



International  
Conference of  
Labour Statisticians  
11-20 October 2023



## Statistical definitions of care work

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### ► Définitions statistiques des activités de soin et services à la personne

### Definiciones estadísticas del trabajo de cuidados

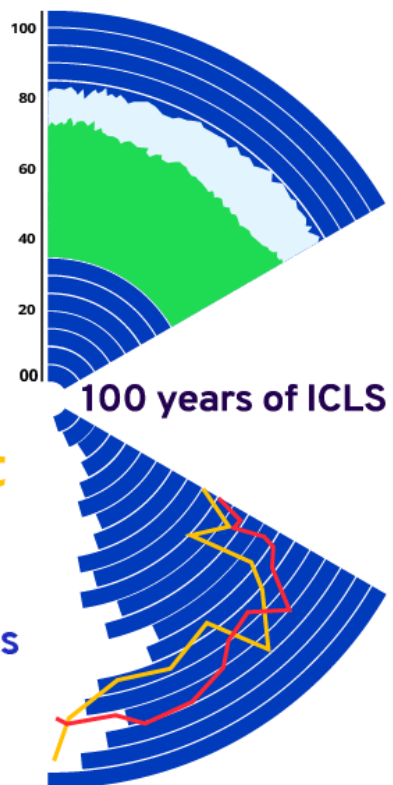
Participants in the Conference are invited to: (a) indicate their views on the need to develop a statistical reference definition, conceptual framework and indicator framework to standardize the measurement of care work, for submission to the 22nd ICLS for approval; and (b) in case such standards are needed, indicate their support for the establishment of a technical working group on care work to initiate the detailed work to support this development, or make suggestions for other ways to advance this work.

Les participants à la Conférence sont invités à: a) donner leur avis sur la nécessité d'élaborer une définition statistique de référence, un cadre conceptuel et une série d'indicateurs visant à normaliser la mesure des activités de soin et des services à la personne, afin de les soumettre à la 22e CIST pour approbation; b) dans l'éventualité où cette normalisation serait nécessaire, exprimer leur soutien à la création d'un groupe de travail technique sur les soins et services à la personne chargé de lancer le travail approfondi que suppose cette démarche, ou suggérer d'autres moyens de la mener à bien.

Se invita a los participantes en la Conferencia a que: a) indiquen sus puntos de vista sobre la necesidad de elaborar una definición estadística de referencia, un marco conceptual y un marco de indicadores para normalizar la medición del trabajo de cuidados, a fin de presentarlos a la 22.ª CIET para su aprobación, y b) en caso de que sean necesarias estas normas, indiquen su apoyo a la creación de un grupo de trabajo técnico sobre el trabajo de cuidados que comience el trabajo detallado para apoyar esta elaboración o sugiera otras formas de avanzar en esta labor.



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## Statistical definitions of care work

# ▶ Statistical definitions of care work

## Session outline

- ▶ Introduction and background
- ▶ Relevant international standards and classification schemes
- ▶ Classifying care work
- ▶ In summary
- ▶ Conclusions and points for reflection

- ▶ Room Document 8: Statistical definitions of care work

## ► Introduction and background

- Interest in the topic of *care work* has intensified in recent years in tandem with awareness of the importance of a well-functioning *care economy* for broader economic and societal goals.
- Care work and the care economy feature increasingly prominently in national policy agendas, as countries seek to respond to accelerating demographic shifts – with major implications for the social organisation of care.
- In parallel with these emerging challenges, many countries continue to grapple with *persistent gender-based inequalities in care work provision – alongside inequalities in labour market participation and access to decent work* - inequalities brought to the fore, and exacerbated, by the COVID-19 pandemic – but which pre-date it - and linger on.

