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## Resolution II

### Resolution to amend the 19th ICLS resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization

#### Preamble

The 21st International Conference of Labour Statisticians,

Having been convened at Geneva by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office and having met from 11 to 20 October 2023,

Recognizing the need to harmonize the international statistical standards on work, employment and labour underutilization adopted by the 19th ICLS with the International Classification of Activities for Time Use Statistics (ICATUS 2016) adopted by the 48th session of the United Nations Statistical Commission, 2017, as well as the definitions underlying Sustainable Development Goal Indicators,

Adopts this 20th day of October 2023 the following amendments to the Resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization, adopted by the 19th International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 2013.

#### Objectives and scope

1. This resolution aims to set standards for work statistics to guide countries in updating and integrating their existing statistical programmes in this field. It defines the statistical concept of *work* for reference purposes and provides operational concepts, definitions and guidelines for:
  - (a) distinct subsets of work activities, referred to as *forms of work*;

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- (b) related classifications of the population according to their *labour force status* and *main form of work*;
  - (c) measures of *labour underutilization*.
2. These standards should serve to facilitate the production of different subsets of work statistics for different purposes as part of an integrated national system that is based on common concepts and definitions.
3. Each country should aim to develop its system of work statistics, including of the labour force, to provide an adequate information base for the various users of the statistics, taking account of specific national needs and circumstances. Such a system should be designed to achieve a number of objectives, in particular to:
- (a) monitor labour markets and labour underutilization including unemployment for the design, implementation and evaluation 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 volume of work or 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;
  - (c) assess participation in different forms of work among population groups such as women and men, young people, children, migrants and other groups of particular policy concern; and study the relationships between different forms of work and their economic and social outcomes.

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4. To serve these objectives, the system should be developed in consultation with the various users of the statistics and in harmony with other economic and social statistics and be designed so as to provide current statistics for short-term needs and statistics collected at longer intervals for structural and in-depth analysis and as benchmark data:
- (a) choices regarding the concepts and topics covered and their different frequencies of measurement and/or reporting will depend on their national relevance and the resources available;
  - (b) each country should establish an appropriate strategy for data collection and reporting, as recommended in paragraph 56, that ensures the progress and sustainability of the system.
5. In developing their work statistics, countries should endeavour to incorporate these standards in order to promote international comparability and to permit the evaluation of trends and differences for the purpose of labour market and economic and social analysis, in particular with respect to the measurement of the labour force, of labour underutilization and of the different forms of work.

## Reference concepts

6. **Work** comprises any activity performed by persons of any sex and age to produce goods or to provide services for use by others or for own use.
- (a) Work is defined irrespective of its formal or informal character or the legality of the activity.
  - (b) Work excludes activities that do not involve producing goods or services (e.g. begging and stealing), self-care (e.g. personal grooming and hygiene) and activities that cannot be performed by another person on one's own behalf (e.g. sleeping, learning and activities for own recreation).

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(c) The concept of work is aligned with the General production boundary as defined in the System of National Accounts 2008 (2008 SNA) and its concept of economic unit that distinguishes between:

(i) market units (i.e. corporations, quasi-corporations and household unincorporated market enterprises <sup>1</sup>);

(ii) non-market units (i.e. government and non-profit institutions serving households); and

(iii) households that produce goods or services for own final use.

(d) Work can be performed in any kind of economic unit.

7. To meet different objectives, five mutually exclusive **forms of work** are identified for separate measurement. These forms of work are distinguished on the basis of the intended destination of the production (for own final use; or for use by others, i.e. other economic units) and the nature of the transaction (i.e. monetary or non-monetary transactions, and transfers), as follows:

(a) *own-use production work* comprising production of goods and services for own final use;

(b) *employment work* comprising work performed for others in exchange for pay or profit;

(c) *unpaid trainee work* comprising work performed for others without pay to acquire workplace experience or skills;

(d) *volunteer work* comprising non-compulsory work performed for others without pay;

(e) *other work activities* (not defined in this resolution).

