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**Relevant resolutions and guidelines
adopted by the International Conference of
Labour Statisticians (ICLS)**

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Resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population,
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(October 1982)

The Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians.

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Recalling the existing international standards concerning statistics of the labour force employment and unemployment contained in Resolution I adopted by the Eighth Conference (1954) and concerning measurement and analysis of underemployment and underutilisation of manpower contained in Resolution III adopted by the Eleventh Conference (1966),

Recognising the need to revise and broaden the existing standards in order to enhance their usefulness in the provision of technical guidelines to all countries and particularly those with less developed statistics and recognising the usefulness of such standards in enhancing the international comparability of the statistics,

Adopts this twenty-ninth day of October 1982 the following resolution in substitution for Resolution I of the Eighth Conference and paragraphs 4 to 9 and 13 of Resolution III of the Eleventh Conference:

Objectives and scope

1. Each country should aim at developing a comprehensive system of statistics on the economic activity of the population in order to provide an adequate statistical base for the various users of the statistics taking account of the specific national needs and circumstances. In particular the system should provide for needs in connection with the measurement of the extent of available and unused labour time and human resources for purposes of macro-economic monitoring and human resources development planning and the measurement of the relationships between employment income and other social and economic characteristics for purposes of formulating and monitoring employment policies and programmes, income-generating and maintenance schemes, vocational training and other similar programmes.

2. In order to fulfil the above objectives the programme of statistics of the economically active population should in principle cover all branches of economic activity, all sectors of the economy and all status groups (employees, own-account workers, etc.) and should be developed to the fullest extent possible in harmony with other economic and social statistics. The programme should specifically provide for both short-term and longer-term needs, i.e. statistics for current purposes compiled frequently on a recurrent basis and statistics compiled at longer intervals for structural in-depth analysis and as benchmark data:

- (a) the current statistics programme should encompass statistics of the currently active population and its components in such a way that trends and seasonal variations can be adequately monitored. As a minimum programme, countries should collect and compile statistics on the currently active population twice a year, if possible coinciding with the agricultural peak and slack seasons wherever considered appropriate;
- (b) the non-current statistics programme which may include censuses and surveys should provide (i) comprehensive data on the economically active population, (ii) in-depth statistics on the activity pattern of the economically active population over the year and the relationships between employment, income and other social and economic characteristics, and (iii) data on other particular topics (e.g. children and youth, women, households) as determined by the long-term and continuing needs.

3. Population censuses and sample surveys of households or individuals generally constitute a comprehensive means of collection of data on the economically active population which can be linked with data on other related topics. Establishment surveys and administrative records may also serve as sources for obtaining in some cases more precise, more frequent and more detailed statistics on particular components of the economically active population. The different sources of information should be regarded as complementary and may be used in combination for deriving where necessary integrated sets of statistics. In designing population censuses, surveys of households or individuals or other means of data collection on the economically active population, efforts should be made in so far as possible to incorporate the international standards.

4. In order to promote comparability of the statistics among countries where national concepts and definitions do not conform closely to the international standards, explanations should be given and the main aggregates should if possible be computed on the basis of both the national and the international standards. Alternatively, the necessary components should be identified and provided separately in order to permit conversion from the national to the international standards.

Concepts and definitions

The economically active population

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

6. Two useful measures of the economically active population are the usually active population measured in relation to a long reference period such as a year and the currently active population or equivalently the "labour force" measured in relation to a short reference period such as one week or one day.

The usually active population

7. (1) The usually active population comprises all persons above a specified age whose main activity status as determined in terms of number of weeks or days during a long specified period (such as the preceding 12 months or the preceding calendar year) was employed or unemployed as defined in paragraphs 9 and 10.

(2) Where this concept is considered useful and feasible the usually active population may be subdivided as employed and unemployed in accordance with the main activity.

The labour force (the currently active population)

8. The labour force or "currently active population" comprises all persons who fulfil the requirements for inclusion among the employed or the unemployed as defined in paragraphs 9 and 10 below.

Employment

9. (1) The "employed" 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":
- (a1) "at work": persons who during the reference period performed some work for wage or salary, in cash or in kind;
- (a2) "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.