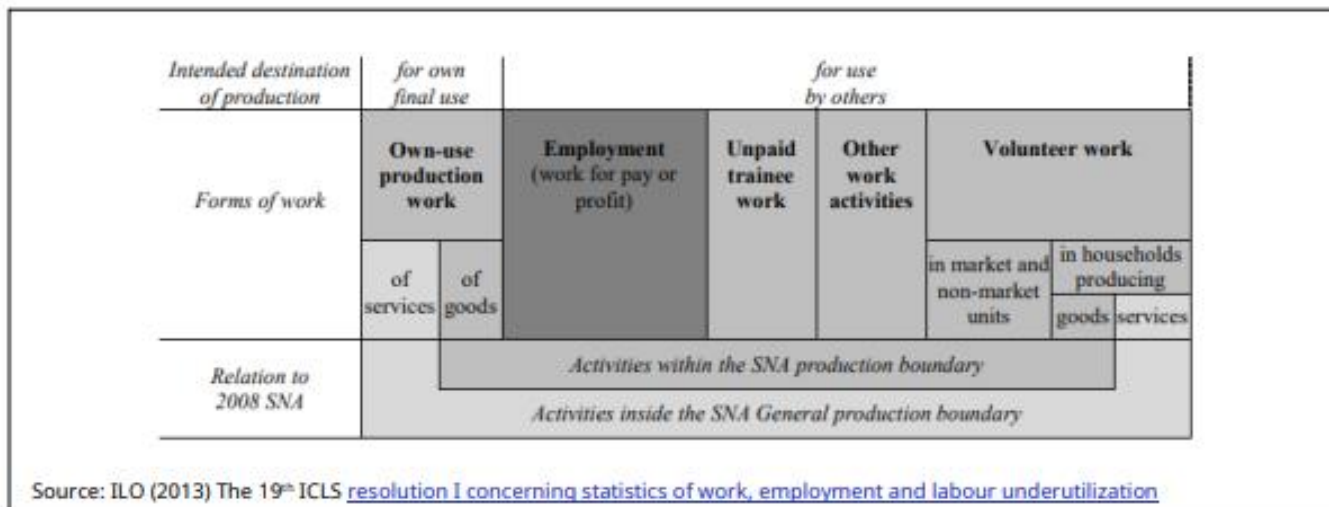
## ► Introduction and background

- Over the last decade there has been an increasing focus on care work and the care economy at global, regional, and national levels – this has greatly intensified demands for data on the topic.
  - i) Existing ICLS standards provide a strong conceptual foundation
  - ii) Labour force surveys are a key data source
  - iii) However, no internationally agreed statistical standards exist to inform the measurement of care work and to promote consistency and international comparability.
  - iv) In practice, a wide variety of practices can be observed among countries, international agencies, non-governmental organisations, and academic researchers. Some of this divergence emerges from differences in the scope of interest and/or measurement objectives. In other cases, divergence occurs despite common stated objectives and scope.

## ► Relevant international standards and classification schemes

- Taken together, a body of international standards can provide a coherent conceptual framework for the advancement of an international definition of care work, as a cross-cutting concept.
- The 19th ICLS (Resolution I) Forms of Work Framework
- International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-08)
- International Standard Industrial Classification (ISIC, rev.5)
- International classification of activities for time-use statistics (ICATUS-16)

## Relevant international standards and classification schemes



the 19th ICLS forms of work framework specifies five separate and mutually exclusive forms of work – care work can be performed as any form or work – the form of work is determined by the destination of the resulting goods or services – and the role of remuneration

This framework provides a strong foundation for the delineation of care work – and the characteristics of those who perform it – within each distinct form of work, as well as for monitoring and mapping shifts in the distribution and volume of care work undertaken across different forms of work.



## Relevant international standards and classification schemes

ISCO-08 Major Groups
1 Managers
2 Professionals
3 Technicians and Associate Professionals
4 Clerical Support Workers
5 Service and Sales Workers
6 Skilled Agriculture, Forestry and Fisheries Workers
7 Craft and Related Trades Workers
8 Plant and Machine Operators, and Assemblers
9 Elementary Occupations
0 Armed Forces Occupations

ISCO - the *International Standard Classification of Occupations* provides a comprehensive framework for the classification of occupations worldwide.

ISCO is periodically updated to maintain relevance to, and coverage of, occupations. The current version, and the fourth iteration, of ISCO was released in 2008 (ISCO-08).

ISCO is characterised by a four-level hierarchical structure. ISCO-08 includes ten major groups, based on required skill level and specialization. These ten major groups contain 43 *sub-major groups*, 130 *minor groups*, and 436-*unit groups*.