<sup>1</sup> That encompass, as a subset, informal sector units.

8. These “other work activities” include such activities as unpaid community service and unpaid work by prisoners, when ordered by a court or similar authority, and unpaid military or alternative civilian service, which may be treated as a distinct form of work for measurement (such as compulsory work performed without pay for others).
9. Persons may engage in one or more forms of work in parallel or consecutively, i.e. persons may be employed, be volunteering, doing unpaid trainee work and/or producing for own use, in any combination.
10. Own-use production of goods, employment, unpaid trainee work, a part of volunteer work and “other work activities” form the basis for the preparation of national production accounts within the 2008 SNA production boundary. Own-use provision of services and the remaining part of volunteer work complete the national production accounts i.e. beyond the 2008 SNA production boundary but inside the General production boundary (diagram 1).

**Diagram 1. Forms of work and the System of National Accounts 2008**

<i>Intended destination of production</i>	<i>for own final use</i>		<i>for use by others</i>					
<i>Forms of work</i>	<b>Own-use production work</b>		<b>Employment</b> (work for pay or profit)	<b>Unpaid trainee work</b>	<b>Other work activities</b>	<b>Volunteer work</b>		
	of service s	of good s				in market and non-market units	in households producing	
							good s	service s
<i>Relation to 2008 SNA</i>			<i>Activities within the SNA production boundary</i>					
			<i>Activities inside the SNA General production boundary</i>					

11. The form of work identified as employment sets the reference scope of activities for labour force statistics. The concept **labour force** refers to the current supply of labour for the

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production of goods and services in exchange for pay or profit. The labour force is computed as described in paragraph 16.

## Statistical and analytical units

12. Different units are relevant for the production of statistics on each form of work. For compiling and reporting, three basic units are *persons*, *jobs* or *work activities*, and *time units*:
- (a) **Persons** are the basic unit for producing statistics on the population engaged in each form of work.
  - (b) A **job** or **work activity** is defined as a set of tasks and duties performed, or meant to be performed, by one person for a single economic unit, as specified in paragraph 6(c):
    - (i) The term *job* is used in reference to employment. Persons may have one or several jobs. Those in self-employment will have as many jobs as the economic units they own or co-own, irrespective of the number of clients served. In cases of multiple job-holding, the **main job** is that with the longest hours usually worked, as defined in the international statistical standards on working time.
    - (ii) This statistical unit, when relating to own-use production work, unpaid trainee work, and volunteer work is referred to as *work activity*.
  - (c) **Time units** are used for producing statistics of volume of work in reference to each form of work or to any combination thereof. These units may be short such as minutes or hours, or long such as half-days, days, weeks or months.
13. In addition, **activity clusters** referring to sub-sets of work activities, is a useful unit for analysis of participation of persons in forms of work other than employment.

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## Classifications of the working-age population

14. Useful classifications of the *working-age population*, as specified in paragraph 65, may be prepared according to participation in the labour market and in different forms of work.
15. Persons may be classified in a short reference period, as specified in paragraph 19(a), according to their **labour force status** as being:
  - (a) in employment, as defined in paragraph 27;
  - (b) in unemployment, as defined in paragraph 47; or
  - (c) outside the labour force as defined in paragraph 16; and among these, in the potential labour force, as defined in paragraph 51.
16. Priority is given to employment over the other two categories, and to unemployment over outside the labour force. The three categories of labour force status are, thus, mutually exclusive and exhaustive. The sum of persons in employment and in unemployment equals the labour force. **Persons outside the labour force** are those of working age who were neither in employment nor in unemployment in the short reference period.
17. To support further social analysis, persons may also be classified according to their **main form of work** as self-declared over a short or long reference period, as being:
  - (a) mainly in own-use production work;
  - (b) mainly in employment;
  - (c) mainly in unpaid trainee work;
  - (d) mainly in volunteer work;
  - (e) mainly in other forms of work;
  - (f) exclusively in non-productive activities.

