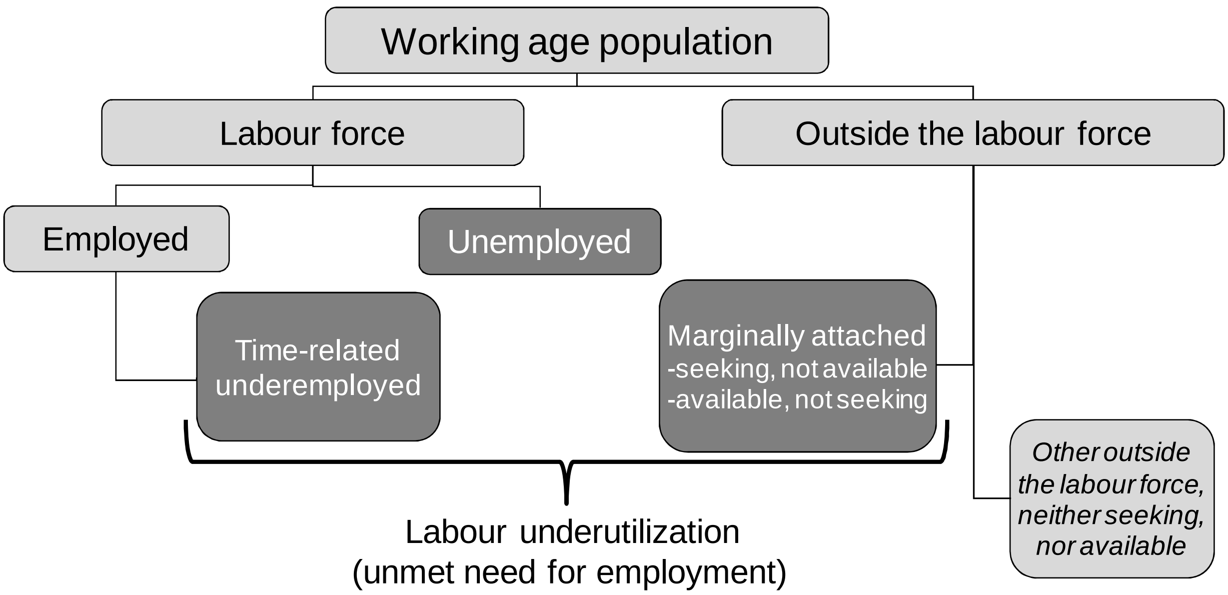
79. Building on this work, a set of measures is proposed that captures situations reflecting an insufficient volume of income-generating work, with a view both to: (a) monitoring labour market downturns in different settings; and (b) reflecting the extent (level) of unmet need for income-generating work. To this end, the measures focus on the principal responses to work shortages in settings *with or without* established unemployment and other social protection schemes, diversified labour markets and channels or infrastructure for seeking employment, including as a result of long-term structural problems and short business cycles. As far as possible, they also take account of responses to work shortages by all types of workers.

80. In other words, the measures are restricted to issues of *quantity of employment* and not issues of quality of employment, which are addressed by broader indicator frameworks including those on decent work and quality of employment. The measures will also serve to complement, and will form part of, those broader indicator frameworks. For this reason and to the extent possible, the proposed measures avoid overlaps with indicators already contained in such frameworks, including those relating to low pay and skills mismatches.

Components

81. Beyond unemployment, measures that reflect an insufficiency of the volume of work include, among the employed, underemployment related to insufficient hours or intensity of work and, among persons not in the labour force, discouragement and other forms of marginal attachment to the labour force (see diagram 4).

Diagram 4. Components of labour underutilization



82. The components proposed above allow the production of three separate measures of labour underutilization: time-related underemployment, unemployment, and marginal attachment. These three measures or their subcomponents, when used separately, would enable more detailed monitoring of labour market cycles, since each component is likely to respond differently at different stages of the business cycle and in different settings. In addition, they may be combined to produce overlapping measures such as an extended unemployment rate, as well as an overarching indicator of labour underutilization. Definitions and operational guidelines for the identification of persons reflecting an unmet need for employment (or labour underutilization) are provided in Chapter 7. General guidance for the construction of relevant derived variables and indicators is included in Chapter 8.

Note on terminology

83. The current standards introduced the terms “economically active population” and “population not economically active” as general concepts that were independent of the measurement framework used. In addition, they introduced the terms “currently active population” and “population not currently active” for measures based on the current activity framework, and “usually active population” and “population not usually active” for measures based on the usual activity framework (see paragraph 18). These terms have been widely criticized because of the implication that work in the production of services beyond the SNA *production boundary*, inside the *general production boundary*, does not contribute to the economy.

84. It is proposed that only the terms “labour force” and “persons outside the labour force” be retained in the revised draft international standards. Use of these terms is consistent with the proposed conceptual framework, which recognizes that persons may engage in different forms of work and that all forms of work involve inputs of labour into productive activities within the SNA or the *general production boundaries*.

85. In addition, the terms “employment” and “unemployment” have been retained notwithstanding the proposed refinement of the activity scope of employment. Retaining these terms is preferred because they are in common use by the general population and because the proposed refinements actually make both measures closer to people’s understanding of the concepts. Furthermore, as a large number of countries already use the proposed narrower activity scope to measure employment, the revisions are not expected to cause significant changes in time-series in those countries.

Part II

86. Part II of this report explains in detail the revisions included in the proposed draft resolution on statistics of work and of the labour force (see Appendix I). The proposals follow the overall revision approach described in Chapter 4.

5. Objectives, scope and coverage

Objectives

87. The proposed revised standards retain emphasis on the measurement objectives highlighted in the 13th ICLS resolution, namely, to meet the needs for macroeconomic monitoring and to inform labour market, employment, human resource development, income and related social policies. These objectives, however, have been expanded and further specified in order to address the emerging needs and limitations described in Chapter 3.

88. Thus, the revised draft standards emphasize the need for a comprehensive system of statistics of work and of the labour force to shed light on: (a) how labour markets function, including monitoring labour underutilization; (b) how different forms of work contribute to production, economic growth, the livelihoods of households and well-being; and (c) how participation in different forms of work varies from one population subgroup to another.

89. Furthermore, the proposed revised draft resolution, in general, acknowledges that national programmes of work and labour force statistics should be designed to meet the needs of all users, providing the requisite statistics to monitor short-term trends as well as to support longer term assessments and taking account of national resources that ensure the sustainability of the programme. In other words, it is not expected that States will implement the measurement of all concepts included in this resolution at the same time and with the same frequency. Rather, the proposed resolution recommends that the responsible agencies develop a rational programme of statistics of work and of the labour force in consultation with all users of the statistics, so as to determine priorities for data collection and the respective frequencies for reporting. More detailed recommendations to guide States in defining such programmes are described in Chapter 8.

90. Recognizing the widespread use of labour force statistics for international comparisons and the need for comparable statistics on all forms of work, recommendations have also been introduced in the objectives promoting the use of the proposed standards as a basis for the development of national statistics on the topic.

Scope

91. To meet the stated measurement objectives, the revised draft resolution continues to stress the importance of comprehensive coverage by national programmes of statistics of work and the labour force. The scope of such coverage, however, has been expanded to refer to all forms of work (or productive activities) and to all jobs carried by the total population in the country. In addition, new guidelines are included to specify the population coverage of national programmes of statistics of work and the labour force, as described below.

Population coverage

92. Inclusion in the revised draft standards of general guidelines for defining the reference population(s) for work and for labour force statistics is needed in order to promote comprehensive coverage of all population subgroups, particularly those likely to be excluded, such as foreigners, the population in collective living quarters, the armed forces and various groups of temporary migrant workers, such as border workers, seasonal workers and other short-term migrant workers. Guidelines are also needed for specifying the appropriate reference populations so as to serve the needs of labour market policies and of national accounts.

93. Two main reference populations are specified: the resident population and the domestic population. The resident population is needed for producing statistics about the working age population, particularly the labour force, for use to inform labour market and social policies. To promote coherence with other statistical domains, the concept of *usual residence* is recommended, as set out in international standards for the collection of population statistics.

94. The domestic population is used primarily as the reference for the production of statistics for national accounts. It serves to produce statistics on the total number of jobs in resident producer units, as defined in the latest version of the SNA, so as to ensure coherence between work and production statistics. In addition to usual residents working for resident producer units, the domestic population includes non-resident border, seasonal and other short-term migrant workers who enter the territory to work for resident producer units.

95. The proposed revised standards recognize that certain groups of workers, particularly migrant workers, may not be adequately captured through regular data collection mechanisms such as labour force surveys. Nonetheless, given their growing policy relevance, these groups are mentioned explicitly. Collection of statistics on these groups of workers, in particular, is recommended on a regular, albeit less frequent, basis, using special data collection mechanisms (see Chapter 8). In addition, to promote the proper interpretation and use of work and labour force statistics, the revised draft standards advocate their dissemination along with methodological information, including population coverage (see Chapter 10).

Age coverage

96. To capture the working age population, general guidelines are provided for selecting an appropriate minimum age limit for the production of work and labour force statistics. The inclusion of guidelines on the minimum age limit was deemed important because of the existence of separate international recommendations for the production of statistics on working children (18th ICLS, 2008c), the different purposes for which statistics on child labour and on the working population are collected and the generally lower prevalence of participation in different forms of work among younger age groups.

97. In setting national minimum age thresholds for labour force and work statistics, ensuring that, where prevalent, the work activities of children are adequately captured is a major concern. To this end, the guidelines recommend taking into account the existence of a separate programme for the collection of child labour statistics as well as the minimum ages of compulsory schooling and of employment. It follows that the minimum age limits for the collection and reporting of labour force and work statistics may not be the same. Countries that use a single common data collection instrument to produce statistics on working children and on the working population will need to set a lower age limit in the survey instrument than that used to compute estimates of employment, unemployment, labour force participation rate, and other indicators. In addition, to enable cross-country comparisons the guidelines recommend reporting labour force and work statistics for the population aged 15+ years (see Chapter 10). This in turn implies that the minimum age for the collection of labour force and work statistics may not be higher than 15+ years of age.

98. The revised draft resolution discourages the introduction of upper age limits for the production of labour force and work statistics. In many countries some groups of the population continue to work well past the legal or customary retirement age. In others, retirement systems are not in place or apply only to a subset of workers. In addition, with a rising life expectancy and limited pension systems, many governments are considering the need to encourage continued participation in the labour force at a more advanced age. Introduction of an upper age limit could lead to incomplete coverage, loss of valuable information and unavailability of data for evaluating the success of government policies to encourage extended labour force participation.

Observation units

99. Two observation units for the production of work and labour force statistics are specified: the job and the person. The concept of *job* was first defined in an international standard for labour statistics as part of the resolution adopting the 1988 version of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88), and updated in the 2007 resolution adopting the current (2008) version. The resolution defined a job as “a set of tasks and duties performed, or meant to be performed, by one person, including for an employer or in self-employment”. This definition was also included in the international standards for the measurement of working time adopted in 2008 by the 18th ICLS, which further specifies that a job may be “formal or informal” and may “refer to unpaid household service and volunteer work performed by one person for a household outside the SNA *production boundary* but within the *general production boundary*”.

100. The revised draft resolution refines the definition of job as “a set of tasks and duties performed, or meant to be performed, by one person for a single economic unit”. Reference to specific status in employment categories has been removed from the definition of job in view of its application to all forms of work. Instead, the proposed revised definition clarifies that a job exists with reference to a single economic unit, whether this be a market or non-market unit or a household. Thus, in the case of employees a job exists with reference to a single employer. In the case of self-employed persons a single job exists with reference to the self-employment activity or enterprise, irrespective of the number of clients served.

101. The revised draft standards further clarify the point that a person may have one or several jobs in the same form of work or in different forms of work. In the special case of own-production work, it clarifies that participation in own-production of goods and in own-production of services should be treated as two separate jobs. Such a distinction is made to enable analysis of own-production work and its contribution to different industries (see paragraph 113).

102. While recognizing multiple job holding, the standards provide a common definition of main job, within each form of work, as that with the longest hours usually worked. Focusing the definition of main job within each form of work (as opposed to the main job across all forms of work) is essential to the analysis of participation in the labour market and in each form of work – for example, in order to distinguish between main and secondary jobs in employment.

103. The choice of usual hours worked (as opposed to income or self-perception) as the principal criterion for identifying the main job is consistent with the emphasis of the framework on measuring participation and working time in each form of work. The concept of *usual hours worked* is used, instead of hours actually worked, to avoid classifying employed persons not at work according to the characteristics of their secondary jobs (with shorter working time).