This formal job attachment should be determined in the light of national circumstances, according to one or more of the following criteria:

- (i) the continued receipt of wage or salary;
- (ii) an assurance of return to work following the end of the contingency, or an agreement as to the date of return;
- (iii) the elapsed duration of absence from the job which, wherever relevant, may be that duration for which workers can receive compensation benefits without obligations to accept other jobs;
- (b) "self-employment":
- (b1) "at work": persons who during the reference period performed some work for profit or family gain, in cash or in kind;
- (b2) "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.
- (2) For operational purposes, the notion of "some work" may be interpreted as work for at least one hour.
- (3) Persons temporarily not at work because of illness or injury, holiday or vacation, strike or lockout, educational or training leave, maternity or parental leave, reduction in economic activity, temporary disorganisation or suspension of work due to such reasons as bad weather, mechanical or electrical breakdown, or shortage of raw materials or fuels, or other temporary absence with or without leave should be considered as in paid employment provided they had a formal job attachment.
- (4) Employers, own account workers and members of producers' co-operatives should be considered as in self-employment and classified as "at work" or "not at work", as the case may be.
- (5) Unpaid family workers at work should be considered as in self-employment irrespective of the number of hours worked during the reference period. Countries which prefer for special reasons to set a minimum time criterion for the inclusion of unpaid family workers among the employed should identify and separately classify those who worked less than the prescribed time.
- (6) Persons engaged in the production of economic goods and services for own and household consumption should be considered as in self-employment if such production comprises an important contribution to the total consumption of the household.
- (7) Apprentices who received pay in cash or in kind should be considered in paid employment and classified as

"at work" or "not at work" on the same basis as other persons in paid employment.

(8) Students, homemakers and others mainly engaged in non-economic activities during the reference period, who at the same time were in paid employment or self-employment as defined in subparagraph (1) above should be considered as employed on the same basis as other categories of employed persons and be identified separately, where possible.

(9) Members of the armed forces should be included among persons in paid employment. The armed forces should include both the regular and the temporary members as specified in the most recent revision of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO).

Unemployment

10. (1) The "unemployed" comprise 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 as defined in paragraph 9;
- (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. The specific steps may 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 own enterprise; arranging for financial resources; applying for permits and licences, etc.

(2) In situations where the conventional means of seeking work are of limited relevance, where the labour market is largely unorganised or of limited scope, where labour absorption is, at the time, inadequate or where the labour force is largely self-employed, the standard definition of unemployment given in subparagraph (1) above may be applied by relaxing the criterion of seeking work.

(3) In the application of the criterion of current availability for work, especially in situations covered by subparagraph (2) above, appropriate tests should be developed to suit national circumstances. Such tests may be based on notions such as present desire for work and previous work experience, willingness to take up work for wage or salary on locally prevailing terms, or readiness to undertake self-employment activity given the necessary resources and facilities.

(4) Notwithstanding the criterion of seeking work embodied in the standard definition of unemployment, persons without work and currently available for work who had made arrangements to take up paid employment or undertake self-employment activity at a date subsequent to the reference period should be considered as unemployed.

(5) Persons temporarily absent from their jobs with no formal job attachment who were currently available for work and seeking work should be regarded as unemployed in accordance with the standard definition of unemployment. Countries may, however, depending on national circumstances and policies, prefer to relax the seeking work criterion in the case of persons temporarily laid off. In such cases, persons temporarily laid off who were not seeking work but classified as unemployed should be identified as a separate subcategory.

(6) Students, homemakers and others mainly engaged in non-economic activities during the reference period who satisfy the criteria laid down in subparagraphs (1) and (2) above should be regarded as unemployed on the same basis as other categories of unemployed persons and be identified separately, where possible.

Population not economically active

11. The "population not economically active" comprises all persons, irrespective of age, including those below the age specified for measuring the economically active population who were not "economically active", as defined in paragraph 5.

The population not currently active

12. (1) The "population not currently active", or, equivalently, persons not in the labour force, comprises all persons who were not employed or unemployed during the brief reference period and 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.

(2) Countries adopting the standard definition of unemployment may identify persons not classified as unemployed who were available for work but not seeking work during the reference period and classify them separately under the population not currently active.

The population not usually active

13. (1) The "population not usually active" comprises all persons whose main activity status during the longer specified period was neither employed nor unemployed. It comprises the following functional categories: (a) students; (b) homemakers; (c) income recipients (pensioners, rentiers, etc.); and (d) others (recipients of public aid or private support, children not attending school, etc.) as defined by the United Nations *Principles and recommendations for population and housing censuses* (1980).

(2) Where necessary, separate functional subcategories may be introduced to identify (i) persons engaged in unpaid community and volunteer services and (ii) other persons engaged in marginal activities which fall outside the boundary of economic activities.

Please note that paragraphs 14 to 20 on Underemployment are revised by the more recent "Resolution on Underemployment and Inadequate Employment situations", 16th ICLS, 1998, which can also be consulted on the Bureau of Statistics' website.

Analytical concepts

21. Based on the concepts and definitions given in paragraphs 5 to 20 above, a variety of analytical concepts and measures can be derived. For instance:

(1) The economically active population may be divided into two broad segments: the armed forces and the economically active civilian population.

(2) The economically active population may be related to the total population for the derivation of a crude participation rate, or, more appropriately, to the population above the age prescribed for the measurement of the economically active population.