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18. These categories of main form of work are mutually exclusive. Priority is given to any work activity over non-productive activity and, among the different forms of work, to the one considered as the main form.

## Operational definitions and guidelines

### Forms of work

19. The various forms of work are measured with respect to a short reference period. The appropriate reference period for each form is based on the intensity of participation and working time arrangements:
- (a) seven days or one week, for *employment* and *unpaid trainee work*;
  - (b) four weeks or one calendar month, for *own-use production of goods*, *unpaid trainee work* and *volunteer work*;
  - (c) one or more 24-hour days within a seven-day or one-week period, for *own-use provision of services*.
20. To enable analysis of participation in multiple forms of work an overlap between these different reference periods is needed. In addition, these short reference periods may be combined with measurement over a long observation period, as described in paragraph 57(c).
21. With the exception of own use production (services), A person is considered to have engaged in a given form of work when performing such form of work for at least one hour during the relevant, short reference period. Use of this one-hour criterion ensures coverage of all the activities engaged in, including part-time, temporary, casual or sporadic activities, as well as comprehensive measurement of all inputs of labour into production.



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## Own-use production work

22. **Persons in own-use production work** are defined as all those of working age who, during a short reference period, performed any activity to produce goods or provide services for own final use, where:

- (a) “any activity” refers to work performed in the various activities under paragraph 22(b) ~~and (c)~~ for a cumulative total of at least one hour, or under paragraph (c), regardless of duration;
- (b) production of “goods” (within the 2008 SNA production boundary) covers:
  - (i) producing and/or processing for storage agricultural, fishing, hunting and gathering products;
  - (ii) collecting and/or processing for storage mining and forestry products, including firewood and other fuels;
  - (iii) fetching water from natural and other sources;
  - (iv) manufacturing household goods (such as furniture, textiles, clothing, footwear, pottery or other durables, including boats and canoes);
  - (v) building, or effecting major repairs to, one’s own dwelling, farm buildings, etc.;
- (c) provision of “services” (beyond the 2008 SNA production boundary but inside the General production boundary) covers:
  - (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, household waste disposal and recycling, and caring for domestic animals or pets;

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(iv) childcare and instruction, transporting and caring for elderly, dependent or other household members ~~and domestic animals or pets,~~ etc.;

(d) "for own final use" is interpreted as production where the intended destination of the output is *mainly* for final use by the producer in the form of capital formation, or final consumption by household members, or by family members living in other households:

(i) the intended destination of the output is established in reference to the specific goods produced or services provided, as self-declared (i.e. mainly for own final use);

(ii) in the case of agricultural, fishing, hunting or gathering goods intended mainly for own consumption, a part or surplus may nevertheless be sold or bartered.

23. Essential items that need to be collected, using various sources as specified in paragraph 67, to support national accounts, and for household and sectoral analyses of own-use production work are:

(a) the working time of own-use producers associated with each relevant activity cluster collected using short time units (such as minutes or hours according to the source);

(b) the estimated value of the production (i.e. goods or services), and/or the amount of goods, consumed or retained by the household and by family members in other households;

(c) the estimated amount and/or value of any part or surplus sold or bartered, where applicable; and

(d) the expenses incurred in relation to this production.

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24. **Subsistence foodstuff producers** constitute an important subgroup of persons in own-use production work. They are defined as:
- (a) all those who performed any of the activities specified in paragraph 22(b)(i) in order to produce foodstuff from agriculture, fishing, hunting or gathering that contribute to the livelihood of the household or family;
  - (b) excluded are persons who engaged in such production as recreational or leisure activities.
25. For operational purposes, an important test to verify the subsistence nature of the activity is that it is carried out without workers hired for pay or profit.
26. For purposes of monitoring conditions of labour market performance as related to insufficient access to, or integration in, markets, or to other factors of production, statistics of this group should be identified and reported separately to serve policy needs, as recommended in paragraph 73(a) and (b).