6. Work concepts and operational definitions

104. In line with the proposed conceptual framework for work statistics, the revised draft resolution introduces a general definition of the concept of work as well as definitions and general operational guidelines for the measurement of four distinct forms of work: own-production work; employment; trainee work; and volunteer work. It also describes the existence of other forms of work, particularly state-mandated work, for which statistics may be collected as per their policy relevance. Given that experiences in the separate measurement of own-production work, trainee work and volunteer work as specific forms of work are relatively recent, the proposed revised resolution does not include extended guidance for producing detailed statistics on each. Rather, it sets the scope and basic definitions for forms of work other than employment, with a view to supporting future development of more detailed guidelines.

Work

105. The draft revised resolution introduces the first international definition of *work* for use in statistical measurement, according to which it comprises “all activities performed in economic units by persons of any sex, in order to produce goods or services for consumption by others, or for own consumption”. It excludes activities that cannot be performed on one’s behalf by another person, including all self-care activities, learning and activities for one’s own recreation as well as all other activities that do not involve production goods or services for one’s own or for other units’ consumption, such as begging and stealing.

106. This definition is consistent with the scope of productive activities included in the *general production boundary* and with the definition of economic unit as currently specified in the 2008 SNA. Accordingly, economic units refer to:

(a) market units producing goods and services mostly for sale at prices that are economically significant;

(b) non-market units producing goods and services mostly for supply to other units without charge or at prices that are not economically significant; and

(c) households producing goods and services mostly for own consumption or fixed capital formation by the producers.

107. A focus on the productive dimension of work also implies that all productive activities are included, regardless of their degree of formalization or whether the production is destined for the market or for own consumption, as well as whether the underlying transactions are monetary (e.g. payments in cash) or non-monetary (e.g. barter, in-kind payments, reciprocal labour) or whether the work involves an exchange between two parties or a transfer.

Forms of work

108. To produce statistics on each form of work, the proposed guidelines recommend using a one-hour criterion to identify persons engaged in the specified form of work in the reference period of measurement. The guidelines also explain the purpose and importance of using a one-hour criterion for measuring participation and working time comprehensively in each form of work. Thus, the one-hour criterion ensures that all work activities carried out on a part-time, sporadic or casual basis are accounted for in the statistics. Such information is essential for producing accurate estimates of labour input, productivity and related measures and of the aggregate contribution of each form of work to the economy. It is also necessary in formulating policies related to work–life balance, working-time arrangements and income and time poverty, as a well as other decent work and quality of employment issues. In addition, it can serve to examine differences in levels of participation in different forms of work among different population groups, such as between men and women. Finally, a one-hour criterion to measure participation in each form of work is consistent with the standards on the measurement of working time (18th ICLS, 2008b).

Own-production work

109. Production of goods and services for own consumption is among the oldest forms of work. Prior to the spread of markets for goods and services, households mainly produced their own food, shelter and other necessities, caring for the household members, premises and durables. As these products have become increasingly available through markets, the prevalence of production for own consumption has steadily declined. Nonetheless, it remains widespread in countries at different levels of development. Such production, as in subsistence agriculture, continues to be central to survival in impoverished areas throughout the world. In more developed settings, and among higher income groups, it predominantly covers unpaid household services, do-it-yourself type work, crafts, backyard gardening, etc.

110. In the draft proposal, the concept of *own-production work* is introduced to capture all inputs of labour involved in the production of goods and of services mainly for own consumption by the producer or by members of his or her household. The main purpose of the activity serves to distinguish between producers of goods mainly for own consumption and those producing mainly to generate income. In line with existing practice, it is suggested to base such a distinction on the self-reported main purpose or intended destination of the goods produced (i.e. intended mainly for own consumption by the household or mainly for sale/barter). This approach is in line with that used in the International Standard Classification of Occupations, 2008 (ISCO-08). Alternative approaches that attempt to quantify the proportion of the production destined to or actually sold in the market are not suggested, given their sensitivity to economic and environmental fluctuations and the complexity of their operational implementation. Rather use of the self-reported intended purpose serves to capture aspects related to the mode of production.

111. Own-production work combines in a single concept the production of goods for own consumption (own-production of goods) which are included within the SNA *production boundary* and the production of services for own consumption (own-production of services) which are included within the *general production boundary* but beyond the more restricted SNA *production boundary*. These activities are covered by the same concept in recognition of their common contribution to household production for own consumption. Such an approach will allow examination of the contribution of own-production work to household material welfare, household income and well-being. These assessments, in turn, can support the identification of subsistence households and of subsistence workers. This approach will also serve to address long-standing gaps in the measurement of activities primarily performed by women, thereby enabling more complete assessments of their contribution to the economy and of the dynamics of women’s participation in own-production work and in employment as an income-generating activity.

112. For measurement purposes, the joint treatment of own-production of goods and of services resolves the problems associated with establishing a boundary between goods and services produced for own consumption, in line with the SNA. For example, fetching firewood, the processing of food for preservation, making butter or cheese, husking rice, slaughtering animals and grinding grain are all considered as production of goods, while cooking a meal is a service on the grounds that the meal is consumed immediately. In practice, the dividing line between cooking and these other activities is often difficult to draw, especially where fresh food is prepared daily. Similarly, construction and improvement of one’s dwelling is considered as fixed capital formation, and thus included within the SNA *production boundary*, whereas smaller repairs are viewed as services and hence excluded. Yet it is often difficult to distinguish between repair, improvement and construction, particularly where dwellings are built of materials such as mud, palm, wood and other perishables (Anker, 1983). It has been argued that an advantage of treating own-production of goods and of services as a single form of work is that it will be less likely for household production to be omitted during data collection than is the case at present (Goldschmidt-Clermont, 2000).

113. Nonetheless, to facilitate continued correspondence with the SNA, the revised draft resolution makes reference to two categories of own-production work: own-production of goods, and own-production of services. It also sets their respective activity scopes in line with the 2008 SNA. Distinguishing between these two categories will also make it possible to treat participation in each as a separate job, thus enabling separate tabulations of jobs in own-production of goods and jobs in own-production of services. Such a distinction is needed to support gender analysis of intra-household allocation of labour as well as to quantify more accurately the contribution of own-production work to different industries as currently defined in the International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC(Rev.4)), particularly agriculture, hunting, forestry and fishing; construction; water supply; manufacturing; and domestic and personal services.

Employment

114. A number of revisions have been introduced to the concept of *employment*, its operational definition and related measurement guidelines. In line with the proposed conceptual framework for work statistics, the scope of employment has been revised to refer to work whose main purpose is to generate income in the form of wages, salary, profit or family gain, paid in cash or in kind. In line with the international statistical standards on employment-related income (16th ICLS, 1998), the revised concept and definition of employment includes work performed by contributing family workers, as they contribute their labour in exchange for income received by the market-oriented enterprise owned by members of the household.

115. In line with the proposed measurement of own-production work, it is suggested to distinguish between employment and own-production of goods based on the self-reported main purpose or intended destination of the goods produced (i.e. intended mainly for sale/barter or mainly for own consumption).

116. The operational definition of employment in the revised draft standards has been updated to reflect the proposed narrower activity scope. In addition, employment is now defined independently from status in employment categories. A self-standing definition of employment has the advantage of remaining relevant over time despite the emergence or disappearance of specific status-in-employment categories and despite changes in the nature of the underlying employment relationships or in the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE-93), currently under review by the ILO Department of Statistics.

117. To identify the employed in the reference period of measurement, continued reference is made to two main groups: employed persons at work and employed persons not at work. In the case of employed persons at work, explicit reference is made to the one-hour criterion, as reiterated in the 14th ICLS guidelines (1987) and on consultations held as part of the review process (see paragraph 108).

118. In the case of employed persons not at work, guidelines for assessing temporary absence from employment have been retained but simplified, taking into account their main purpose, existing national practices and the international standards on the measurement of working time (18th ICLS, 2008b). Specifically, the proposals for revision focus on providing guidance for the identification of employed persons on temporary absence from their jobs in the reference period, as needed to produce current estimates of employment.

119. In addition, a common approach is proposed to determine temporary absence from employment among persons in paid employment and in self-employment. This is based on the recognition that the same forms of absence from employment generally apply to persons in paid jobs and in self-employment jobs, irrespective of the associated modalities of pay, entitlements or benefits. This is clear, for example, in the case of annual leave, holidays, sick leave, personal leave and maternity or paternity leave, but also in the case of temporary interruption due to bad weather, mechanical or electrical breakdown, shortage of raw materials or fuels and slack work.

120. Three main criteria are proposed for specifying temporary absences from employment: the self-declared expectation of a return to employment with the same employer or in the same business or activity; the reason for the absence; and the total elapsed duration of the absence. These criteria are part of the current standards (see Chapter 2) and tend to be the most common criteria used by countries to identify persons in employment not at work.

121. The first criterion implies that, for a person to be considered on temporary absence from a job, he or she must have already worked in that job prior to the absence and have the expectation of returning to it after the period of absence. The requirement to have already worked in the job implies that persons who have made arrangements to start a new job or business in the future, commonly referred to as *future starters*, should not be considered as employed persons not at work on the basis of that job. The expectation of a return to work with the same employer or in the same business or activity is the main basis on which temporary absence from employment is generally assessed. This expectation of return is usually included in the main question that starts the sequence on temporary absence (e.g. even though you did not work last week, did you have a job or business to which you will definitely return?).

122. The second and third criteria (reason and duration of the absence) are suggested as a means of assessing further the temporary nature of the absence. In general, certain reasons for absence do not necessarily call into question the continued existence of an employment relationship. These include absences due to illness or injury, holiday, vacation or annual leave, and maternity or paternity leave. In addition, the length of absences for such reasons is generally determined by national legislation or common practice. In such cases, the expectation of a return to employment as self-reported and the reason for the absence may be sufficient for the absence from employment to be treated as temporary.

123. In the case of other reasons for absence, however, it may not be possible to assume that an employment relationship continues to exist or that the absence is temporary in nature. This is so, for example, in the case of occupational injury, personal leave (including education leave and care for others), parental leave, strike or lockout, reduction in economic activity (including temporary lay-offs and slack work), disorganization or suspension of work because of bad weather, mechanical or electrical breakdown, and shortage of raw materials or fuels. In these cases it may be necessary also to use the expected total accrued duration of the absence in order to determine its treatment as a temporary absence from employment.

124. The limit on the duration for an absence to be treated as temporary is left to national circumstances, taking account of general patterns of temporary absence from employment and the desired periodicity (e.g. monthly or quarterly) of current estimates of employment. The proposed revised standards note that such a limit is generally set at less than three months. Total accrued duration is proposed instead of total elapsed duration, in order to facilitate its operational implementation. It is unlikely, for example, that employees not at work because of a strike, bad weather or shortage of raw materials will be able to report an expected total elapsed duration of the absence.

125. Compared to the 13th ICLS standards, the proposed revisions do not recommend using the continued receipt of payment as evidence of temporary absence. Though indicative of a continued employment relationship, such a criterion is not a sufficient test, particularly in the case of informal jobs and of unpaid leaves initiated by the worker. Rather, continued receipt of payment during a temporary absence from employment forms part of the conditions of employment associated with the job.

126. In addition, the revised standards recommend excluding from employment persons on indefinite lay-off (i.e. with no assurance of their returning to work with the same employer), persons with seasonal employment jobs during the off season if they cease to perform activities related to that income-generating job, and persons on extended absence from employment (i.e. absences with a total accrued duration beyond the limit set for defining temporary absence from employment). Countries where extended absences are commonplace may for analytical purposes wish to collect information on payment received during the absence and total duration.

127. In line with the labour force framework, guidelines are retained to classify the following workers as being in employment: contributing family workers, irrespective of the number of hours worked during the reference period; assisting family members; employed persons who in the reference period were on training and skills-enhancement programmes required by the job or for another job in the same economic unit; and persons mainly engaged in other forms of work and in other activities who at the same time were in employment (priority principle).

128. In the case of persons engaged in employment promotion programmes, the revised draft standards recommend that they be classified as employed if, in the context of the programme, the participant contributes to the production of goods and services of an economic unit for which he or she receives payment in cash or in kind, including a government social benefit. It excludes those in job-training or retraining schemes whose main purpose is to provide workplace experience and skills development to improve the participants' employability. It also excludes participants who do not contribute inputs of labour into production (e.g. recipients of subsidies to start a self-employment activity, unless the participant engages in self-employment during the reference period of measurement).

129. In line with the proposed work statistics framework, the following groups of workers are excluded from employment on the basis of that job: persons who produced goods mainly for own consumption by their household but who also sold or bartered part of the production; persons working as apprentices, interns or trainees, or as part of a job-training or retraining scheme, irrespective of whether or not they received some payment in cash, in kind or in services; and volunteer workers. These forms of work are captured under the concepts of *own-production work, trainee work* and *volunteer work*, respectively.