(3) The employed population may be related to the population above the specified age for the derivation of an employment-population ratio.

(4) The unemployed population may be related to the economically active population for the derivation of a general unemployment rate. Unemployment rates, relevant to paid employment on the one hand and self-employment on the other, may be derived, wherever considered useful and feasible.

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(6) A composite rate of unemployment and visible underemployment compiled as the ratio of unemployed labour time available for employment to the total labour time employed or available for employment.

The rates, ratios and proportions suggested above may be compiled separately by sex in respect of specified age groups.

22. The technique of labour time disposition suggested in paragraph 20, if carried out through a series of current surveys covering a representative sample of reference periods spread over a year, can be used for the estimation of labour time employed or unemployed over the year. The estimates may be expressed in terms of person-days or person-hours or, if so desired, converted into standard full-time person-years.

Employment and income relationships

23. In order to realise the objectives of analysis of the relationships between employment and income mentioned in paragraph 1, countries should develop programmes of data collection on employment and income that reveal related economic and social aspects. In particular, data should be compiled on employment, income from employment and household income for the purpose of (a) analysing the income-generating capacity of different economic activities and (b) identifying the number and characteristics of persons who are unable to maintain their economic well-being on the basis of the employment opportunities available to them.

24. (1) In order to obtain comprehensive measures of the relationships between employment and income, the measurements of employment, income from employment and household income should refer to the work experience of the population over a long reference period, preferably a year, taking into account not only the principal occupation but also any secondary occupations and other sources of income.

(2) Income from employment includes wages, salaries and other earnings in cash and kind of persons in paid employment and net entrepreneurial income of persons in self-employment.

(3) The concepts and definitions of income and its components are given in the resolutions concerning an integrated system of wages statistics and concerning household income and expenditure surveys adopted by the Twelfth Conference (1973) and in the United Nations Provisional guidelines on statistics of the distribution of income, consumption and accumulation of households (1977).

(4) The statistics on employment and income should be analysed to the extent possible, in conjunction with duration of work, household size, number of earners, assets and other demographic, social and economic characteristics of the individual and the household.

(5) The statistics on employment and income should be consistent with and, in so far as possible, be integrated into the framework of the statistics of the economically active population set forth in paragraphs 5 to 22 above.

Data collection, analysis and classifications

25. The International Labour Office should prepare a manual on statistics of the economically active population,

employment, unemployment and underemployment detailing such aspects as methodology of data collection, tabulation and analysis.

26. (1) The analysis of the economically active population and the population not economically active should include classifications by significant demographic, social and economic characteristics as well as appropriate cross-classifications by two or more related characteristics.

(2) In particular, the population above the age specified for the measurement of the economically active population should be cross-classified by usual activity status (employed, unemployed, students, homemakers, etc.) and current activity status (employed, unemployed and not currently active).

27. For the purpose of international comparisons, the classifications of the statistics of the economically active population should adhere to or be convertible into the standard international classifications most recently adopted such as:

- (a) International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO)-ILO;
- (b) International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC)-United Nations;
- (c) International classification according to status (as employer, employee, etc.) — definitions of status by the United Nations — except that for the classification of unpaid family workers the minimum time criterion (at least one-third of the normal working hours) no longer need be applied;
- (d) Provisional Guidelines on Standard International Age Classifications-United Nations.

28. For classifications according to other characteristics such as duration of work, duration of unemployment, the International Labour Office should develop appropriate international standard classifications taking into account the current national practices and needs.

Data on particular topics

29. In order to adequately study the transition phases from learning to earning activities and to develop appropriate policy measures where necessary, specific statistics should be obtained periodically on children and youth in relation to school attendance and their participation in economic activity. For this purpose, it may be necessary to collect additional data on children and youth below the specified minimum age limit adopted for measuring the economically active population.

30. (1) For the purpose of developing and monitoring programmes concerned with the participation of women in development and the promotion of equality between the sexes, an adequate statistical base on women's participation in economic activities is essential. In this respect, therefore, the statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment, underemployment and related topics should be compiled separately for males and for females.

(2) Further, in order to obtain more accurate statistics on women's participation in economic activities, measurement methods should be carefully reviewed to ensure unbiased coverage of men and women. Sex biases in the form of underestimation of women's participation in economic activity may result, for example, from incomplete coverage of unpaid economic activities, failure of respondents and enumerators to take account of women's multiple activities and use of proxy respondents. Where necessary, research should be carried out in order to identify the extent, nature and sources of the possible biases, if any, and to develop appropriate methods of reducing them.