## Employment

27. **Persons in employment** are defined as all those of working age who, during a short reference period, were engaged in any activity to produce goods or provide services for pay or profit. They comprise:
- (a) employed persons “at work”, i.e. who worked in a job for at least one hour;
  - (b) employed persons “not at work” due to temporary absence from a job, or to working-time arrangements (such as shift work, flexitime and compensatory leave for overtime).
28. “For pay or profit” refers to work done as part of a transaction in exchange for remuneration payable in the form of wages or salaries for time worked or work done, or in the form of

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profits derived from the goods and services produced through market transactions, specified in the most recent international statistical standards concerning employment-related income.

- (a) It includes remuneration in cash or in kind, whether actually received or not, and may also comprise additional components of cash or in-kind income.
- (b) The remuneration may be payable directly to the person performing the work or indirectly to a household or family member.

29. Employed persons on “temporary absence” during the short reference period refers to those who, having already worked in their present job, were “not at work” for a short duration but maintained a job attachment during their absence. In such cases:

- (a) “job attachment” is established on the basis of the reason for the absence and in the case of certain reasons, the continued receipt of remuneration, and/or the total duration of the absence as self-declared or reported, depending on the statistical source;
- (b) the reasons for absence that are by their nature usually of short duration, and where “job attachment” is maintained, include those such as sick leave due to own illness or injury (including occupational); public holidays, vacation or annual leave; and periods of maternity or paternity leave as specified by legislation;
- (c) reasons for absence where the “job attachment” requires further testing, include among others: parental leave, educational leave, care for others, other personal absences, strikes or lockouts, reduction in economic activity (e.g. temporary lay-off, slack work), disorganization or suspension of work (e.g. due to bad weather, mechanical, electrical or communication breakdown, problems with information and communication technology, shortage of raw materials or fuels):

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- (i) for these reasons, a further test of receipt of remuneration and/or a duration threshold should be used. The threshold should be, in general, not greater than three months taking into account periods of statutory leave entitlement specified by legislation or commonly practiced, and/or the length of the employment season so as to permit the monitoring of seasonal patterns. Where the return to employment in the same economic unit is guaranteed this threshold may be greater than three months;
  - (ii) for operational purposes, where the total duration of the absence is not known, the elapsed duration may be used.

30. *Included* in employment are:

- (a) persons who work for pay or profit while on training or skills-enhancement activities required by the job or for another job in the same economic unit, such persons are considered as employed “at work” in accordance with the international statistical standards on working time;
- (b) apprentices, interns or trainees who work for pay in cash or in kind;
- (c) persons who work for pay or profit through employment promotion programmes;
- (d) persons who work in their own economic units to produce goods intended mainly for sale or barter, even if part of the output is consumed by the household or family;
- (e) persons with seasonal jobs during the off season, if they continue to perform some tasks and duties of the job, excluding, however, fulfilment of legal or administrative obligations (e.g. pay taxes), irrespective of receipt of remuneration;
- (f) persons who work for pay or profit payable to the household or family,

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- (i) in market units operated by a family member living in the same or in another household; or
  - (ii) performing tasks or duties of an employee job held by a family member living in the same or in another household;
  - (g) regular members of the armed forces and persons on military or alternative civilian service who perform this work for pay in cash or in kind.

31. *Excluded* from employment are:

- (a) apprentices, interns and trainees who work without pay in cash or in kind;
- (b) participants in skills training or retraining schemes within employment promotion programmes, when not engaged in the production process of an economic unit;
- (c) persons who are required to perform work as a condition of continued receipt of a government social benefit such as unemployment insurance;
- (d) persons receiving transfers, in cash or in kind, not related to employment;
- (e) persons with seasonal jobs during the off season, if they cease to perform the tasks and duties of the job;
- (f) persons who retain a right to return to the same economic unit but who were absent for reasons specified in paragraph 29(c), when the total duration of the absence exceeds the specified threshold and/or if the test of receipt of remuneration is not fulfilled. For analytical purposes, it may be useful to collect information on total duration of absence, reason for absence, benefits received, etc.;
- (g) persons on indefinite lay-off who do not have an assurance of return to employment with the same economic unit.