Trainee work

130. The concept of *trainee work* is introduced in the revised draft resolution to capture work carried out by persons with the main purpose of gaining workplace experience or as part of an education programme or an employment promotion scheme to acquire a specific set of skills. Most common forms of trainee work take place in the context of apprenticeships, traineeships and internships that may lead to the acquisition of a qualification or certification, as well as through job training and retraining schemes promoted as part of active labour market policies implemented to improve the employability of target groups, particularly the unemployed.

131. This form of work is widely recognized as a main mechanism to develop skills, to improve employability and that supports job matching and productivity of enterprises in the long term. Trainee work programmes today are organized very differently around the world. Apprenticeship systems organized in partnership between enterprises and the vocational and training system are widespread in more developed countries, and are increasingly being established in less developed countries. In such programmes, apprentices usually receive some remuneration or an allowance during the practical workplace component, increasing with skill levels but always lower than the wages of employees in that occupation. More common in many less developed countries, however, are traditional forms where experienced workers train apprentices in their trade or craft, in workshops, garages, etc. These apprentices may not receive any remuneration, or only an allowance or in-kind support; in many cases they are expected to pay a fee for the workplace learning received or to provide their own tools (ILO 2008d; Nübler 2009). Remuneration and the acquisition of a qualification or certification are less prevalent in the case of traineeships and internships, in both more and less developed countries around the world.

132. The proposed scope and operational definition of trainee work recognize the diversity of such programmes, emphasizing that trainee work may be formal or informal, paid, unpaid or paying, and may or may not lead to the acquisition of a qualification or certification. In this way, the revised standards enable the production of a coherent set of statistics on this form of work that support cross-country comparisons as well as assessments of the conditions of work associated with these programmes. This information is needed to inform the formulation, monitoring and evaluation of policies and programmes for vocational education and training, skills development and reskilling of workers.

133. In general, skills development and training can be a feature of many other work activities. Indeed, all activities over time lead to the acquisition of a variety of skills and knowledge. The concept of *trainee work* focuses on those work activities which have the acquisition of workplace experience and skills as their main purpose. It thus excludes probationary periods associated with the start of a job in employment, as well as general on-the-job training activities and other training that is required by jobs in employment or in volunteer work.

134. Traditional forms of learning a trade or profession, or gaining workplace experience may occur in a family context, where a young household member learns a craft, trade or occupation by working in the market-oriented enterprise owned by a member of the household. Such situations are not included within the scope of trainee work. Rather, they are classified as employment because the overarching purpose of that activity is to contribute to the income-generating enterprise owned by members of the household. Similarly, trainee work also excludes the general acquisition of skills in own-production work because the purpose of those activities is primarily to contribute to the household’s self-provisioning activities. This is reflected in the operational definition of trainee work as that taking place in “market or non-market economic units, owned by members of another household”.

135. The introduction of trainee work as a separate form of work will mean that, in many countries, apprentices, trainees and interns who receive remuneration will no longer be counted as employed. This may have an impact on statistics of youth employment and unemployment, which will need to be complemented with statistics on youth in trainee work. Youth unemployment statistics may be affected primarily by the reduction in the number of youth counted as being in employment. Changes in the number of trainees counted among the unemployed is likely to be minimal, as these groups of workers will most likely seek and become available for employment for the purpose of generating an income only upon completion of the period of training. It will not affect statistics on average earnings, as income received by apprentices is generally excluded from the calculations.

Volunteer work

136. Volunteer work is another form of work which contributes to the production of goods and services and to community well-being. Among the oldest forms of volunteering is helping other households or the community through mutual aid or self-help where the group as a whole benefits from the work performed. Such volunteer work is widespread in many cultures around the world, serving as a mechanism to maintain social relations and promote community development. More recent forms occur for or through organizations, particularly non-profit institutions, as an important mechanism to promote social cohesion, civic engagement, and community well-being.

137. The revised draft resolution introduces the concept of *volunteer work* to capture work activities performed without pay on a voluntary basis for others. Its proposed definition, as well as related measurement guidelines, builds on the work carried out by the ILO Department of Statistics in collaboration with the Johns Hopkins University Center for Civil Society (Baltimore, MD, US) as well as on the recommendations of the 18th ICLS Working Group on the Measurement of Volunteer Work (ILO, 2008a) and the ILO's recently published manual on the topic (ILO, 2011).

138. The proposed definition emphasizes as main criteria of volunteer work its unpaid and non-compulsory nature, as well as its main purpose of benefiting others. The term unpaid indicates that volunteer work is carried out without payment, whether in cash or in kind, that is to say that volunteer workers do not receive an income in return for the work performed. They may, however, receive some forms of monetary or in-kind compensation, such as the reimbursement of out-of-pocket expenses, services such as meals or transportation, stipends to cover living expenses and symbolic gifts, in recognition of their voluntary work (ILO, 2011).

139. The term *non-compulsory* signifies that volunteer work is performed without any legal or other obligation or coercion. This is an important element in distinguishing volunteer work from other forms of state-mandated work (e.g. court-mandated community service, work mandated as part of a prison sentence, mandatory national service related to a military draft, unpaid work required for graduation or continuation in a school or training programme and other such forms of compulsory work). At the same time, "helping" or "providing" assistance to benefit others is a common feature of many cultures and societies. Participation in volunteer work may be partly driven by shared social expectations or by peer pressure, but such expectations or pressure should not be interpreted as indicating that the work is compulsory (ILO, 2011).

140. In accordance with the proposed conceptual framework for work statistics, the main purpose of volunteer work is to benefit others outside of their own household. This means that the principal beneficiary of volunteer work must be someone other than the volunteers themselves and the members of their household. It follows that volunteer work can be conducted to benefit any organization or cause, including people, the environment, animals, the wider community, etc.

141. While its main objective is to benefit others, volunteer work is seldom a one-way transaction. Generally, volunteers benefit in a number of ways from participation in volunteer work, including the establishment or maintenance of social connections, social standing or a feeling of self-worth and by developing skills, etc. (ILO, 2011). In addition, volunteer work may benefit the volunteer when he or she is a member of the group, community or organization for which the work is performed. Volunteer work carried out within a self-help or mutual-aid groups is thus included.

142. Finally, the proposed definition recognizes that volunteer work may be carried out for or through market or non-market units or directly for other households. This is necessary to ensure the comprehensive measurement of volunteer work practices across countries, by capturing the traditional as well as the institutionalized forms of volunteer work.

7. Labour underutilization (unmet need for employment)

143. As part of national programmes for labour force statistics, definitions and operational guidelines are included in the revised draft resolution for the compilation of selected measures of labour underutilization, particularly those aimed at identifying persons in time-related underemployment, the unemployed and persons marginally attached to the labour force. These measures are intended for regular dissemination as headline indicators for purposes of labour market monitoring.

144. In the case of time-related underemployment and unemployment, the existing underlying definitions and overall measurement approaches have been retained, so as to promote the continuity of time series to the extent possible. The proposed refinements centre primarily on enhancing their relevance for labour market monitoring and improving the operational guidelines based on accumulated experience, so as to promote greater cross-country comparability of the statistics. In addition, a new international measure of persons marginally attached to the labour force is proposed.

Time-related underemployment

145. The revised draft resolution incorporates guidelines for the measurement of time-related underemployment based on the recommendations included in the 16th ICLS resolution on this topic. The operational definition of time-related underemployment has not been changed. However, several revisions to the text are proposed in order to clarify ambiguities identified by countries in the application of the international standards. These refer particularly to the defining criteria of time-related underemployment and the various subgroups of persons in time-related underemployment that may be identified for different purposes.

Unemployment

146. A number of refinements have been introduced to the operational definition of *unemployment* and related measurement guidelines. First, the definition has been refined in light of the proposed changes to the concept of *employment*. Thus, unemployment is now defined with respect to work whose main purpose is to generate income, more closely reflecting people’s perception of unemployment as the search for income-generating work. This implies that unemployment should reflect the search for any type of employment as newly defined, including paid employment and self-employment as well as informal, casual part-time, seasonal or other temporary employment. Similarly, to capture the available supply of labour in a country adequately, unemployment should cover all persons who fulfil the criteria for its measurement, whether they seek employment within the national territory or abroad.

Defining criteria

147. In order to place emphasis in the activity-based conceptual framework and measurement approach, the criteria to measure unemployment have been reordered in the text. In accordance with the priority rule of the labour force framework, the criterion “without employment” is determined first. This criterion serves to ensure that persons who are employed, even if only for a few hours, are not counted among the unemployed. Once this criterion has been ascertained, it is followed by the “active search for employment” criterion and, finally, the “availability” criterion. The 13th ICLS resolution listed these last two criteria in reverse order, leading to their operational implementation in the household surveys of certain countries in that order. Partly as a result of this, countries have reported problems with the interpretation of the questions on availability for employment, leading to problems regarding the quality of the measurement of unemployment. New operational guidelines based on identified good practices which recommend the measurement of active search for employment prior to availability will serve to anchor the latter in the context of the search and thus reduce problems of interpretation.

Search for employment

148. In the implementation of the “seeking employment” criterion, the current standards include a list of methods to be used as evidence of job search (see paragraph 26). In the last 30 years a variety of new activities to seek employment have become more commonplace. In particular, the spread of the Internet as a main channel of communication and of networking has led to the emergence of a range of new methods, which include placing or answering online job announcements and placing or updating résumés on online professional or social networking sites. In addition, the use of private employment services and intermediaries has also become common practice, particularly for specialized occupations but also as a way of seeking employment in wider geographic regions, including outside the national territory. The revised list of active search methods incorporates these new methods. It also describes more clearly activities that indicate a search for self-employment, including in agriculture, such as looking for land, building, machinery, equipment or raw materials, arranging for financial resources, applying for permits, licences, etc.

149. As labour markets become more competitive and employment jobs more specialized requiring specific skills or experience, a question emerges as to whether activities such as reading newspapers or online advertisements when searching for employment should also be considered as evidence of active search. Persons seeking employment may spend more time reading through job advertisements before identifying one that matches their skills, occupation and job preferences. Furthermore, with the increasing regional and international integration of labour markets, the search for employment outside the national territory raises the question as to whether making arrangements for travel in order to find employment should also be included as evidence of active job search.

150. Recognizing that a precondition of actively searching for employment is the existence of a diverse labour market, with available opportunities for employment and established channels for job search, the current standards allow States to relax (in other words, to exclude) this criterion where such conditions are not present. In such cases, the standards recommend using additional tests beyond availability for employment, such as the “desire” or “willingness” to take employment, in order to determine the existence of an interest in the labour market. These recommendations have created some confusion as to which are the required criteria for the measurement of unemployment and have limited the international comparability of unemployment statistics. In line with the inclusion of a new, separate concept and measure to capture persons marginally attached to the labour force, and to reduce the confusion surrounding the measurement of unemployment, the option of relaxing the "seeking work" criterion has been removed from the proposed revised draft standards.

Availability for employment

151. According to the international standards, persons without employment who are seeking employment should also be available for employment if they are to be considered as unemployed. In this context, availability is a test of readiness to start employment (Hussmanns, 1990), and its inclusion is necessary for unemployment to serve as a current measure of labour market performance. It excludes from unemployment any persons who may be actively seeking employment but are not available to start within a short period of time. Such is the case of students who start seeking employment while still studying but will only become available to start after they have completed their studies. In this sense, the criterion of availability for employment refers to "time availability" to take employment after finding an opportunity (i.e. how soon a person can become available to start working). This is now made clear in the revised standards, which address concerns as to the utility and purpose of this criterion.

Reference periods of measurement

152. To ensure that unemployment serves as a measure of current labour market performance that can capture short-term changes in labour market absorption, the standards recommend generally short reference periods of measurement for each of its defining criteria: the "reference day or week" criterion for establishing that a person is not in employment and is available for employment, and a "specified recent period" to capture activities to seek employment. The latter is intended to be interpreted as a longer period than the reference day or week, in order to account for the time-lags which often follow initial steps to seek employment, and during which jobseekers may not take any other steps to find employment (Hussmanns, 1990).

153. Concerns have been raised about the adequacy of measuring current availability to take up employment with respect to a reference period in the past. As indicated, the main purpose of the availability criterion is to identify those persons without employment who would be ready to start working upon finding a job or business opportunity. In reality, jobseekers may need a few days to become available to take up employment upon finding a job or business opportunity. This is particularly the case of those who need assistance with their children or with household responsibilities prior to starting work. Similarly, persons living in areas to which access is difficult may need to secure transportation, while new entrants to the labour market may need to purchase the clothing or equipment needed.

154. Tests indicate that in certain contexts small differences in the reference period used to measure availability do have an effect on the measurement of unemployment, particularly in the case of women and young persons (Hussmanns, 1990). This suggests that, in those settings, a slightly longer reference period of measurement than the reference week would be more suited to capturing situations of unemployment among different population subgroups. It is thus recommended that a slightly longer reference period be used for the measurement of availability for employment, determined by national tests and encompassing the reference week and one or two subsequent weeks. Such a recommendation is consistent with the range of practices observed at the national level.