When integrated with the 19th ICLS forms of work framework, ISCO-08 offers an appropriate classification scheme for *distinguishing care work performed as employment, unpaid trainee work, and volunteer work*

## Relevant international standards and classification schemes

ISIC Sections (rev.5)	
A.	Agriculture, forestry, and fishing
B.	Mining and quarrying
C.	Manufacturing
D.	Electricity, gas, steam, and air conditioning supply
E.	Water supply; sewerage, waste management and remediation activities
F.	Construction
G.	Wholesale and retail trade
H.	Transportation and storage
I.	Accommodation and food service activities
J.	Publishing, broadcasting, and content production and distribution activities
K.	Telecommunications, computer programming, consultancy, computing infrastructure, and other information service activities
L.	Financial and insurance activities
M.	Real estate activities
N.	Professional, scientific, and technical activities
O.	Administrative and support service activities
P.	Public administration and defence; compulsory social security
Q.	Education
R.	Human health and social work activities
S.	Arts, sports, and recreation
T.	Other service activities
U.	Activities of households as employers; undifferentiated goods- and services-producing
V.	Activities of extraterritorial organizations and bodies

Experiences of mapping care work indicates that ISCO-08 classifications may not suffice alone for the identification of the listed forms of *care work*.

In such cases, *ISIC, the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities* can perform a useful complementary role

The latest edition of ISIC, adopted at the 54th Session of the *United Nations Statistical Commission* in March 2023, following extensive global consultations led by the UN Statistical Division.

ISIC (rev. 5) is organised around 22 one-letter *sections*, disaggregated into 87 two-digit *divisions*, 256 three-digit *groups*, and 461 four-digit *classes*.

## Relevant international standards and classification schemes

ICATUS Major Divisions
1 Employment and related activities
2 Production of goods for own final use
3 Unpaid domestic services for household and family members
4 Unpaid caregiving services for household and family members
5 Unpaid volunteer, trainee, and other unpaid work
6 Learning
7 Socializing and communication, community participation, and religious practice
8 Culture, leisure, mass media and sports practices
9 Self-care and maintenance

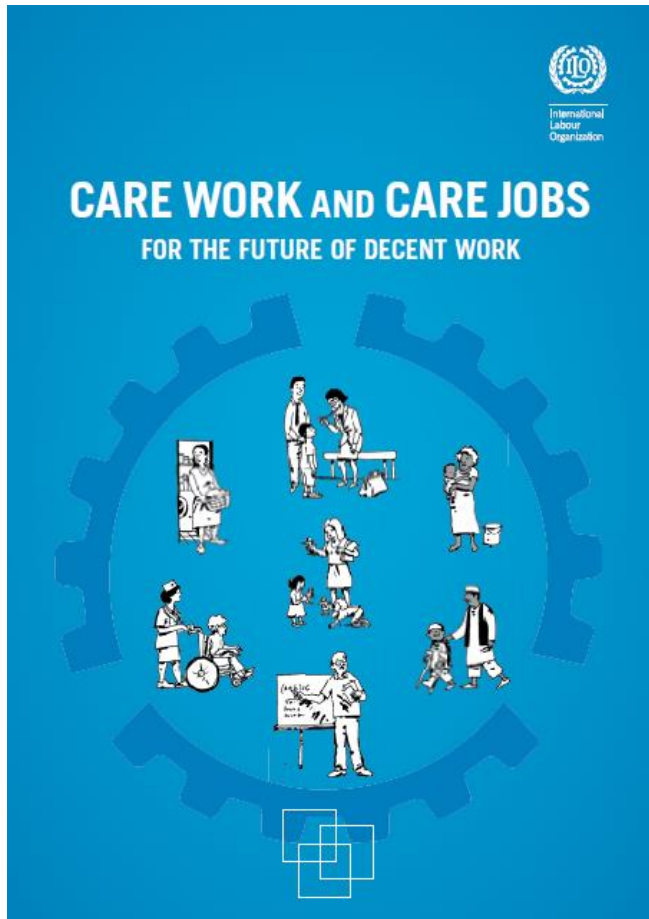
ICATUS-16 is a three-level hierarchically organised classification scheme with 9 *major divisions* (one digit), disaggregated across 56 *divisions* (two-digit), and 165 *groups* (three digit).

The scheme is harmonised to the SNA (2008) production boundary and general production boundary, and to the 19th ICLS forms of work framework.

ICATUS-16 provides a scheme for the classification of all activities performed by persons.