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32. To support job-level analyses, information should be collected on the number of jobs held by persons in employment in the short reference period. Where the number of secondary jobs in the country is significant, it may be useful to collect information about their characteristics, including industry, occupation, status in employment, type of economic unit (formal market units/informal market units/non-market units/households), working time and employment-related income.

### Unpaid trainee work

33. **Persons in unpaid trainee work** are defined as all those of working age who, during a short reference period, performed any unpaid activity to produce goods or provide services for others, in order to acquire workplace experience or skills in a trade or profession, where:
- (a) "short reference period" is interpreted as specified in paragraph 19, and according to the source used;
  - (b) "any activity" refers to work for at least one hour;
  - (c) "unpaid" is interpreted as the absence of remuneration in cash or in kind for work done or hours worked; nevertheless, these workers may receive some form of support, such as transfers of education stipends or grants, or occasional in cash or in kind support (e.g. a meal, drinks);
  - (d) production "for others" refers to work performed in market and non-market units that are owned by non-household or non-family members;
  - (e) acquiring "workplace experience or skills" may occur through traditional, formal or informal arrangements whether or not a specific qualification or certification is issued.
34. *Included* in unpaid trainee work are persons involved in:

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- (a) traineeships, apprenticeships, internships or other types when unpaid, according to national circumstances; and
  - (b) unpaid skills training or retraining schemes within employment promotion programmes, when engaged in the production process of the economic unit.

35. *Excluded* from unpaid trainee work:

- (a) periods of probation associated with the start of a job;
- (b) general on-the-job or life-long learning while in employment, including in market and non-market units owned by household or family members;
- (c) orientation and learning while engaged in volunteer work;
- (d) learning while engaged in own-use production work.

36. Essential items that need to be collected to support analysis of the characteristics and conditions of work of persons in unpaid trainee work include industry, occupation, working time, programme type and length, contract characteristics and coverage, existence of participation fees and nature of certification.

## Volunteer work

37. **Persons in volunteer work** are defined as all those of working age who, during a short reference period, performed any unpaid, non-compulsory activity to produce goods or provide services for others, where:

- (a) “any activity” refers to work for at least one hour;
- (b) “unpaid” is interpreted as the absence of remuneration in cash or in kind for work done or hours worked; nevertheless, volunteer workers may receive some small form of support or stipend in cash, when below one third of local market wages (e.g. for out-



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of-pocket expenses or to cover living expenses incurred for the activity), or in kind (e.g. meals, transportation, symbolic gifts);

(c) “non-compulsory” is interpreted as work carried out without civil, legal or administrative requirement, that are different from the fulfilment of social responsibilities of a communal, cultural or religious nature;

(d) production “for others” refers to work performed:

(i) through, or for organizations comprising market and non-market units (i.e. organization-based volunteering) including through or for self-help, mutual aid or community-based groups of which the volunteer is a member;

(ii) for households other than the household of the volunteer worker or of related family members (i.e. direct volunteering).

38. *Excluded* from volunteer work:

(a) community service and work by prisoners ordered by a court or similar authority, compulsory military or alternative civilian service;

(b) unpaid work required as part of education or training programmes (i.e. unpaid trainees);

(c) work for others performed during the working time associated with employment, or during paid time-off from an employee job granted by the employer [to do that specific activity](#).

39. Essential items that should be collected for national accounts and sectoral analyses of volunteer work include the working time associated with each relevant activity cluster, the industry, occupation, and type of economic unit (market units/non-market units/households).

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## Measures of labour underutilization

40. **Labour underutilization** refers to mismatches between labour supply and demand, which translate into an unmet need for employment among the population. Measures of labour underutilization include, but may not be restricted to:
- (a) *time-related underemployment*, when the working time of persons in employment is insufficient in relation to alternative employment situations in which they are willing and available to engage;
  - (b) *unemployment*, reflecting an active job search by persons not in employment who are available for this form of work;
  - (c) *potential labour force*, referring to persons not in employment who express an interest in this form of work but for whom existing conditions limit their active job search and/or their availability.
41. These measures are the basis to produce headline indicators for labour market monitoring. For more comprehensive assessment they can be used with other indicators relating to the labour market, as recommended in paragraph 76, in particular skill-related inadequate employment and income-related inadequate employment as per the relevant international statistical standards.
42. Other dimensions of underutilization of labour at the level of individuals as well as the economy are skills mismatches and slack work, in particular among the self-employed.