155. With respect to the reference period for measuring activities to seek employment, the review of national practices suggests that the current guidelines are not sufficiently clear. A number of countries use the reference week to determine active job search, but such a short measurement period is not sufficient to capture employment search behaviour adequately. To improve the clarity of the standards and to promote international comparability of the statistics, a reference period of four weeks or a month, including the reference week or seven days, is recommended to measure active search for employment.

Treatment of specific groups

156. To clarify the treatment of specific groups, guidelines are retained that recommend that persons on indefinite lay-off be treated as being in unemployment if they satisfy the three criteria for inclusion. As in the current standards, no special treatment is given to persons in such a situation. The option to relax the "seeking work" criterion for indefinite lay-offs has been removed, as such persons, if available for employment, will be included among persons marginally attached to the labour force.

157. In line with the proposed revisions for determining temporary absence from employment, persons with seasonal jobs during the off season and persons on extended absence from a job are now eligible for inclusion among the unemployed if they seek and are available for employment.

158. Likewise, in line with the revised definition of employment, new guidelines are included to ensure that persons exclusively engaged in forms of work other than employment (i.e. in own-production work, trainee work, volunteer work) are classified as unemployed or not in the labour force, depending on their search for employment and their availability. As a result, it will be possible to have information about the labour force characteristics of persons performing other forms of work.

159. The proposed treatment of specific groups thus promotes the even application of the unemployment definition, regardless of specific circumstances, and the enhancement of international comparability. Two exceptions have been retained. In the case of future starters, now more clearly defined, it is proposed that they continue to be treated as unemployed if available, irrespective of whether they sought employment or not. Similar treatment is also proposed for participants in skills training schemes who have an assurance that they will be employed at the end of the training period. Given that future starters have already found a job, it can be assumed that, if they indicate that they are available to take up employment, they would have started working earlier if possible. They therefore constitute underutilized labour resources. For participants in training schemes, participation in the programme indicates that they would have been available to start the employment if they had had the opportunity to do so.

Long-term unemployment

160. Beyond monitoring cyclical fluctuations in unemployment, it is important that labour market analysis assess structural situations of unemployment over longer reference periods. To this end, general guidance has been added for the measurement of long-term unemployment and the production of tabulations of unemployed persons by duration of unemployment.

161. Duration of unemployment is important as both an economic and a social indicator. In periods of high and increasing unemployment, changes in duration of unemployment and in the proportion of persons unemployed for longer periods are key indicators of changes in labour market conditions. Long-term unemployment is of particular concern because of such consequences as financial hardship, loss of relevant skills and self-esteem and alienation from employment.

162. While many countries collect statistics on duration of unemployment and the long-term unemployed, conceptual and measurement differences between countries and regions impose serious limitations on the international comparability of these statistics. These differences stem from the extent to which criteria for activity, job search and availability for employment are applied over a lengthy period. There are also variations in the period used to determine long-term unemployment; in many countries a period of 12 months is used, whereas in others a shorter period (typically of six months) is used.

163. For tabulation purposes the revised draft standards propose that the duration of unemployment be reported for four classes of unemployment: four weeks/one month or less; more than four weeks/one month to less than six months; more than six months to less than 12 months; and 12 months or more. Long-term unemployment is further defined in reference to any of the last two categories, according to national circumstances. In addition, in order to determine the duration of unemployment it is proposed to use the period from when a person began looking for employment or, if that job search was interrupted by a period of employment, the period since a person was last employed, whichever is the shorter.

164. While this approach requires that criteria of activity and job search be applied to identify the long-term unemployed, at present no separate test is proposed to determine availability throughout the duration of job search. In addition, while providing flexibility, for international comparisons it would be preferable to recommend a common duration limit.

Marginal attachment

165. To identify situations of inadequate absorption of labour, beyond those captured by unemployment, the revised draft resolution introduces a definition of *persons marginally attached* to the labour force. It is proposed that the definition covers persons who have indicated some interest in employment by seeking employment or by expressing availability for work, but who fail to meet all of the criteria to be counted among the unemployed, i.e. groups of persons who share some of the characteristics of the unemployed but not all.

166. As proposed here, such groups would comprise:

(a) persons without employment, seeking employment, but not available; and

(b) persons without employment, not seeking employment, but available.

167. Existing data suggest that group (a) accounts for only a small proportion of persons outside the labour force. In certain cases, this group most likely reflects the sensitivity of the "available for employment" criterion to the reference period used for its measurement. That is to say that it captures persons who put pressure on the labour market (by actively seeking employment) but who, because they are not immediately available, are excluded from unemployment. Recent analysis of this group in countries of the European Union indicates that it has the strongest attachment to the labour market, compared to other persons outside the labour force (Eurostat, 2011).

168. Group (b) is generally larger and includes some subgroups that have received considerable attention from policy-makers, i.e. persons on indefinite lay-off and discouraged jobseekers. It also comprises persons facing a variety of impediments to seeking employment, including personal and family related factors in addition to the socio-economic context. Some of these subgroups are at present included among the unemployed in countries that have chosen to relax the "seeking work" criterion. Capturing this group has become particularly relevant in both more developed and less developed regions, owing on the one hand to the increasing flexibility of labour markets across the world and, on the other, to the limited existence of diversified labour markets and channels for seeking employment in many rural areas in less developed countries.

169. A definition of *discouraged jobseekers* has also been included to meet the demand for more comparable information on this particular subgroup of persons marginally attached. As proposed, the group of discouraged jobseekers comprises persons without employment who, though available, did not seek employment on account of such labour market reasons as past failure in finding a suitable job, lack of experience or qualifications, lack of jobs matching the person's skills, absence of any jobs in the area, recent job loss, or the fact of being considered too young or too old by prospective employers.

170. Some approaches argue that, for a jobseeker to be classified as discouraged, some evidence of past search for employment is needed. For this, an additional criterion of employment search in a recent reference period (i.e. the past six or 12 months) would need to be included. Such a restriction, however, would affect the relevance of the measure in settings where employment opportunities are limited and where people have general knowledge of available employment options. The latter is a reason why the relaxation of the "seeking work" criterion was introduced as an option in the measurement of unemployment.

171. The inclusion of a definition of persons marginally attached to the labour force implies that data collection instruments need to collect information about employment search and availability for all persons not classified as employed in the reference period of measurement. As this practice is not yet widespread, appropriate guidance is provided in the revised draft resolution.

172. Beyond identification of these two subgroups, it may be useful to include additional further guidance for identifying persons without employment who are neither seeking nor available but who express the desire to be employed. This group is particularly relevant in impoverished areas where persons not only have no opportunity to seek employment but are also occupied with subsistence activities as their main source of livelihood. It is also an important indicator of need for employment, particularly in the case of women, in settings where family responsibilities and expectations imply that the expression of interest in the labour market is generally in the form of an expressed desire for employment.

8. Data collection plans and methods

Reporting periodicities

173. Flexibility is needed in national data collection plans in order to meet the demands of users for statistics of work and of the labour force within existing budgets and resources. In determining the periodicity with which different statistics are needed, their policy relevance and their suitability for describing work patterns in an economy are decisive factors.

174. For labour market monitoring, information on employment and labour underutilization, including unemployment, is needed on a sub-annual basis in order to capture seasonal and other temporal variations in the supply of labour, including variations resulting from the business cycle. As discussed below, such information is also essential for producing accurate annual averages that take account of variations in the level of participation at different times of the year.

175. Frequent statistics on own-production of goods would also be needed in countries where this form of work is widespread among large sectors of the population and where seasonal variations result in changes in participation levels and working time at different periods of the year (for example, during peak and slack seasons in agriculture). The information would, in addition, be essential to monitor participation in seasonal employment among producers of goods for own consumption and their need for income-generating employment at different times of the year. In such situations, the revised draft standards recommend, as a minimum, that countries establish regular data collection programmes with a view to producing statistics on the labour force and on own-production of goods at least twice a year, coinciding with the peak and slack seasons for work. This recommendation is in line with the guidelines set out in the 13th ICLS resolution.

176. For a more structural evaluation of labour markets and of forms of work other than employment, statistics are needed on an annual basis. For national production accounts, especially, statistics are needed on the total number of jobs and working time contributing to SNA production. For proper analysis of the labour market annual statistics are needed that describe the structure and distribution of the labour force, including by relevant characteristics of the employed, the unemployed and persons outside the labour force, such as those highlighted in Chapter 9.

177. For more in-depth analysis of specific work topics or population subgroups, as well as for benchmarking and to assess macroeconomic models and estimations, statistics are required on a less-than-annual basis, for example every three, five or ten years, as determined by user demand. Particularly important for a deeper understanding of work patterns in the population and to inform policies targeting specific groups are statistics on such topics as labour migration, child labour, youth, gender, transitions in and out of employment, work in rural areas, household work patterns, and income and other socio-economic factors. Because of their importance, these topics have been highlighted as examples in the revised draft resolution.

178. While sub-annual reporting of labour force statistics serves to assess changes in employment and unemployment levels over time, they do not provide information about the underlying dynamics leading to such changes – for example, whether an increase in unemployment is the result of a decline in employment, a rise in the number of first-time jobseekers, or an improvement in labour demand leading to a transition from discouragement to unemployment. To understand such labour market dynamics better, statistics on gross labour market flows are necessary. General recommendations are included for countries with established annual data collection programmes which promote the implementation of data collection mechanisms that enable the measurement of gross labour market flows, according to national priorities. Such mechanisms may be based on the introduction of panel sub-samples in labour force surveys or other household surveys or on the use of person-level data drawn from registers.

Sources of data

179. Statistics of work and of the labour force may be derived from a variety of sources. In general, the best sources are household-based surveys. Other sources such as establishment surveys and administrative records also play an important role in providing statistics for certain groups of workers, as noted in the revised draft resolution. Register-based sources can likewise be an important source in countries with well-developed and comprehensive registration systems. The revised draft resolution recognizes the complementary role of the various sources and recommends their joint use in developing a comprehensive set of statistics of work and of the labour force. To this end, the proposals stress the need for harmonization across sources in terms of concepts, definitions, classifications, reference periods of measurement and other methodological aspects.

180. Given the central role played by household surveys, however, special attention is paid to their use as the main source of data. Household surveys, particularly labour force surveys, are best equipped for collecting statistics on most forms of work and on measures of labour underutilization. Because measurement is done through the household, these surveys can cover all forms of work, notably those taking place only within households, such as own-production work and some forms of volunteer work. In addition, they can produce statistics for the population as a whole, and for all jobs. The latter is essential as household-based surveys are often the only source of information about informal jobs in employment, in some forms of volunteer work and in trainee work that do not appear in administrative sources or establishment surveys (an exception being specialized establishment surveys of the informal sector). They are flexible tools that can be used in a modular format to introduce supplementary question sequences to collect information on specific topics or forms of work with different frequencies of collection.

181. To enable the joint assessment of participation in the labour force and in forms of work other than employment, the introduction of short add-on modules or supplements in labour force surveys is recommended. Such an approach is already used on a regular basis in a number of countries in both more developed and less developed regions. Add-on modules may also be used in the context of general household surveys containing a labour force module. The introduction of such supplementary modules would primarily serve to produce statistics on general levels of participation and working time in each form of work, as well as on other selected characteristics as described in Chapter 9. To limit the response burden and to assure the overall quality of the data collection, however, care should be taken not to introduce too many modules in a single data collection exercise and to include only a limited number of questions at a time.

182. For these reasons, specialized household surveys may be appropriate for a more detailed analysis of each form of work. The revised draft resolution recognizes the potential of specialized household surveys for providing in-depth information on specific topics or population groups. In particular, surveys of time-use, volunteer work, employment in agriculture and labour migration are highlighted. Traditionally, time-use surveys have been used to capture information about all activities performed by the population within a short period. While employment activities are not generally covered in detail, time-use surveys have been a major source of statistics on participation in own-production of services and in volunteer work.

183. However, household surveys are generally not an adequate source of statistics for small geographic areas, small groups or populations not living in private households, unless explicitly designed for such purposes (for example, by implementing special procedures to enumerate worker camps, military barracks, etc.). This could be the case for statistics on trainee work, if its prevalence in the general population is small, or for statistics on migrant workers living in group quarters or outside the national territory. For these groups of workers establishment surveys are a potential source of information, to the extent that the workers are formal paid employees.

184. Population censuses can be used to provide statistics on small populations or areas, as well as on the population living in group quarters. Their low frequency and the number of questions that can be included on any given topic can, however, pose limitations. They are thus best used as a source for benchmarking purposes, and in preparing master samples for use in the design of household surveys. Nonetheless, where the population census is the primary or only source of statistics, it is recommended that participation in the different forms of work be measured in accordance with the latest international recommendations for this source.