31. Since the participation in economic activity of individuals often depends on the circumstances of other

members of the family or household and in many countries, particularly in rural areas of developing countries, economic activity is largely organised on a family or household basis, statistics on economically active population, employment, unemployment, underemployment and related topics should be supplemented periodically by statistics on families and households: for example, identifying the unemployed in terms of their relationship to other members of the household or family, presence of other working members of the household or family, number of children in the household or family, as well as identifying households and families in terms of number of members unemployed, sex and other characteristics of the primary earner in the household or family, etc.

32. In order to provide improved and more detailed information on employment, unemployment and underemployment and for other purposes such as identifying multiple activities and marginal activities, attempts should be made to collect periodically statistics on time-use.

33. In order to account for the informal sector activities both in developed and developing countries and the rural non-agricultural activities generally carried out by households in conjunction with agricultural activities in developing countries, and given the scarcity of statistics on these topics, it is desirable that countries develop appropriate methodologies and data collection programmes on the urban informal sector and the rural non-agricultural activities. In particular, suitable definitions and classifications should be developed in order to identify and classify the economically active population in the urban informal sector and those engaged in the rural non-agricultural activities.

34. In order to provide adequate employment opportunities and means of livelihood for the disabled and other handicapped persons, statistics should be collected and compiled using appropriate methodologies on the size of this population and its distribution according to relevant social and economic characteristics distinguishing in particular those employed, those unemployed and those inactive.

35. (1) It is recommended that in countries with a planned economy, extensive use should be made of the balance sheet of labour resources so as to identify the size and structure of the labour force and its geographical distribution by type of employment and sector of the national economy.

(2) The population of working age, with the exception of the disabled who do not work, and also the population not of working age, are included as labour resources. The balance sheet of labour resources may be broken down separately according to sex, identifying persons employed in subsidiary farming and in housework, disabled persons of working age but who do not work and persons not of working age.

(3) The data in the balance sheets make it possible to identify the proportion of labour resources which may be utilised in the future to work in national production.

36. It is suggested that countries consider collecting information on the population not economically active, taking account of national needs and circumstances, to assist governments in designing their human resources and development policies. Countries should develop classifications designed to permit cross-tabulation reflecting the relative strength of attachment to the labour market of the groups identified in paragraphs 12(1) and 13(1) above.

Evaluation and dissemination

37. Like any other set of data, statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment, underemployment and related topics are subject to errors. While the data collection programme should be carefully designed to minimise possible errors, some are bound to occur. A careful interpretation of the results, therefore, requires some knowledge about the quality of the data. An evaluation of data quality is also necessary to improve upon data collection, processing and estimation procedures in subsequent rounds of the programme. The evaluation procedure should as far as possible form part of the data collection programme itself.

38. Statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment, underemployment and related topics should be issued promptly and made widely available. The statistics may be issued in stages by means of preliminary reports as soon as the main aggregates are available, followed by one or more final reports giving the revised and detailed statistics, in tabular form and, to the extent possible and permissible, in machine readable form.

39. Every release of statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment, underemployment and related topics, whether recurring or single-time, should clearly indicate the nature of the data and make reference to any detailed technical descriptions. In particular, descriptions should be given of the scope and coverage, the concepts and definitions, the method of data collection, the sample size and design where sampling is used, the methods of estimation and adjustments, including seasonal adjustments where applied, measures of data quality, including sampling and non-sampling errors where possible, as well as descriptions of changes in historical series, deviations from international standards and relationships with other sources of similar data and related bodies of statistics.

GUIDELINES ENDORSED BY THE INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF LABOUR STATISTICIANS :

Guidelines on the implications of employment promotion schemes on the
measurement of employment and unemployment, endorsed by the
Fourteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians
(October-November 1987)

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7. There was general agreement that the definitions of employment and unemployment adopted by the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (1982) did not at present require revision for the purpose of classifying the participants in the employment promotion schemes described in Chapter IV into the major categories: employed, unemployed, not in the labour force. It was, however, felt that the application of those standards in particular circumstances could usefully be elaborated.

8. In this context it was stressed that according to the international definition of employment, being "at work" meant having contributed to the production of goods and services as defined by national accounting, in exchange for a wage or salary, in cash or in kind, for at least one hour during the reference period (one week or one day).

9. The "one hour of work" criterion of the international definition of employment was carefully examined and there was unanimous agreement that this criterion should not be changed, as it would destroy the basic structure of the labour force framework embedded in the international standards on statistics of employment and unemployment and it would lead to inconsistencies with the United Nations System of National Accounts and standards concerning other related bodies of statistics. It was emphasized however that the employment data should be classified by hours of work and that countries should make further use of the concept of visible underemployment as already recommended by the international standards.