## Time-related underemployment

43. **Persons in time-related underemployment** are defined as all persons in employment who, during a short reference period, wanted to work additional hours, whose working time in all jobs was less than a specified hours threshold, and who were available to work additional hours given an opportunity for more work, where:

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- (a) the “working time” concept is hours actually worked or hours usually worked, dependent on the measurement objective (short or long-term situations) and in accordance with the international statistical standards on the topic;
  - (b) “additional hours” may be hours in the same job, in an additional job(s) or in a replacement job(s);
  - (c) the “hours threshold” is based on the boundary between full-time and part-time employment, on the median or modal values of the hours usually worked of all persons in employment, or on working time norms as specified in relevant legislation or national practice, and set for specific worker groups;
  - (d) “available” for additional hours should be established in reference to a set short reference period that reflects the typical length of time required in the national context between leaving one job and starting another.

44. Depending on the working time concept applied, among persons in time-related underemployment (i.e. who wanted and were “available” to work “additional hours”), it is possible to identify the following groups:

- (a) persons whose hours usually and actually worked were below the “hours threshold”;
- (b) persons whose hours usually worked were below the “hours threshold” but whose hours actually worked were above the threshold;
- (c) persons “not at work” or whose hours actually worked were below the “hours threshold” due to economic reasons (e.g. a reduction in economic activity including temporary lay-off and slack work or the effect of the low or off season).

45. In order to separately identify the three groups of persons in time-related underemployment, information is needed on both hours usually worked and hours actually

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worked. Countries using only one working time concept will cover, for hours usually worked, the sum of groups (a) and (b); for hours actually worked, the group (c), so long as the reasons for being “not at work” or for working below the “hours threshold” are also collected.

46. To assess further the pressure on the labour market exerted by persons in time-related underemployment, it may be useful to identify separately persons who carried out activities to seek “additional hours” in a recent period that may comprise the last four weeks or calendar month.

## Unemployment

47. **Persons in unemployment** are defined as all those of working age who were not in employment, carried out activities to seek employment during a specified recent period and were currently available to take up employment given a job opportunity, where:
- (a) “not in employment” is assessed with respect to the short reference period for the measurement of employment;
  - (b) to “seek employment” refers to any activity when carried out, during a specified recent period comprising the last four weeks or one month, for the purpose of finding a job or setting up a business or agricultural undertaking. This includes also part-time, informal, temporary, seasonal or casual employment, within the national territory or abroad. Examples of such activities are:
    - (i) arranging for financial resources, applying for permits, licences;
    - (ii) looking for land, premises, machinery, supplies, farming inputs;
    - (iii) seeking the assistance of friends, relatives or other types of intermediaries;
    - (iv) registering with or contacting public or private employment services;

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- (v) applying to employers directly, checking at worksites, farms, factory gates, markets or other assembly places;
  - (vi) placing or answering newspaper or online job advertisements;
  - (vii) placing or updating résumés on professional or social networking sites online;
- (c) the point when the enterprise starts to exist should be used to distinguish between search activities aimed at setting up a business and the work activity itself, as evidenced by the enterprise's registration to operate or by when financial resources become available, the necessary infrastructure or materials are in place or the first client or order is received, depending on the context;
- (d) "currently available" serves as a test of readiness to start a job in the present, assessed with respect to a short reference period comprising that used to measure employment:
- (i) depending on national circumstances, the reference period may be extended to include a short subsequent period not exceeding two weeks in total, so as to ensure adequate coverage of unemployment situations among different population groups.