Reference periods of measurement

185. For measuring participation in each form of work, including employment, the use of a short reference period of one week or seven days is recommended. This is in line with the existing international standards for the measurement of employment and with national practice. It is a central feature of the labour force measurement framework for producing statistics on a current basis, to serve as the reference period for measuring employment and for establishing the "without employment" criterion in the measurement of unemployment.

186. The inclusion of alternative reference periods of the same length ("one week or seven days") provides some flexibility while at the same time promoting cross-country comparability of the statistics. It is based on the recognition that there are valid reasons for different practices in national data collection methodologies whereby a fixed calendar week, a moving week or the previous seven days may be used. These differences exist in order to achieve a number of objectives – notably in terms of providing statistics for a specific period in the month or producing an average for the full month, as well as of improving or facilitating retrospective recall given common working-time arrangements in the country.

187. The proposal to extend the same reference period of measurement to the production of statistics on forms of work other than employment is based on two considerations. First, a short reference period of one week has proved to be optimal in reducing reporting errors attributable to memory recall problems, particularly for activities carried out frequently, as is the case of employment, own-production work and trainee work. Second, common reference periods of measurement will support the joint analysis of levels of participation in each form of work, as well as of dynamics related to participation in different forms of work.

188. However, such a short reference period may not be sufficient to capture forms of work carried out sporadically or infrequently. This is particularly relevant to volunteer work but possibly also to own-production of goods in settings where its prevalence is low in the population and where it primarily comprises activities undertaken as a lifestyle choice. In such situations the revised draft resolution recommends, as an alternative, the use of slightly longer reference periods such as four weeks or a calendar month.

189. In addition to a one-week reference period of measurement, the present standards, in fact, also recommend a reference period of one day (see paragraph 20). The alternative of a one-day reference period has its origins in early approaches to the production of stock estimates that referred to a particular point in time, developed primarily for use in population censuses. This alternative is now deemed to be too short to provide meaningful information to describe labour force patterns in the population. The one-day reference period was also intended for statistics derived from establishment surveys and administrative sources, which are often compiled with reference to a specific day (for example, the payroll day or the last Friday in the month). The revised draft standards no longer recommend the one-day reference period.

Periodicities of data collection

190. Statistics of work and of the labour force referring to a one-week reference period cannot be taken to reflect the general situation in a country for a given year. To reflect labour markets and work patterns in an economy adequately, repeated measurements must be made at different times during the year. In practice, the best approach is to combine continuous data collection with a short reference period of measurement. Such continuous coverage is usually provided by administrative sources, in so far as they are updated on a continuous basis. For household surveys it entails implementing continuous or monthly data collection throughout the year. When this kind of approach is used, even work activities carried out sporadically will be adequately covered using a short reference period of measurement. Seasonal and other temporal variations in employment and work patterns will likewise be adequately captured. The revised draft resolution highlights data collection on a continuous or monthly basis as the recommended periodicity for data collection.

191. Sub-annual data collection, however, may not be feasible in less developed countries where the resources allocated to the agency in charge of producing work and labour force statistics are limited. At the same time, investing in one-time household surveys that collect information using a long reference period of measurement often results in a major burden for respondents and poor data quality because of serious memory recall problems. For this reason, the revised draft standards recommend the progressive implementation of more frequent data collection, for example, twice a year to coincide with the high and low season in employment. In line with this recommendation, and given its limited national implementation, the usual activity approach and related measures (usually active population, not usually active population) are no longer recommended.

192. In the long term, national programmes should seek to implement frequent data collection in order to meet adequately the demand for statistics to inform macroeconomic, labour market and related social policies. While striving to establish such programmes, annual estimates (particularly of employment and own-production of goods), for national production accounts may be prepared using various estimation techniques based on information collected for longer reference periods using retrospective methods such as job-based or month-by-month recall.

9. Derived measures and indicators, tabulations and classifications

193. The revised draft resolution stresses the importance of specifying a comprehensive set of derived measures, indicators and tabulations, in consultation with all users of the statistics. In general, and to reflect adequately differences in working patterns among population subgroups, the resolution proposes that all statistical outputs be routinely produced for the total population, and separately by sex, geographic region (including urban and rural distinctions), specified age groups and other characteristics, as appropriate.

Derived measures

194. A number of key derived measures will need to be produced as part of national labour force statistics programmes, based on the concepts and definitions set out in the revised draft resolution. These include existing derived measures such as the “labour force” and “persons outside the labour force”.

195. The definition of *labour force* has not changed; it refers to the sum of the employed and the unemployed. However, given the narrower activity scope of employment proposed and its implications for the measurement of unemployment, the “labour force” conceptually no longer refers to the supply of labour contributing to SNA production. Rather it captures persons who are in employment to generate income and persons seeking and available for this form of work. Persons exclusively engaged in trainee work, in volunteer work and/or in own-production of goods, as well as those seeking and available for such forms of work, are excluded. Thus, as an indicator of the labour market, the “labour force” will target more closely the population of interest for the formulation of employment, income and related social policies and programmes.

196. Given the above changes, the scope of the derived measures for “persons outside the labour force” will also change. It will now include persons engaged exclusively in trainee work, in volunteer work and/or in own-production of goods, if they are not seeking and available for employment to generate income. Under the current standards these groups of workers are included among the employed. In contrast with the existing definition of persons not in the labour force, it is proposed that this derived measure be restricted to persons above the age specified for measuring the labour force, i.e. the working age population. This change is suggested in recognition of the fact that children may be engaged in a variety of work activities and that separate international statistical standards exist for the production of statistics on children in productive activities. It also takes account of the development of a new measure of persons marginally attached to the labour force to be used for labour market monitoring.

197. In addition to the above, three new derived measures are proposed:

(a) extended labour force, comprising the sum of the labour force and persons marginally attached;

(b) extended unemployment, comprising the sum of the unemployed and persons marginally attached; and

(c) labour underutilization, comprising the sum of persons in time-related underemployment, the unemployed and persons marginally attached.

198. The two measures (a) and (b) add persons marginally attached to the classic measures of the labour force and unemployment. Measure (c) adds persons in time-related underemployment to the extended labour force. The extended labour force (a) is introduced for use as the reference population for the computation of supplementary rates to be disseminated together with the unemployment rate (see below). The extended unemployment (b) and labour underutilization (c) form part of the new supplementary measures proposed for dissemination, together with unemployment figures, in order to reflect and monitor labour market performance more broadly (see paragraph 82).

Indicators

199. Guidance has also been included for the computation of a few selected headline indicators of the labour market, as well as of participation in forms of work other than employment. For purposes of labour market monitoring, three indicators are highlighted: the employment-to-population ratio (also referred to as the employment rate in certain States and regions), the labour force participation rate and the unemployment rate. In addition, it is suggested that unemployment rates for first-time jobseekers and for job losers be calculated separately, in order better to assess trends in unemployment attributable to new entrants on the labour market and as a result of job losses.

200. New labour market indicators proposed for use in conjunction with the unemployment rate include:

(a) marginal attachment rate, referring to persons marginally attached expressed as a percentage of the extended labour force;

(b) rate of time-related underemployment, referring to persons in time-related underemployment expressed as a percentage of the extended labour force or of the employed;

(c) extended unemployment rate, referring to extended unemployment expressed as a percentage of the extended labour force;

(d) labour underutilization rate, referring to persons in labour underutilization expressed as a percentage of the extended labour force; and

(e) long-term unemployment rate, referring to persons in long-term unemployment expressed as a percentage of the labour force.

201. The two indicators (a) and (b) provide relative measures of the prevalence of persons marginally attached to the labour force and of persons in time-related underemployment in the population. When expressed as a percentage of the extended labour force, the indicators can be used as measures of labour underutilization, to distinguish differences in responses to labour market downturns, for example, as a result of reductions in working time, layoffs or a decline in available vacancies. There is a concern that, while constructed as proper rates, they are expressed in a different scale from the unemployment rate, which is expressed as a percentage of the labour force. Consequently, their use as complementary measures of the unemployment rate to assess differences in labour market responses to economic downturns in different contexts may be hampered.

202. Indicators (c) and (d) provide increasingly broad measures for monitoring changes in overall levels of labour underutilization together with the unemployment rate. These measures include the unemployed within their scope. The last indicator (e) is an important measure to complement the unemployment rate and the measures of labour underutilization. It provides a different perspective by tracking the prevalence of persons who have been in a situation of unemployment for a prolonged period of time.

203. Basic indicators of the prevalence of participation in forms of work other than employment would include a volunteer rate and a rate of own-production of goods, each expressed as a percentage of the working age population. Such indicators, when used together with the refined employment-to-population ratio, serve to provide a general picture of the relative levels of the population's participation in these different forms of work. On the one hand, using the working age population as the denominator will provide a common basis for comparison. On the other hand, indicators based on the working age population are influenced by the age structure of the population, thus limiting their usefulness for cross-country comparisons and for monitoring long-term changes over time. For these purposes it may be important to produce age-specific participation rates.

204. The proposals do not include specific guidance regarding the computation of basic indicators for own-production of services and for trainee work, given their recent development. In the case of own-production of services, a general rate for the total population may not be as informative, since the vast majority of the working population engages in such productive activities. However, rates of own-production of services calculated separately for men and women, and by type of service provided, would be more informative. Finally, given in particular the lack of information about the extent of informal or unpaid apprentices, traineeships and internships, it is not clear whether a general trainee work rate expressed as a percentage of the working population would be informative and a trainee rate calculated for specific age groups or target groups might be more useful.

205. Prevalence indicators are useful measures of the extent to which a country's population or a specific population group engages in each form of work. However, they do not provide information about the amount of time spent in each form of work, i.e. the volume of work carried out by persons. Volume measures are essential for macroeconomic estimation, including the assessment of production and productivity. They are also informative for the analysis of working time patterns and arrangements and for assessments of time poverty. For the purposes of national production accounts, the revised draft resolution recommends producing estimates of the volume of work or labour input, in accordance with the international standards for measurement of working time (18th ICLS, 2008b).

Tabulations and classifications

206. General guidance is provided to support the preparation of comprehensive national tabulation plans of statistics of work and of the labour force, taking into account the main uses of the statistics. Tabulations may be prepared for persons, jobs and households with respect to the resident population and/or the domestic population.

207. Person-level tabulations of the resident population are mainly needed to inform social and economic policies and programmes targeting the population of the country. This is the approach that is recommended for preparing tabulations for the labour force and for persons in each form of work. For a descriptive analysis of the labour force, general tabulations of the working age population by labour force status should be prepared. In addition, statistics of the employed, the unemployed and persons outside the labour force should be classified by relevant characteristics of their main or last (main) job in employment, in particular: industry, occupation, status in employment, sector of employment, institutional sector, working time, wages and geographic place of work, where relevant.

208. For persons outside the labour force, new guidelines are included in addition to the above to promote the development of alternative classifications by degree of labour market attachment, by reasons for not seeking, not being available for or not wanting employment, and by self-perceived main activity status. The proposed classifications respond to the demand for policy relevant breakdowns of this component of the working age population, which was previously treated as a residual category.

209. Classification by degree of labour market attachment is the basis for the identification of persons marginally attached to the labour force; it may also be used to identify in greater detail persons who want employment but are neither seeking it nor available. Classification by reasons given provides information to support the analysis of barriers to employment, including personal factors (illness, disability, studies), family related factors (pregnancy, presence of small children, refusal by family), labour market factors (past failure to find a suitable job, lack of experience or qualifications, jobs that do not match the person's skills, lack of jobs in the area, recent job loss, being considered too young or too old by prospective employers), lack of infrastructure (lack of assets, roads, transportation, employment services), other sources of income (pension, rent) or disenfranchisement. These two classifications need to be combined to identify specific target groups, particularly discouraged jobseekers. Finally, classification by main activity status aims to provide a basic breakdown of persons outside the labour force according to their self-perceived main activity. The breakdowns included are activity-based, and social status categories such as retired or disabled are therefore not included. Instead, they are included as part of the classification based on reasons.

210. With regard to persons in forms of work other than employment, the revised draft resolution proposes basic tabulations by selected characteristics, notably by specified bands of hours actually worked and broad industry aggregates. In the case of volunteer workers, additional tabulations by economic unit (market or non-market enterprises and households) and, for households, by type of production (goods or services) are essential. To shed light on the labour market integration of persons in forms of work other than employment, tabulations by labour force status and by category of labour underutilization, and other such characteristics (particularly among the employed by industry) are also needed.