ICATUS-16 provides an internationally agreed scheme for the classification, measurement, and mapping of **care work performed as own-use provision of services / unpaid domestic and care work**.

## ► Classifying care work



2018, the ILO published a seminal report, titled “*Care work and care jobs for the future of decent work*”. The report combined data for over 100 countries, and from multiple sources – primarily labour force surveys and time-use surveys, to produce a detailed review of the “*challenges and opportunities of integrating the care economy into labour market analysis*”. The report surveyed the landscape of both paid and unpaid care work, an approach grounded in the 19th ICLS *forms of work framework*.

The report sets out a comprehensive and holistic concept of *care work*, whereby *care work* refers to a wide range of “*activities and relations involved in meeting the physical, psychological, and emotional needs of adults and children, old and young*”. This broad conception of *care work* acknowledges that requirements for care extend across the life cycle: “*New-borns and young people...adults...[and]...older persons [all] have physical, psychological, cognitive and emotional needs and require varying degrees of protection, care, or support*”.

## ► Classifying care work

The conceptual contours of *care work* are subject to emerging consensus.

But certain considerations complicate the delineation of the boundaries between care work and non-care work in practice:

1. Care work cuts across different *forms of paid and unpaid work* and is undertaken in a wide variety of economic units (in private homes, communities, and market and non-market enterprises).
2. Identical care work activities may be performed, in identical economic units, as paid or unpaid work, and as formal or informal work. Conversely, activities classified as care work when performed as one or another form of work may be reasonably excluded from the category of care work when performed as another form of work.
3. Collating data on care work often requires a combination of different measurement sources

## ► Classifying care work within OPS / unpaid domestic and care work

### ► Conceptual considerations for standard setting

- Defining the boundaries of care work performed as OPS / unpaid domestic and care work.
- Assessing the case for the definition of sub-categories of care work performed as OPS.
- Defining appropriate terminology for care work performed as OPS, and for those performing it.

### ► Measurement considerations for standard setting

- Defining measurement criteria for the concept of care work performed as OPS.
- Developing indicator frameworks and recommended sub-groups for disaggregation.

### ► Data availability

- Mapping the extent to which existing – and forthcoming - data sources are compatible with the concept(s) of care work performed as OPS.

## ► Classifying care work within OPS / unpaid domestic and care work

Historically, **data availability has been a key challenge** for the measurement of OPS. The complexity of the measurement source - the independent time-use survey - has tended to deter regular implementation outside of certain regions

**International comparability of data has also been an issue**, in the absence of standardised methods and approaches for time-use measurement. Recent years have seen major advances in international harmonisation, as well as wider uptake, meaning **data availability and comparability are beginning improve in many regions**.

At a conceptual level, one important consideration – **which isn't always acknowledged** - relates to whether the boundaries of OPS / unpaid domestic and care work and *care work* performed as OPS can reasonably be treated as identical for the purposes of measurement.

## ► Classifying care work within OPS / unpaid domestic and care work

OWN USE PROVISION OF SERVICES				
OWN USE PROVISION OF SERVICES  ACTIVITY CLUSTERS	(i) household accounting and management, purchasing and/or transporting goods	(ii) preparing and/or serving meals, household waste disposal and recycling	(iii) cleaning, decorating, and maintaining one's own dwelling or premises, durables and other goods, and gardening	(iv) childcare and instruction, transporting and caring for elderly, dependent or other household members..., etc
FOR OWN FINAL USE	For final use by the producer	Unpaid domestic work		
	For final consumption by household members or family members living in other households	"Indirect care"		"Direct care"
		Unpaid domestic work		Active care
				Passive / Supervisory care
				Care work undertaken as own use provision of services / unpaid domestic and care work
UNPAID DOMESTIC AND CARE WORK				



## ► Classifying care work within employment

### ► Conceptual considerations for standard setting

- Defining the boundaries of care work performed as employment, with reference to the occupation and industry in which the employment is performed, based on the latest developments in the relevant standards.
- Defining meaningful sub-categories of paid care work performed as employment, in line with existing international standards (e.g., differentiated by economic unit) and user needs (e.g., separate identification of “long-term care”)
- Defining appropriate terminology for care work performed as employment.