48. *Included* in unemployment are:

- (a) **future starters** defined as persons "not in employment" and "currently available" who did not "seek employment", as specified in paragraph 47, because they had already made arrangements to start a job within a short subsequent period, set according to the general length of waiting time for starting a new job in the national context but generally not greater than three months;

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- (b) participants in skills training or retraining schemes within employment promotion programmes, who on that basis, were “not in employment”, not “currently available” and did not “seek employment” because they had a job offer to start within a short subsequent period generally not greater than three months;
- (c) persons “not in employment” who carried out activities to migrate abroad in order to work for pay or profit but who were still waiting for the opportunity to leave.
49. For a structural analysis of unemployment it may be useful to collect information on the duration of the search for employment, measured from when unemployed persons began carrying out activities to “seek employment”, or from the end of their last job, whichever is shorter.
50. Among persons in unemployment, it may be useful to identify separately those in **long-term unemployment** defined as those with a duration of search for employment, as specified in paragraph 49, lasting 12 months or more, including the reference period. To monitor policies related to provision of social benefits, a shorter duration limit may be used (i.e. 6 months or more).

### Potential labour force (entrants)

51. **Potential labour force** is defined as all persons of working age who, during the short reference period, were neither in employment nor in unemployment and:
- (a) carried out activities to “seek employment”, were not “currently available” but would become available within a short subsequent period established in the light of national circumstances (i.e. *unavailable jobseekers*); or
- (b) did not carry out activities to “seek employment”, but wanted employment and were “currently available” (i.e. *available potential jobseekers*).

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52. Among those in paragraph 51(b) it may be useful to identify separately **discouraged jobseekers**, comprising those who did not “seek employment” for labour market-related reasons as listed in paragraph 80(b).
53. A separate group with an expressed interest in employment not included within the potential labour force but relevant for social and gender analysis in specific contexts is the **willing non-jobseekers**, defined as persons who wanted employment but did not “seek employment” and were not “currently available”.
54. In order to identify the two categories of the potential labour force as well as the willing non-seekers, questions on activities to “seek employment” and “current availability” should be asked of all persons “not in employment” in the short reference period. The question to determine whether persons wanted employment should only be asked to those who did not carry out activities to “seek employment”.
55. For purposes of computing indicators of labour underutilization (LU3 and LU4 as defined in paragraph 73(c)), the reference population used is the **extended labour force**, defined as the sum of the labour force plus the potential labour force.

## Programmes of data collection

### Strategies for data collection and reporting frequency

56. To meet the need for information to monitor labour markets and work patterns, a national data collection strategy should be established that allows for different sets of statistics to be reported, as relevant, on:
- (a) *a sub-annual basis*, main aggregates of employment, the labour force, labour underutilization, including unemployment, and subsistence foodstuff producers, in order to monitor short-term trends and seasonal variations (e.g. high and low season, quarterly);

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- (b) *an annual basis*, detailed statistics of the labour force and of labour underutilization, including unemployment, that permit the structural analysis of labour markets and statistics of working time in relation to the total number of jobs/work activities contributing to production within the SNA production boundary in order to compile national accounts;
  - (c) *a less frequent basis*, depending on national circumstances, for the purpose of in-depth analysis, benchmarking and comprehensive macro-socio-economic estimations, statistics on:
    - (i) participation and working time in own-use production work, unpaid trainee work and volunteer work;
    - (ii) particular topics, such as labour migration, child labour, transition in and out of employment, youth, gender issues in work, household characteristics, work in rural areas, the relationship between employment, income and other economic and social characteristics, etc.