211. Job-level tabulations with reference to the domestic population are needed mainly for macroeconomic purposes, including national production accounts, as well as to describe the characteristics of all jobs (whether main or secondary) in specific forms of work or in a specific industry (agriculture, construction, manufacturing). For countries where own-production of goods is significant, the revised draft resolution proposes the preparation of combined tabulations for the total number of jobs (in employment and in own-production of goods) in specific industries, especially agriculture, manufacturing, construction and water supply. A similar suggestion is made for industry tabulations for domestic and personal services. Such special tabulations would shed light on the extent to which the production of goods or provision of services in specific industries is undertaken on an own-account basis by households.

212. Household-level tabulations are needed to understand better the dynamics of participation in different forms of work, such as how households allocate labour as part of their livelihood strategies. They also serve to assess more accurately the socio-economic outcomes associated with participation in each form of work, including poverty and material well-being at the level of the household. In particular, guidance is included on the preparation of tabulations that support: (a) gender analysis of work patterns taking into account basic features of the composition and structure of households, including the presence of dependent members; and (b) identification of households at risk of poverty.

10. Data evaluation, dissemination and reporting

213. To promote good practices in the production, dissemination and reporting of statistics at the national and international level, general recommendations are included that emphasize data quality and documentation, timely and wide dissemination of statistics and accompanying methodological information to all users and reporting of the information so as to permit international comparisons.

Evaluation, communication and dissemination

214. Current standards call for prompt and wide release of statistics of the labour force and focus on disseminating appropriate methodological information in order to evaluate data quality. The revised draft resolution builds on those general recommendations, highlighting the importance of countries' statistical agencies communicating the resulting labour force and work statistics, on an impartial basis, to all users including to other parts of government, civil society, social partners, news media and so on.

215. Emphasis is also placed on dissemination through a variety of formats, including electronically, to meet all user needs, as well as the timely release of the information in phases so as to meet the demand for fast preliminary reports of main aggregates, followed by full reports. Dissemination of public-use files that guarantee the confidentiality of the information is also advocated for promoting more in-depth analysis and use of the information.

216. In adopting the revised standards for the production and dissemination of national labour force statistics, statistical agencies will need to consider the most appropriate strategy to communicate the nature of the changes in the statistics and the reasons for them. This is likely to be of particular concern if introduction of the standards leads to a break in high-profile statistical series, such as employment, unemployment and time-related underemployment rates. Moreover, the introduction of new measures of labour underutilization and their relationship to existing measures such as the unemployment rate will need to be explained. More generally, States are urged to disseminate statistics of work and of the labour force routinely along with relevant metadata, including information about the concepts, definitions and methods of data collection and about its quality.

International reporting

217. For purposes of international comparison, the revised draft resolution includes guidelines recommending the routine reporting of statistics of work, of the labour force and of key derived indicators (particularly measures of labour underutilization) for the total population, by sex, by specified age group, by broad level of education, and by urban and rural areas.

218. Use of common five-year age bands for reporting the main aggregates is highlighted, starting from the 15–19 age group and ending with an open bracket for persons aged 75 years and above to accommodate future changes in participation levels in light of rising life expectancies around the world. Where concerns for data quality may preclude the use of five-year age bands, the resolution recommends broader bands for specific target groups, including 15–24 years, 25–34 years, 35–54 years, 55–64 years, 65–74 years and 75+ years. The use of common classifications that are convertible to the most recent standard international classifications is likewise recommended.

219. Finally, to facilitate the use of statistics for international comparison, the revised resolution exhorts States to document and report any differences between their national concepts, definitions, classifications and methods and those contained in the relevant international statistical standards.

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Appendix I

Resolution concerning statistics of work and of the labour force

Preamble

The 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians,

Having reviewed the relevant texts of the resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment adopted by the 13th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (1983); the resolution concerning the measurement of underemployment and inadequate employment situations adopted by the 16th Conference (1998), as well as the guidelines endorsed therein concerning treatment in employment and unemployment statistics of persons on extended absences from work; and the guidelines on the implications of employment promotion schemes on the measurement of employment and unemployment, endorsed by the 14th Conference (1987),

Recalling the requirements of the Labour Statistics Convention, 1985 (No. 160), and the accompanying Labour Statistics Recommendation, 1985 (No. 170), and the need for coherence with other international statistical standards, particularly with regard to the system of national accounts, working time, employment-related income, child labour, status in employment and informal employment,

Recognizing the need to revise and broaden the existing standards in order to facilitate better statistical measurement of participation of all persons in all forms of work and in all sectors of the economy; of labour underutilization; and of interactions between different forms of work; as well as to provide guidelines on a larger number of measures than previously defined internationally, thereby enhancing the relevance and usefulness of the standards for countries at all stages of development,

Calling attention to the usefulness of these standards to enhance the international comparability of the statistics and to their contribution to the measurement of decent work and of well-being of households and society in general, as well as to the achievement of gender justice,

Acknowledging that the relevance of measures of work in a given State will depend on the nature of its society, labour markets and all user needs, and that their implementation will therefore, to a certain extent, be determined by national circumstances;

Adopts this xx day of October 2013 the following resolution in substitution for the resolution of 1983, and for paragraph 8(1) of the resolution of 1998, as well as for the guidelines from 1987 and 1998 cited above:

Objectives

1. Each State should aim to develop a comprehensive system of statistics of work and of the labour force in order to provide an adequate information base for the various users of the statistics, taking account of the specific national needs and circumstances. In particular, the system should meet the needs for information to:

(a) monitor labour markets and labour underutilization comprising unemployment, in order to inform the design of economic and social policies and programmes related to employment creation, income generation, skills development including vocational education and training, and related decent work policies;

(b) provide comprehensive measurement of participation in all forms of work in order to estimate labour input for national production accounts, including existing “satellite” accounts, and the contribution of all forms of work to economic development, to household livelihoods and to the well-being of individuals and society; and

(c) assess participation in different forms of work among population subgroups such as women and men, young people, migrants and other groups of particular policy concern; and study the relationships between different forms of work and their social and economic outcomes.

2. To serve these objectives, national programmes of statistics of work and of the labour force should be developed in consultation with all users of the statistics and in harmony with other economic and social statistics and should provide for both short- and longer term needs, taking account of national resources to enable the sustainability of the programme.

3. In developing statistics of work and of the labour force, efforts should be made to incorporate these international standards in order to promote comparability among countries.

Conceptual framework

4. *Work* is defined as comprising all activities performed in economic units by persons of any sex, in order to produce goods or services for consumption by others, or for own consumption.

5. *Work* excludes: (i) activities that cannot be performed on one's behalf by another person, including all self-care, learning and activities for one's own recreation; (ii) all other activities that do not involve producing goods or services for one's own or for other units' consumption, such as begging and stealing.

6. The definition of *work* is aligned with the *general production boundary* of the System of National Accounts and its concept relating to economic units that distinguishes market and non-market enterprises and households.

7. *Work* is thus defined irrespective of the legality of the activity, its formal or informal nature, the economic unit within which it takes place, the intended destination of the production (for the market or for own consumption) or nature of the transaction (whether monetary, part of an exchange or transfer). Similarly, work may occur irrespective of the sex, age, country of origin or other characteristics of the persons performing it.

8. The conceptual framework for work statistics serves to meet the needs of diverse users by distinguishing between the different forms of work on the basis of the main purpose of the activity. *Main purpose* relates to the different ways in which households allocate labour to fulfil a variety of purposes, beyond the production of goods and services common to all, namely: self-provisioning, income generation, job-related skills acquisition, benefiting others.

9. This resolution, therefore, identifies and provides definitions for four distinct forms of work: *own-production work* (paragraphs 19–23), *employment* (paragraphs 24–29), *trainee work* (paragraphs 30–33) and *volunteer work* (paragraphs 34–37).

10. The conceptual framework for work statistics allows for additional forms of work not defined in this resolution that may be identified in future, to be included as separate building blocks as per their policy relevance. One such form may be work mandated by the State or a public authority that may include legally sanctioned community service for the main purpose of rehabilitation, reintegration or civic compensation.

11. For comprehensive measurement, all forms of work can be aggregated to arrive at the general concept of *work*. The various forms may be used separately or also combined as the basis for, in particular:

    (a) *employment* to produce statistics of the labour force that comprise unemployment statistics and other measures of labour underutilization;

    (b) *work within the SNA production boundary* (2008), which consists of employment, own-production of goods, trainee work and certain volunteer work activities as specified in paragraph 36(a) and (b)(i); and

    (c) *work beyond the SNA production boundary* (2008), comprising own-production of services and certain volunteer work activities as specified in paragraph 36(b)(ii).

12. Two basic observation units, the job and the person, are relevant to the measurement of work, depending on the objective and measure pursued. A job is defined as a set of tasks and duties performed, or meant to be performed, by one person for a single economic unit.

13. A person may have one or several jobs in one form of work, or in different forms of work, that is own-production jobs, employment jobs, trainee jobs, volunteer jobs. Within each form of work, the *main job* is the job with the longest *hours usually worked*, as defined in the international standards on working time. In own-production work, a person may have, at most, one job producing goods and one job providing services.

Scope and coverage

14. A national programme of work and of labour force statistics should, in principle, cover all jobs in all forms of work performed by the total population in the country.

Population

15. Alternative reference populations are:

    (a) the *resident population*, covering all persons of any sex who are usual residents of the country, regardless of national origin, citizenship or geographic location of their place of work. It includes all usual residents working in the national territory and usual residents working outside the national territory, such as cross-border workers, seasonal workers and other short-term migrant workers; and

    (b) the *domestic population*, covering all persons of any sex working in the national territory, regardless of national origin, citizenship or place of usual residence. It includes all usual and non-usual residents who work in resident producer units located in the national territory. It excludes usual residents working outside the national territory.

16. In specifying the concepts of *usual residence* and *resident producer units*, countries should aim to maintain consistency with international standards for population statistics and national accounts. Accordingly, the armed forces and the population in collective living quarters are, in principle, also included within the scope of the statistics.

Age

17. To reflect the working age population, a national programme of work and labour force statistics should introduce age limits that take into account the prevalence of participation in work activities of persons in young and older age groups. Age limits may be set with:

    (a) the lower boundary based on the minimum age for employment, including exceptions as specified in national laws or regulations, or on the age of completion of compulsory schooling, whichever is lower, thereby also enabling examination of age groups in transition from school to employment. Where appropriate, this boundary may be set in light of an existing programme for the production of statistics on children in productive activities as per the international standards on Child Labour; and

    (b) no upper age boundary to enable comprehensive coverage of work activities of the adult population, as well as examination of transitions from employment to retirement and post-retirement.

Concepts and operational definitions

18. In order to produce statistics of persons or jobs in each of the different forms of work, information about the productive activities performed by the population should be collected using a one hour criterion in the reference period of measurement as specified in paragraphs 67–69, to ensure comprehensive measurement of all inputs of labour and to account for all work activities carried out, including on a part-time, casual or sporadic basis, according to the definitions specified below.

Forms of work

Own-production work

19. *Own-production work* comprises all activities performed by persons for the main purpose of producing goods and services for own consumption (i.e. for consumption by the producer or producer household members).

20. For measurement purposes, *persons in own-production work* are defined as all those above a specified age who, during the reference period of measurement, worked for at least one hour for the purpose:

    (a) of producing goods mainly for own consumption; or

    (b) of providing services for own consumption.

21. *Own-production work* producing goods, covers production (mainly for own consumption, including processing for subsequent storage) of: (a) agricultural, hunting, fishing and forestry products, including firewood and other fuels; (b) manufacturing of other goods such as furniture, textiles, clothing and footwear, pottery, utensils or other durables, including boats, canoes, etc.; (c) construction of own dwellings, farm buildings, etc.; and (d) fetching water.

22. *Own-production work* providing services, covers such activities as: (a) household accounting and management; (b) self-services and shopping for the household; (c) preparing and serving meals; (d) cleaning, decorating and maintaining household premises; (e) cleaning, servicing and repairing household durables or other goods; (f) waste disposal and recycling for the household; (g) caring for and instructing children; (h) caring for elderly and sick household members; (i) pet care; and (j) transportation of household members or goods.

23. For operational purposes, the production of goods *mainly for own consumption* may be distinguished from the production of goods *mainly to generate income*, on the basis of whether the main purpose of the activity (as self-reported) is for own consumption, or for sale or barter. Accordingly, and to avoid double-counting of activities, producers of goods mainly for own consumption who also sell or barter some of the goods should be classified as in own-production work and, on the basis of that activity, excluded from the measure of employment.

Employment

24. *Employment* encompasses all activities performed by persons to produce goods and services for the main purpose of generating an income.

25. For measurement purposes, *persons in employment* are defined as comprising all those above a specified age who, during the reference period of measurement, were:

    (a) employed *"at work"*, i.e. worked for at least one hour to generate income in the form of wage or salary, profit or family gain, paid in cash or in kind; or

    (b) employed *"not at work"*, i.e. with a job to generate income but temporarily absent, generally for less than three months, for specific reasons.