10. With respect to the statistical treatment of participants in job-training schemes, it was generally agreed that:

- a) when training took place within the context of the enterprise, it could be assumed that participants, like apprentices, were associated with the production of goods and services of the enterprise, at least for an hour during the reference period (one week or one day), and in that case the participants should be considered as "at work" and classified as employed, whether the employer or another entity paid the wage or salary;
- b) when training did not take place within the context of the enterprise, or inside the enterprise but without association with the production activity of the enterprise), the statistical treatment would depend on whether or not the participant was employed by the enterprise before the training period (including cases classified as employed under a) above):
 - (i) if employed by the enterprise before the training period, the participant should continue to be considered as employed while on training if he or she maintained a "formal job attachment", as set forth in the international definition of employment in paragraph 9(1)(a2) of Resolution I of the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians.

In this context, to establish whether or not “formal job attachment” exists, the criterion of “assurance of return to work” should be considered to be the essential one. “Assurance of return to work” should be interpreted as assurance to return to work with the same employer.

In situations where such assurance to return to work did not exist, “formal job attachment” should be assessed on the basis of the criterion of “continued receipt of wage or salary”. That criterion should be considered as satisfied if the employer paid directly all or a significant part of the wage or salary.

The third criterion, “elapsed duration of absence”, might also be used in particular situations, e.g., in connection with long-term training schemes;

- (ii) if the participant was not employed by the enterprise before the training period, the participant could not be considered as “with a job but not at work” and the notion of “formal job attachment” would not apply. Consequently, if the scheme provided a definite commitment to employment at the end of training, the statistical treatment might follow that of persons who had made arrangements to take up employment at a date subsequent to the reference period (see paragraph 10(4) of Resolution I of the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians).

11. Regarding the “seeking work” criterion of the international definition of unemployment, it was agreed that the example of “registration at a public or private employment exchange” need not be reformulated but should, in general, be interpreted as follows: registration should be considered as an active step to seek work only when it was for the purpose of obtaining a job offer from the employment exchange. This precision was particularly important where participation in an employment promotion scheme was linked to registration. Consequently, where registration was simply an administrative requirement for benefiting from the provision of a scheme and not for the purpose of obtaining a job offer, the act of registration should not be considered as an active step to seek work in the sense of the international definition of unemployment.

12. The issue concerning the distinction between seeking self-employment and the self-employment activity itself was examined in the light of the schemes providing assistance to unemployed persons wishing to set up an enterprise. It was suggested that this distinction be based on the point when the enterprise started to exist, e.g., when the enterprise was registered. In situations and in countries where enterprises were not necessarily required formally to register in order to operate, it was suggested that the dividing line might be at the point when the first order was received or when the financial resources became available or when the necessary infrastructure was in place. While noting these suggestions, the Working Group decided that the present formulation of the “seeking work” criterion of the international standards did not require further specification in the respect.

13. The relevance of the concept of “visible underemployment” of the international standards was examined in relation to the employment situation of participants in certain categories of employment promotion schemes. There was agreement that the concept might indeed be useful in this context, but that it needed to be further elaborated, possibly as part of the work of a future International Conference of Labour Statisticians. Some concerns were, however, expressed as to the practical difficulties of joint measurement of visible underemployment and participation in employment promotion schemes. Visible underemployment was only measurable through household surveys. Enumeration of participants in employment promotion schemes was often best made using administrative sources.

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Resolution concerning the measurement of underemployment and inadequate employment situations, adopted by the Sixteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (October 1998)

The Sixteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians,

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Having reviewed the relevant texts of resolution III adopted by the Eleventh International Conference of Labour Statisticians concerning measurement and analysis of underemployment and underutilization of manpower (1966), and of resolution I adopted by the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment (1982),

Having acknowledged that resolution I adopted by the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians provides the framework within which the present resolution is formulated,

Recognizing the need to revise the existing standards on the measurement of underemployment and to broaden the scope to cover also inadequate employment situations, in order to enhance the standards' usefulness as technical guidelines to countries and improving the international comparability of the statistics,

Acknowledging that the relevance of underemployment and inadequate employment situations in a given country depends on the nature of its labour markets and that the decision to measure one or both of these is therefore determined by national circumstances;

Adopts this fifteenth day of October 1998 the following resolution in substitution for resolution III of the Eleventh International Conference of Labour Statisticians and paragraphs 14 to 20 and 21 (5) of resolution I of the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians:

Objectives

1. The primary objective of measuring underemployment and inadequate employment situations is to improve the analysis of employment problems and contribute towards formulating and evaluating short-term and long-term policies and measures designed to promote full, productive and freely chosen employment as specified in the Employment Policy Convention (No. 122) and Recommendations (Nos. 122 and 169) adopted by the International Labour Conference in 1964 and 1984. In this context, statistics on underemployment and indicators of inadequate employment situations should be used to complement statistics on employment, unemployment and inactivity and the circumstances of the economically active population in a country.
2. The measurement of underemployment is an integral part of the framework for measuring the labour force established in current international guidelines regarding statistics of the economically active population; and the indicators of inadequate employment situations should as far as possible be consistent with this framework.