### ► Measurement considerations for standard setting

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- Developing indicator frameworks and recommended sub-groups for disag

### ► Data availability

- Mapping the extent to which existing – and forthcoming - data sources are concept(s) of care work performed as employment (esp. availability at su

\*Owing to reliance on common data sources and the similarity of measurement frameworks, any concepts, definitions, and measurement framework developed to classify paid care work as a sub-set of employment is likely to also be appropriate for application to the classification of care work performed as unpaid trainee work.

## ► Classifying care work within employment

The approach developed by the ILO in the 2018 report *"Care Work and the Future of Care Jobs"* offers a potential starting point. Paid care work is here restricted to *"occupations providing a face-to-face service that develops the human capabilities of the care recipient"*

Within this formulation four separate and mutually exclusive categories of paid care work are identified based on the occupation and industry / sector of the employment:

i. Care work performed as employment in \*care sectors

ii. Non care work performed as employment in \*care sectors - as they support the provision of care services".

ii. Care work performed as employment in non-care sectors

iv. Domestic workers [employed by households]

(\*Care sectors specified as: education, health, and social work).

## Classifying care work within employment

These separate clusters of care work within employment can be mapped out in ISCO and ISIC classifications

Example approach for the classification of paid care work	Corresponding ISCO-08 and ISIC (rev.4) codes (at 2-digit)	
(i) Care work performed [as employment] in care sectors (specified as: education, health, and social work).	<b>ISCO-08</b> 22 – Health professionals 23 – Teaching professionals 32 – Health associate professionals 53 – Personal care workers <b>ISIC (rev.4)</b> 85 – Education 86 – Human health activities 87 – Residential care activities 88 – Social work activities without accommodation	
(ii) Non care work performed [as employment] in care sectors (specified as: education, health, and social work), “as they support the provision of care services”.	<b>ISCO-08</b> 13 – Production and specialized services managers	
	(iii) Care work performed [as employment] in non-care sectors.	<b>ISCO-08</b> 22 – Health professionals 23 – Teaching professionals 32 – Health associate professionals 53 – Personal care workers <b>ISIC (rev.4)</b> (Excludes codes classified under (i))
	(iv) Domestic workers [employed by households].	<b>ISIC (rev.4)</b> 97: activities of households as employers of domestic personnel

## ► In summary

- Despite rapidly intensifying policy demands, few countries are currently measuring *all* care work – *which cuts across all forms of work*
- When countries do measure care work a wide variety of definitions, measurement approaches, and classifications are applied – *a lack of standardisation hampers comparability*
- We are working to support wider measurement using good practices and the latest standards (including the release of LFS add-on modules to measure time use and volunteer work and ongoing technical assistance).
- Further work is needed on concepts – there is no clear common definition of “care work” and what is included (particularly at issue for employment, volunteer work and unpaid trainee work)
- No international agreement on required indicators
- Conceptual and measurement gaps tabled for discussion at 21st ICLS  
– *may result in a request for ILO to undertake further work and consultation*
- This is timely, with opportunity to link to ongoing process to update ISCO-08 (and transitions to ISIC, rev.5)

## ► Conclusions and points for reflection

- Participants are invited to share their experiences of conceptualising and measuring “care work” in a comprehensive and coherent way.
- Participants are invited to express their views regarding the relevance, importance, and timeliness of the proposed development of a statistical definition of care work and measurement framework, aligned to the latest international standards for labour statistics.
- Participants are invited to indicate their support of the proposal that the ILO hosts a standard setting process on the topic of statistical definitions of care work, for reporting, discussion, and possible adoption at the 22nd ICLS.
- Further to an indication of support for this proposal, participants are invited to provide inputs on the potential modality of work, including the possibility to form a Working Group of Experts, composed of experts from ILO constituents and qualified observers, or to propose other modalities that could be used. Countries are invited to express their interest to participate in the development process.
- Countries are encouraged to adopt the latest statistical standards and guidance for labour statistics to advance the international comparability of data on care work.

## Classifying care work

OWN USE PROVISION OF SERVICES					
OWN USE PROVISION OF SERVICES ACTIVITY CLUSTERS		(i) household accounting and management, purchasing and/or transporting goods	(ii) preparing and/or serving meals, household waste disposal and recycling	(iii) cleaning, decorating, and maintaining one's own dwelling or premises, durables and other goods, and gardening	(iv) childcare and instruction, transporting and caring for elderly, dependent or other household members..., etc
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