26. Temporary absence from employment implies that the person had already worked in the present job or economic unit and was expected to be absent for a short duration. For operational purposes, evidence may be based on the temporary nature of the absence as self-declared or reported depending on the statistical source, and on the type of *reason for absence*. Additionally and in light of national circumstances, for certain reasons the accrued duration of the absence may also be needed to establish its short nature. Thus:

    (a) considered as short-term absences from employment are:

        (i) own illness or injury, holiday, vacation or annual leave, maternity leave and paternity leave;

    (b) considered as short-term absences, if the total accrued duration does not exceed the specified, short time limit are:

        (i) occupational injury, parental leave, personal leave including educational leave and care for others, strike or lockout, reduction in economic activity including temporary lay-off and slack work, disorganization or suspension of work for reasons such as bad weather, mechanical or electrical breakdown, shortage of raw materials or fuels, etc.

27. Considered as extended absences and thus not treated as within employment are:

(a) reasons such as:

(i) indefinite lay-off without an assurance of return to work with the same employer;

(ii) the off season of seasonal employment, where the activities related to that job cease to be performed; and

(iii) absences specified in 26(b) when the total accrued duration is longer than the short time limit set for temporary absence;

(b) it may be useful to separately identify persons on extended absences by type of absence, total elapsed duration, and characteristics of payment received, where relevant.

28. Included on the same basis as other persons in employment during the reference period and classified as “at work” or “not at work” are:

(a) family workers in the following categories:

(i) contributing family workers who provide their work without pay to the market-oriented enterprise that generates income for their household;

(ii) assisting family members who provide assistance without pay to a household member for his/her paid employment activities;

(b) persons in employment promotion programmes who worked for pay in cash or in kind, which may include a government social benefit, excluding schemes targeting job training or retraining;

(c) self-employed producers of goods mainly to generate income, even if they also use a part of their production for own consumption;

(d) persons in training or skills enhancement required by the job or for another job in the same economic unit. Such persons are classified as employed at work in accordance with the international standards on working time;

(e) persons on compensation for overtime and shift work. Such persons are classified as employed at work with zero hours actually worked, in accordance with the international standards on *working time*; and

(f) persons mainly engaged in other forms of work (own-production work, trainee work, volunteer work) or non-work activities (studies, self-care, cultural or recreational activities, etc.) who were also in employment, as defined in this resolution.

29. *Employment* excludes persons who during the reference period were exclusively engaged in own-production work, trainee work and/or volunteer work.

Trainee work

30. *Trainee work* comprises all activities performed by persons for the main purpose of gaining workplace experience or acquiring skills while contributing to the production of goods and services in economic units outside their own household. This includes training recognized by tradition or state authorities, whether paid, unpaid or paying, and whether or not ending in the acquisition of a specific qualification or certification.

31. For measurement purposes, *persons in trainee work* are defined as all those above a specified age who, during the reference period of measurement, worked for at least one hour in a market or non-market enterprise owned by non-household members, with the main purpose of obtaining workplace experience or acquiring a recognized set of occupational skills.

32. Persons are classified as in trainee work while engaged in the production of goods and services, as part of:

(a) apprenticeships, traineeships, internships or similar programmes, according to national circumstances; and

(b) job training or retraining schemes within employment promotion programmes.

33. *Trainee work* excludes:

(a) job training and skills enhancement covered by paragraph 28(d);

(b) periods of probation associated with the start of a job in employment;

(c) general on-the-job learning in:

(i) employment or volunteer work;

(ii) a market-oriented enterprise owned by household members; or

(iii) own-production work.

Volunteer work

34. *Volunteer work* comprises all activities performed by persons voluntarily and without pay to produce goods or services for the benefit of others, including their own community or association, but excluding activities performed solely for own household members.

35. For measurement purposes, *persons in volunteer work* are defined as all those above a specified age who, during the reference period of measurement, performed unpaid, non-compulsory work for at least one hour for the main purpose of benefiting other units, where:

(a) *unpaid* may be interpreted as the absence of pay in cash or in kind; nevertheless, volunteer workers may receive some form of reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses, a stipend to cover living expenses or in-kind compensation such as meals, transportation or symbolic gifts;

(b) *non-compulsory* may be interpreted as work carried out without legal or other obligation or coercion. Volunteer work may be carried out as part of social obligations, including cultural or community expectations; and

(c) *to benefit other units* may be interpreted as work performed to serve other economic units outside the person's own household. Volunteer workers may also benefit from the work performed, as in the case of self-help, mutual aid or community-based groups.

36. *Volunteer work* may be performed:

(a) through or for market or non-market enterprises; or

(b) directly for households that produce:

(i) goods for own consumption; or

(ii) services for own consumption.

37. *Volunteer work* excludes court-mandated community service, work mandated as part of a prison sentence, alternative military service and unpaid service required as part of higher education or training programmes.

Labour underutilization (unmet need for employment)

38. As part of a national labour force statistics programme, statistics on employment need to be complemented with measures of labour underutilization, of which unemployment is a main component. Measures of labour underutilization provide current information about the extent to which groups in the population exert pressure on labour markets, or express interest in employment. These measures serve to monitor overall labour market performance as well as to assess the effectiveness of labour market policies in meeting the need for employment of the population in the short and medium term.

39. Persons may reflect an unmet need for employment, irrespective of their participation in employment or in other forms of work. This unmet need can be expressed in a variety of ways, such as through seeking – or indicating an availability or desire – to increase working time or to take up employment.

40. Considered as in *labour underutilization* are persons in *time-related underemployment*, persons in *unemployment* and *persons marginally attached*, as defined below.

Persons in time-related underemployment

41. Time-related underemployment exists when the hours of work of an employed person are insufficient in relation to an alternative employment situation in which the person is willing and available to engage. It may occur due to fluctuations in the demand for labour associated with short-term business cycles or as a result of longer term, structural problems of labour absorption.

42. For measurement purposes *persons in time-related underemployment* are defined as comprising those in employment who, during the reference period of measurement, satisfy all three of the following criteria:

    (a) wanted to work additional hours;

    (b) whose hours actually worked in all jobs were less than a specified hours threshold; and

    (c) were available to work additional hours, given opportunities for additional work, within a specified, subsequent period of time.

43. For operational purposes:

    (a) wanting to work additional hours may be interpreted as in the same job, in an additional job, or replacement job(s), in employment;

    (b) the hours threshold may be specified in line with national circumstances, on the basis of the boundary between full-time and part-time employment, or median or modal values of hours usually worked in accordance with the international standards on working time; and

    (c) the reference period to establish availability should be short, comprising the subsequent one or two weeks, so as to take account of the time generally required to leave one job in order to start another.

44. Among persons in time-related underemployment, States may wish to separately identify the following subgroups:

    (a) persons who usually work less than the hours threshold specified for time-related underemployment, who want and are available to work additional hours, in order to bring to light structural situations of insufficient volume of employment;

    (b) persons who usually work more than the hours threshold specified for time-related underemployment, who during the reference period were not at work due to labour market-related reasons such as: reduction in economic activity including temporary lay-off and slack work; disorganization or suspension of work for reasons such as mechanical or electrical breakdown and shortage of raw materials or fuels; and

    (c) persons in time-related underemployment who actively sought to work additional hours.

Unemployment

45. Unemployment refers to a situation of total lack of employment among persons who are actively seeking and available for employment.

46. For measurement purposes, *persons in unemployment* are defined as comprising all those above a specified age who satisfy all three of the following criteria:

    (a) were “without employment”, i.e. were not in employment during the reference week or seven days;

    (b) carried out activities to “seek employment” during the last four weeks or one month, including the reference week or seven days; and

    (c) were “available for employment” within a short period of time determined according to national circumstances, i.e. were available to take up employment given an opportunity.

Search for employment

47. Seeking employment is not dependent on the duration or type of employment sought, or its location. It covers seeking paid employment, self-employment, part-time, informal, temporary, seasonal or casual employment and, in general, any type of employment as defined in this resolution, whether within the national territory or abroad.

48. Activities to seek employment may include any one of the following when carried out for the purpose of obtaining an offer of employment or creating a job opportunity: registration with a public or private employment service; applications to employers; checking at worksites, farms, factory gates, markets or other assembly places; placing or answering newspaper or online job advertisements; placing or updating résumés on online professional or social networking sites; seeking assistance of friends, relatives or other intermediaries; looking for land, premises, machinery, equipment or materials to start any type of own enterprise or business activity including in agriculture; arranging for financial resources; applying for permits, licences, etc.

49. For operational purposes and depending on the context, the distinction between seeking self-employment and the self-employment activity itself may be based on the point when the enterprise starts to exist – such as when it is registered to start operating, when the first order has been received, when financial resources have become available, or when the necessary infrastructure or materials are in place.

Availability for employment

50. The main purpose of the availability criterion to measure unemployment is to test for readiness to take up employment within a short reference period. It serves to exclude persons who may actively look for employment but who are not available to start within a reasonable, short period of time.

51. In line with the activity-based framework and in order to reduce errors of interpretation, it is recommended that questions on availability for employment be asked *after* questions on activities to seek employment.

52. In addition, to ensure adequate coverage of unemployment situations among different population groups, sensitivity tests should be carried out to determine an adequate reference period for the measurement of availability, which should comprise the reference week and a short subsequent period – for example, one or two weeks, as appropriate.

Treatment of specific groups

53. Considered as unemployed are those who satisfy the criteria in paragraph 46 above and who, during the reference period of measurement, were:

(a) on indefinite lay-off;

(b) during the off season of their seasonal employment jobs, if they cease to perform activities related to that income-generating job;

(c) on extended absence from a job in employment; and

(d) exclusively engaged in forms of work other than employment (own-production work, trainee work, volunteer work) and in other activities (studies, self-care, cultural or recreational activities, etc.).

54. Classified as unemployed irrespective of the job search criterion, are:

(a) *future starters*, that is, persons “without employment” who did not “seek employment” during the last four weeks or month because they had already made arrangements to start employment at a date subsequent to the reference period of measurement, and who were “available for employment”; and

(b) *participants in job training or retraining schemes* as part of employment promotion programmes, who had a commitment to employment at the end of the training, whether or not “available for employment”.

55. Included among the unemployed, States may identify long-term unemployment comprising all unemployed persons who carried out activities to seek employment during a long period, such as six months or one year, to be specified according to national circumstances. For operational purposes, the duration of unemployment may be defined as from when the person began seeking employment or, if that job search was interrupted by a period of employment, since the person was last employed, whichever is the shorter.

Marginal attachment

56. *Persons marginally attached* are defined as comprising all those above a specified age who were neither in employment nor in unemployment and who, during the relevant reference period of measurement, were:

    (a) seeking employment but not available; or

    (b) not seeking but available for employment.

57. Among persons marginally attached, States may separately identify discouraged jobseekers, defined as those persons who, although available, did not seek employment due to labour market-related reasons such as: past failure to find a suitable job; lack of experience, qualifications or jobs matching the person's skills; lack of jobs in the area; recent job loss; or being considered too young or too old by prospective employers.

58. In order to identify persons marginally attached to the labour force, questions on search for employment and availability should be asked of all persons not classified as employed in the reference period of measurement. In areas with limited labour markets, and where it is commonplace for persons not in employment to be fully engaged in other activities, particularly in own-production work, additional questions to assess desire for employment to generate income may be asked of all persons not in employment, regardless of their job search activities and availability, in order to assess their degree of labour market attachment.

Data collection

Reporting periodicities

59. A national programme of statistics of work and of the labour force should provide statistics for current purposes compiled frequently and on a recurrent basis as well as statistics compiled at longer intervals for structural in-depth analysis and as benchmark data.

60. Specifically, States should aim to produce:

    (a) on a sub-annual basis statistics on employment and labour underutilization, including unemployment and, where relevant, on participation in own-production of goods, to monitor short-term trends and seasonal variations;

    (b) on an annual basis statistics on the labour force for structural analysis of labour markets and on the total number of jobs and working time contributing to SNA production for national accounts purposes;

    (c) on a less frequent basis for in-depth analysis, for benchmarking, for comprehensive macro-socio-economic estimations, in light of national circumstances, statistics on:

        (i) participation in forms of work other than employment; and

        (ii) particular topics, such as labour migration, child labour, transitions in and out of employment, youth, gender, households, work in rural areas, usual activity, the relationship between employment, income and other social and economic characteristics, etc.

61. Countries with established, regular annual data collection programmes should, in addition, aim to implement mechanisms to enable the measurement of gross labour market flows, reflecting national policy priorities (such as to measure month-to-month, quarter-to-quarter and/or year-to-year changes), so as to shed light on labour market dynamics and transitions, job stability, etc. Such mechanisms will entail, for the various statistical sources below, the use of panel sub-samples in labour force or other household surveys producing labour force statistics, panel surveys or individual-level data from population registers, as feasible.