Scope and concepts

3. In line with the framework for measuring the labour force, the measurement of underemployment and indicators of inadequate employment should be based primarily on the current capacities and work situations as described by those employed. Outside the scope of this resolution is the concept of underemployment based upon theoretical models about the potential capacities and desires for work of the working age population.
4. Underemployment reflects underutilization of the productive capacity of the employed population, including those which arise from a deficient national or local economic system. It relates to an alternative employment situation in which persons are willing and available to engage. In this resolution, recommendations concerning the measurement of underemployment are limited to time-related underemployment, as defined in subparagraph 8(1) below.
5. Indicators of inadequate employment situations that affect the capacities and well-being of workers and which may differ according to national conditions, relate to aspects of the work situation such as use of occupational skills, degree and type of economic risks, schedule of and travel to work, occupational safety and

health and general working conditions. To a large extent, the statistical concepts to describe such situations have not been sufficiently developed.

6. Employed persons may be simultaneously in underemployment and inadequate employment situations.

Measures of time-related underemployment

7. 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.

8. (1) Persons in time-related underemployment comprise all persons in employment, as defined in current international guidelines regarding employment statistics, who satisfy the following three criteria during the reference period used to define employment:

- (a) “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. In order to show how “willingness to work additional hours” is expressed in terms of action which is meaningful under national circumstances, those who have actively sought to work additional hours should be distinguished from those who have not. Actively seeking to work additional hours is to be defined according to the criteria used in the definition of job search used for the measurement of the economically active population, also taking into account activities needed to increase the hours of work in the current job;
- (b) “available to work additional hours”, i.e. are ready, within a specified subsequent period, to work additional hours, given opportunities for additional work. The subsequent period to be specified when determining workers’ availability to work additional hours should be chosen in light of national circumstances and comprise the period generally required for workers to leave one job in order to start another;
- (c) “worked less than a threshold relating to working time”, i.e. persons whose “hours actually worked” in all jobs during the reference period, as defined in current international guidelines regarding working time statistics, were below a threshold, to be chosen according to national circumstances. This threshold may be determined by e.g. the boundary between full-time and part-time employment, median values, averages, or norms for hours of work as specified in relevant legislation, collective agreements, agreements on working time arrangements or labour practices in countries.

(2) To provide analytical flexibility for policy formulation and evaluation, as well as for international comparability, countries should endeavour to identify all workers who during the reference period were willing and available to work additional hours, regardless of the hours they actually worked during the reference period.

Analytical groups within time-related underemployment

9. (1) Among time-related underemployed persons, countries may want to identify separately the following two groups:

- (a) persons who usually work part-time schedules and want to work additional hours;
- (b) persons who during the reference period worked less than their normal hours of work.

(2) Countries may want to study the relationship between the size and composition of these groups of workers and the economically active population at different points in time.

Volume of time-related underemployment

10. The volume of time-related underemployment relates to the additional time that persons in time-related underemployment were willing and available to work during the reference period up to the chosen threshold, as described in paragraph 8(1)(c) above. It may be computed in units of working days, half-days or hours as may be convenient in national circumstances. In addition, countries may want to estimate the volume of time-related underemployment by aggregating the number of days, half-days or hours that each person in time-related underemployment is willing and available to work in addition to the hours actually worked during the reference period without reference to a threshold.

Analytical indicators on time-related underemployment

11. Based on the concepts and definitions given in paragraphs 7 to 10 above, a variety of analytical

measures can be derived. For instance:

- (a) a rate of time-related underemployment may be calculated as the ratio between the population in time-related underemployment and in employment. Wherever considered useful, the ratio between the population in time-related underemployment and the economically active population may also be calculated;
- (b) a rate of the volume of time-related underemployment may be obtained as the ratio between the volume of time-related underemployment and the potential time for work of persons in employment, calculated as the sum of the “hours actually worked” by the employed population and the volume of time-related underemployment.

Topics related to time-related underemployment

12. Statistics may be collected on the “duration of time-related underemployment”, understood as the number of days, weeks, months or years that time-related underemployed persons have been continuously in this situation, i.e. willing and available to work additional hours and working less than the chosen threshold. Information about the number of days or weeks of employment, unemployment and time-related underemployment experienced by a worker throughout the year may also be instructive.

13. In countries where multiple jobholding is common, it may be useful to produce statistics on the reasons for having more than one job, covering all multiple jobholders.

Classifications for time-related underemployment

14. (a) The time-related underemployed population should be classified by significant demographic, social and economic characteristics. Appropriate cross-classifications should be used with due regard to the need for confidentiality and statistical significance.

(b) The number of persons in time-related underemployment, and the rates suggested in paragraph 11 above, should be classified by sex in respect of specified age groups and levels of education, and for each branch of economic activity, occupational group, institutional sector (including a category on the informal sector, where relevant) and status in employment categories. The classification by presence of young children and of adults requiring care would also be useful.

(c) For the purpose of classification by branch of economic activity, occupation, institutional sector and status in employment, reference should be made to the main job. The main job should be understood as the job at which the worker has worked the longest hours or which has provided the highest income from employment during the period, or which can be expected to provide the highest income from work carried out in that period, if payment can only be expected in the future.

(d) In order to provide flexibility for analysis, it is important to classify persons, where possible, by the component groups covered in the definition of time-related underemployment, i.e. by whether they wanted to work additional hours, by whether they had actively sought to work additional hours, were available to work additional hours, and by the hours they actually worked during the reference period.

Inadequate employment situations

15. Indicators of inadequate employment situations describe situations in the workplace which reduce the capacities and well-being of workers as compared to an alternative employment situation. To a large extent, the statistical definitions and methods necessary to describe such situations still have to be developed further.

16. Countries may want to consider as persons in inadequate employment situations, all those in employment who during the reference period, wanted to change their current work situation, or (particularly for the self-employed) to make changes to their work activities and/or environment, for any of a set of reasons, chosen according to national circumstances. Such reasons might include, for example: inadequate use and mismatch of occupational skills; inadequate income in current job(s); excessive hours of work; precarious job(s); inadequate tools, equipment or training for the assigned tasks; inadequate social services; travel to work difficulties; variable, arbitrary or inconvenient work schedules; recurring work stoppages because of delivery failures of raw material or energy; prolonged non-payment of wages; long overdue payments from customers. It should be noted that these reasons will not be mutually exclusive nor exhaustive of inadequate employment situations. Workers' availability to change their current work situation, as well as their active job search, as

understood in the definition of time-related underemployment, may also be applied.

Particular types of inadequate employment situations

17. Countries may in particular wish to consider, among the various types of inadequate employment situations, whether it is important to produce separate indicators for:

- (a) *skill-related inadequate employment*, characterized by inadequate utilization and mismatch of occupational skills, thus signifying poor utilization of human capital. Persons in this form of inadequate employment may be understood to include all persons in employment who during the reference period wanted or sought to change their current work situation in order to use their current occupational skills more fully, and were available to do so;
- (b) *income-related inadequate employment*, resulting from low levels of organization of work or productivity, insufficient tools and equipment and training or deficient infrastructure. Persons in this form of inadequate employment may be understood to include all persons in employment who during the reference period wanted or sought to change their current work situation in order to increase income limited by factors such as those mentioned above, and were available to do so. Countries may wish to apply a threshold, chosen according to national circumstances, above which persons do not qualify for inclusion;
- (c) *inadequate employment related to excessive hours*, may be understood to refer to a situation where persons in employment wanted or sought to work less hours than they did during the reference period, either in the same job or in another job, with a corresponding reduction of income. Countries may wish to apply a threshold of hours below which persons do not qualify for inclusion.

Analytical indicators associated with inadequate employment situations

18. For persons in the various inadequate employment situations separately identified according to national circumstances, countries may want to derive analytical indicators such as the following:

- (a) persons in each chosen type of inadequate employment situation, expressed as a percentage of the employed;
- (b) persons simultaneously in two or more inadequate employment situations, expressed as a percentage of the employed.

Classifications for inadequate employment situations

19. The analysis of the various inadequate employment situations may include their classification by significant demographic, social and economic characteristics, as well as appropriate cross-classifications with due regard to the need for confidentiality and statistical significance.

Data collection and international reporting

20. The use of household surveys, and in particular specialized labour force sample surveys, has advantages when producing statistics on time-related underemployment and indicators of inadequate employment situations. Other sources, such as those based on administrative records, may also provide an adequate basis for such statistics. When a household-based survey exists in a country, its results may be used to calibrate the results from other sources.

21. In order to enhance international comparability, it is recommended that countries, as far as possible, design their data collection and processing procedures so that they will be able to report:

- (a) estimates on the time-related underemployed population, as defined in subparagraph 8(1) above, who wanted to work additional hours, regardless of whether or not they sought to do so;
- (b) estimates on the sub-group of the time-related underemployed population, as defined in subparagraph 8(1) above, who sought to work additional hours;
- (c) information on the manner in which the threshold, mentioned in subparagraph 8(1)(c) above, has been determined;
- (d) where feasible, information on workers who during the reference period satisfy the criteria mentioned in subparagraphs 8(1)(a) and (b), without reference to a threshold, i.e. criterion 8(1)(c).