Sources

62. Statistics of work and of the labour force may be compiled using a single or a variety of data sources, depending on the existing statistical infrastructure, the objectives pursued, the prevalence of each form of work and the extent of seasonal or other temporal variations in activity levels.

63. Household-based surveys are generally best suited to collect statistics of work and of the labour force covering the *resident population*; their participation in all jobs and in all forms of work, in particular, informal employment, own-production work, trainee work and volunteer work.

(a) Household-based surveys, in particular labour force surveys, are the main source of statistics for purposes of monitoring labour markets, labour underutilization and own-production of goods. They are the most adequate source when the objective is to capture general levels and patterns of participation of the population in forms of work other than employment, and their labour force characteristics. For these purposes, short add-on modules or supplements on own-production work, trainee work and volunteer work may be attached to labour force surveys for completion by all or a sub-sample of respondents, on a periodic or continuous basis, as appropriate, with due regard to respondent burden and overall survey quality.

(b) Specialized household surveys may be more appropriate for comprehensive measurement and in-depth analysis of participation in specific forms of work, or to focus on particular subgroups of the population such as migrant workers. This includes surveys of time-use, of volunteer work, of agricultural employment and labour migration, among others.

(c) Other household surveys that focus mainly on a topic not directly concerned with work, such as health or housing, may serve to produce summary measures of employment and unemployment as explanatory variables.

(d) The population census represents a main source of statistics for benchmarking purposes, for preparing master samples for household surveys and for producing estimates for small geographic areas and small groups. This is particularly pertinent regarding non-nationals living in the country, persons living in collective living quarters and those without fixed premises as well as for detailed occupational groups. Space and operational considerations, however, place limits on the work-related topics included, so measurement may be limited to questions on the labour force and own-production work in accordance with the latest international recommendations for this source. Where the population census represents the primary or only data source, however, States should endeavour to measure participation in the different forms of work.

64. Administrative records are useful to produce for long reference periods of one month, quarter or year, more frequent and detailed statistics on specific target groups of registered workers, for all jobs covered by the system. Job-based registers, pension schemes, social security and tax system registers provide statistics of employment for persons covered by the scheme or register concerned. Depending on national circumstances, data cover participants in employment promotion and paid apprenticeship schemes, in organized traineeship programmes, as well as recipients of unemployment benefits. Data on usual resident cross-border workers, short-term, contract migrant workers abroad and work permit holders can be obtained from overseas employment administrations and labour offices.

65. Establishment surveys are a relevant source of data, particularly on paid employment, including on non-usual residents working in resident producer units for reference periods of a week, month, other pay period, or year. Along with administrative records, they are essential for producing estimates of total employment (total jobs in the State) according to the *domestic population* concept.

66. The different statistical sources should be regarded as complementary, to be used in combination to derive comprehensive sets of statistics, where feasible. To this end and to the extent possible, the national statistical authorities need to ensure the use of common concepts, definitions, classifications and reference periods of measurement across the various sources of work and labour force statistics.

Reference period and periodicity of collection

67. A short reference period of measurement of one week or seven days, observed at frequent intervals, is of particular use to produce statistics on a current basis that support the monitoring and analysis of changes and trends in the labour market and in work activities, and the development of dynamic measures. Continuous or monthly data collection, combined with a short reference period of measurement, provides for optimal coverage of seasonal and other temporal variations for purposes of producing sub-annual and annual estimates.

68. When the periodicity of data collection is not frequent, States should aim to estimate the periods not covered and to increase the frequency of data collection over the year (high/low season, quarterly, etc.) rather than to expand the reference period of measurement. When this is not feasible, annual estimates, particularly of employment and own-production of goods for use in national production accounts, may be prepared using various estimation techniques – based, for example, on information collected using retrospective recall methods (job-based or month-by-month recall).

69. Alternative reference periods may be used when specific forms of work are carried out sporadically or irregularly and data collection is not frequent; for volunteer work, in particular, a four-week or calendar month reference period is recommended.

Derived measures and indicators

70. A variety of derived measures and indicators may be computed using the concepts and definitions given above. To serve the principal objectives of the statistics, States should develop a set of measures and indicators to be compiled routinely for the total population, separately by sex, geographic region, including urban and rural distinctions, specified age groups, and other relevant characteristics.

71. In addition to measures of the total number of persons in employment, in other forms of work as relevant, in time-related underemployment, in unemployment and in marginal attachment, the set of measures and indicators should include, as a minimum, measures of the following groups:

(a) *labour force*, i.e. the sum of persons employed and unemployed. The labour force may be further divided into the civilian labour force and the armed forces;

(b) *persons outside the labour force*, i.e. all persons of working age not classified as employed or unemployed;

(c) *extended labour force*, i.e. the sum of the labour force and persons marginally attached;

(d) *extended unemployment*, i.e. the sum of the unemployed and persons marginally attached; and

(e) *labour underutilization*, i.e. the sum of persons in time-related underemployment, the unemployed and persons marginally attached.

72. Specific measures for monitoring labour markets, including labour underutilization, should also be computed, including:

(a) *employment to population ratio*, in reference to the working age population;

(b) *labour force participation rate*, in reference to the working age population;

(c) *unemployment rate*, in reference to the labour force. Unemployment rates relevant to first-time jobseekers and to job losers may also be derived, wherever considered useful and feasible;

(d) *marginal attachment rate*, in reference to the extended labour force;

(e) *extended unemployment rate*, in reference to the extended labour force;

(f) *rate of time-related underemployment*, in reference to the extended labour force for use as a measure of labour underutilization, and in reference to the employed for use with other indicators relating to characteristics of employment;

(g) *labour underutilization rate*, in reference to the extended labour force; and

(h) *long-term unemployment rate*, in reference to the labour force.

73. Derived measures for monitoring levels of participation in forms of work other than employment may also be computed, such as a *rate of own producers of goods* and a *volunteer rate*, using the working age population as the reference.

74. Estimates of labour input into production within and beyond the SNA should be prepared in accordance with the international standards on working time.

Tabulations and classifications

75. As part of national programmes of work and labour force statistics, States should develop comprehensive tabulation and classification plans in consultation with all users. In particular statistics on:

    (a) employment and other forms of work may be tabulated according to: (i) the total population engaged in each form of work; or (ii) the total number of jobs in each form of work, and may relate to the resident population or the domestic population; and

    (b) the labour force and on labour underutilization should be tabulated according to the total number of persons and relate to the resident population.

76. To adequately reflect the situation of all population groups, statistics of work, of the labour force and of labour underutilization should be systematically tabulated by significant characteristics, particularly sex, region, including urban and rural distinctions, specified age groups, level of educational attainment and orientation of educational programme.

77. For descriptive analysis of the labour force, general tabulations of the working age population should be prepared by labour force status and category of labour underutilization. In addition, statistics of the employed, the unemployed and persons outside the labour force may be further tabulated by characteristics of their main or last job in employment, such as industry, occupation, status in employment, sector of employment (formal/informal/household), institutional sector, geographic place of work (national territory/abroad) as appropriate, relevant measures of working time and income, etc.

78. Additionally, tabulations for the unemployed may be prepared by duration of unemployment that enable separate identification of persons in long-term unemployment, of: four weeks/one month; more than four weeks/one month to less than six months; six months to less than 12 months; and 12 months or more.

79. To address different policy purposes, the population outside the labour force may be further subdivided according to alternative classifications below that may be combined to bring to light specific subgroups affected by discouragement or by gender-based, economic or social barriers to employment:

    (a) *degree of labour market attachment:* comprising persons marginally attached, i.e.: (i) persons seeking employment but not available; and (ii) persons not seeking employment but available. This can also include: (iii) persons neither seeking nor available who want employment; and (iv) persons neither seeking nor available who do not want employment;

    (b) *main reason for not seeking or being available for employment:* illness; disability; studies; family related reasons (pregnancy, presence of small children, refusal by family); labour market reasons (past failure to find a suitable job, lack of experience, of qualifications or of jobs matching the person’s skills, no jobs in the area, recent job loss, considered too young or too old by prospective employers); lack of infrastructure (assets, roads, transportation, employment services); other sources of income (pensions, rents), disenfranchisement; and

    (c) *main activity status as self-perceived:* in studies, unpaid trainee work, own-production of goods, own-production of services, volunteer work, self-care (due to illness or disability), in leisure activities (social, cultural, recreational).

80. For analysis of participation of persons in forms of work other than employment and for assessments of their contribution to the economy, these statistics should be further tabulated by specified bands of hours actually worked and by broad industry aggregates (agriculture, industry and services).

81. For national production accounts, tabulations are needed of volunteer workers, by category, in market or non-market enterprises, in households that produce goods for own consumption and in households that produce services for own consumption.

82. To shed light on their integration into the labour market, additional tabulations of persons in forms of work other than employment are needed by their labour force status, labour underutilization category and related characteristics.

83. For analysis by industry, where work in own-production of goods is significant special tabulations are needed that combine the total number of jobs (in employment and in own-production of goods) for specific industries, particularly for agriculture, forestry and fishing, for construction, manufacturing, and water supply. Similar tabulations combining jobs in own-production of services and of such services for the market may also be prepared.

84. Since participation in employment and in other forms of work often depends on family or household-level characteristics, and in many countries, particularly in rural areas of developing countries where work is largely organized on a family or household basis, essential tabulations may be prepared for:

(a) employed persons by marital status and by presence of dependent or accompanying persons (young children, the elderly and others requiring care); and

(b) households by family structure and labour force status of all members; of the jobless households and of households with members engaged in own-production of goods by size, composition and other social and economic characteristics.

Evaluation, communication and dissemination

85. States should adhere to scientific statistical standards in producing work and labour force statistics. In order to facilitate and promote a careful interpretation of the statistical results produced as part of the national statistical programme, it is essential to ensure that procedures are in place to monitor the quality of the statistical production process from planning through data collection, processing, estimation and dissemination.

86. The implementation of a sound, publicized communication strategy for the dissemination of official statistics, which involves all partners and the public, is as important as the data collection programmes themselves. This strategy is based on the need to ensure that statistics of work and the labour force are made available by official statistical agencies on an impartial basis to all users of the statistics, including other government units. Furthermore, the impact of revisions, new time-series or indicators deriving from this resolution and changes in historical series, should be clearly explained. As far as possible, public-use files that guarantee the confidentiality of the information (i.e. anonymized, confidentialized micro-datasets) should also be made available to analysts and other interested users.

87. Official statistics on different forms of work and the labour force, including on labour underutilization, should be disseminated in electronic format to the extent possible and permissible; they may be released in stages, with rapid, preliminary reports for main aggregates, followed by full reports of the detailed, final statistics in recommended tabulations. Other important forms of release and communication may be through multimedia, the Internet, through informational events, etc. The frequency of release of statistics on the different forms of work may vary according to their relevance to national circumstances.

88. To enhance the transparency of work and labour force statistics, whether produced on a recurring or single (stand-alone) basis, States are urged to report them accompanied by appropriate methodological information, with particular regard to: scope and coverage; concepts and definitions, data collection method used; sample size and design where relevant; any estimation or adjustment methods, including seasonal adjustments and imputation procedures; as well as measures of data quality, including response rates, standard errors that account for complex survey designs, where relevant, and non-sampling errors, where possible.

89. In disseminating all official statistics, States should respect the confidentiality of persons and establishments, as well as the requirements set out in the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics.

International reporting

90. For international reporting, States should endeavour to routinely report statistics of work, the labour force and derived indicators, in particular measures of labour underutilization, for the total population, by sex, by specified age groups, by broad levels of education and, to the extent possible, by urban and rural areas.

91. To enable international comparisons of statistics of work and the labour force, these should be reported according to standard age ranges of five-year age bands for the main aggregates, where the lowest age bracket refers to persons aged 15–19 years and the last age bracket to persons aged 75 years and above. Where concerns for data quality impede disaggregation by five-year age bands, broader bands may be used; in all cases these should include 15–24 years, 25–34 years, 35–54 years, 55–64 years, 65–74 years and 75+ years.

92. The classifications applied to statistics of work and the labour force should adhere to, or be convertible to, the most recent standard international classifications, such as the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO), the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC), the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE) and the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED).

93. In order to enhance the transparency and promote the comparability of the statistics reported internationally, States are urged to compile and disseminate requisite information on national concepts, definitions and methodology and any departures from international standards. States should endeavour, therefore, to design their data collection and processing procedures so as to enable them to document fully any differences between relevant national statistical definitions and these international standards or, where possible, to compute and report main aggregates on the basis of both the national and the international standards.