Further action

22. Subject to the availability of funds, a programme of work should be sponsored by the ILO to refine the measurement of time-related underemployment and to further develop concepts and definitions for the indicators of inadequate employment situations. The ILO should also sponsor work relating to the measurement and presentation of these statistics in a number of developing, transition and industrialized countries and evaluate and document the results.

23. As far as possible, the ILO should cooperate with countries in the implementation of the definition of time-related underemployment and in the development and application of methods to describe indicators of inadequate employment situations as recommended in this resolution, and disseminate the information about the experiences gained.

Guidelines concerning treatment in employment and unemployment statistics
of persons on extended absences from work, endorsed by the Sixteenth International
Conference of Labour Statisticians
(October 1998)

Employees on maternity leave

1. (1) Women on maternity leave, who have an assurance of a return to work following the end of the leave, should be classified as employed if, during the reference period, they are in receipt of all or a significant part of their wage or salary from the employer or an equivalent payment from other sources received by virtue of being an employee. Women on maternity leave, who have an assurance of a return to work following the end of the leave, should also be considered as being employed during the compulsory period of the leave stipulated by national legislation to ensure that mothers before and after childbirth have sufficient rest, or for a period to be specified according to national circumstances.

(2) In countries where they are not classified as employed according to subparagraph 1(1), women on maternity leave should be classified as unemployed or not economically active, depending upon their current availability for work and recent job-search activity.

Employees on unpaid leave initiated by the employer

2. (1) Employees on unpaid leave initiated by the employer (including leave paid out of the government budget or social security funds) should be classified into labour force categories as follows:

- (a) persons having an agreed date for return to work should be considered employed if the elapsed duration of their leave falls within a time-limit to be specified according to national circumstances. Such persons may be classified as a separate category among employed persons; they should be included among persons in time-related underemployment if they satisfy the criteria of the definition of time-related underemployment as specified in the resolution concerning the measurement of underemployment and inadequate employment situations adopted by the Sixteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (October 1998);
- (b) persons who have an agreed date for return to work but whose elapsed duration of leave is longer than the specified time-limit, as well as persons who have no agreed date for return to work but who are expecting to return to their work in the near future, should be considered as unemployed if they satisfy the criteria specified in paragraph 10 of the resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment adopted by the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (October 1982), otherwise, they should be considered as being not economically active;
- (c) persons who neither have an agreed date for return to work nor expect to be recalled to their work in the near future should be considered as being unemployed or not economically active, depending upon their current availability for work and recent job-search activity.

(2) The notion of expectation of returning to work "in the near future" should be specified in the light of the national circumstances and economic situation of each country.

Employees on other types of extended leave

3. (1) Employees on other types of extended leave such as parental leave, who have an assurance of a return to work with the same employer following the end of the leave, should be classified as employed if the employer continues to pay all or a significant part of the wage or salary of the person on leave, or if the duration of the leave does not exceed a time-limit to be specified according to national circumstances.

(2) Employees on other types of extended leave, who are not classified as employed according to subparagraph 3(1), should be classified as unemployed or not economically active, depending upon their current availability for work and recent job-search activity.

Seasonal workers not at work during the off-season

4. (1) Seasonal employees not engaged in any kind of work during the off-season should be classified as employed if they have an assurance of a return to work with the same employer at the beginning of the next season, and the employer continues to pay all or a significant part of their wage or salary during the off-season.

(2) Seasonal employees not engaged in any kind of work during the off-season who are not classified as employed according to subparagraph 4(1), as well as seasonal employers, own-account workers, members of producers' cooperatives and contributing family workers not engaged in any kind of work during the off-season, should be considered as unemployed if they satisfy the criteria specified in paragraph 10 of the resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment adopted by the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians (October 1982).

(3) Seasonal workers not engaged in any kind of work during the off-season, who are not classified as employed or unemployed according to subparagraphs 4(1) and (2), should be considered as being not economically active.

Resolution III

Resolution concerning the development of measures of labour underutilization

The 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians,

Aware of the limitations of the unemployment rate as the main labour market indicator for many countries,

Considering that the unemployment rate may not adequately reflect the labour market situation, especially of women,

Recognizing the need to develop, at the international level and as part of the measurement of decent work, measures of labour underutilization complementary to the unemployment rate,

Having reviewed the methodological work already undertaken by the ILO in this area;

Recommends that:

- (i) the ILO, in cooperation with interested countries and organizations, continue work on the development of a methodology for the measurement in particular of labour slack, low earnings and skills mismatch;
- (ii) the methodology developed build on relevant existing international concepts, definitions and classifications;
- (iii) efforts be undertaken by the ILO to promote understanding of these measures relative to the unemployment rate;
- (iv) the topic be considered for inclusion on the agenda of the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians with a view to adopting an international standard.

Resolution V

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 (October 1982)

The 18th International Conference of Labour Statisticians agrees to replace 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 (October 1982), by the following text:

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