### **Measurement over short and long observation periods**

57. Statistics that support the analysis of short-term trends and of the situation of individuals and the economy over a long observation period such as a year, may be produced by means of different data collection approaches:

- (a) Measurement of the current situation during the short reference periods specified in paragraph 19, repeated over a long observation period, is recommended to achieve optimal coverage of seasonal and other temporal variations in work activity patterns for purposes of producing sub-annual and annual estimates for short-term trend and structural analyses. In particular:



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- (i) repeated measurement by means either of population registers with individual-level data or household surveys with panel samples or subsamples permits the assessment of the current and long-term situation of both individuals and the economy;
  - (ii) measurement by means of a one-time survey with nationally representative sample spread over the duration of the long observation period permits assessments at the level of the economy.
- (b) Where frequent data collection is not possible, the aim should be to progressively increase data collection in the year so as to provide estimates for at least the high/low seasons, rather than expanding the reference periods of measurement.
- (c) Alternatively, a one-time cross-sectional survey can be used to produce both current and annual estimates combining the recommended short reference period, as specified in paragraph 19, with retrospective recall over a long observation period. This serves to approximate levels of participation and related working time in employment, own-use production of goods, unpaid trainee work and volunteer work. In such case, the long observation period and recall method used should be chosen so as to reduce respondent burden and memory recall errors to the extent possible:
- (i) the long observation period may refer to the last 12 months, calendar year, agricultural, education or tourist season or any other season relevant to national circumstances;
  - (ii) retrospective recall may relate to short, individual time periods (e.g. month-by-month) or to jobs/work activities so as to establish participation in the different forms of work based on broad categories of part-time/full-time (instead of the

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one-hour criterion); or to a single recall over the entire period so as to establish the main form of work of persons as recommended in paragraph 17.

58. Measurement over a long observation period, particularly the last 12 months or calendar year, is especially important for national accounts estimates and to assess the relationship of work statistics with other economic and social statistics that use a long observation period, such as statistics on household income, poverty, social exclusion and education.
59. Countries using repeated measurement or retrospective recall on a period-by-period basis should aim to:
- (a) measure gross labour market flows (on a monthly, quarterly and/or yearly basis) reflecting national policy priorities, in order to shed light on labour market dynamics, job stability and transitions between the different labour force statuses, status in employment, forms of work, etc.; and
  - (b) prepare summary statistics by means of aggregation or averaging across the different periods, as appropriate, in order to describe the situation of individuals and of the economy over a long observation period, for example, long-term employment situation of persons and annual employment estimates.

### Population coverage

60. In general, statistics of work should cover the resident population comprising all persons who are *usual residents* of the country, regardless of sex, national origin, citizenship or geographic location of their place of work. This includes usual residents who work outside the country (e.g. cross-border workers, seasonal workers, other short-term migrant workers, volunteer workers, nomads).
61. In countries with a significant in-flow of short-term or temporary migrant workers, employment statistics should be supplemented to the extent possible with information

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about the employment characteristics of non-usual residents working in the national territory, so as to permit analysis of their situation and impact on the labour market.

62. For complete national production accounts, volume of work should cover all forms of work performed by persons working in *resident producer units*, regardless of sex, national origin, citizenship or place of usual residence. This comprises all jobs/work activities, whether main or secondary, including those performed by non-usual residents working in resident producer units.
63. In specifying the concepts of *usual residence* and *resident producer units*, countries should aim to maintain coherence with international standards for population statistics and the system of national accounts. In principle, therefore, the scope of the statistics includes the population living in private households and in collective living quarters, covering both the civilian population and the armed forces. Countries should endeavour to use all available sources to produce statistics with the widest population coverage.

### Age limits

64. In principle, the national system of work statistics will cover the work activities of the population in all age groups. To serve different policy concerns, separate statistics are needed for the working-age population and, where relevant, for children in productive activities as specified in the international statistical standards on the topic.
65. To determine the **working-age population**:
- (a) the lower age limit should be set taking into consideration the minimum age for employment and exceptions specified in national laws or regulations, or the age of completion of compulsory schooling;

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- (b) no upper age limit should be set, so as to permit comprehensive coverage of work activities of the adult population and to examine transitions between employment and retirement.

66. The lower age limit for the collection of statistics, however, may differ according to whether or not a separate programme exists for child labour statistics.

## Sources

67. Statistics of work may be compiled using a single or a variety of data sources. In general, household-based surveys are best suited for collecting 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, work in the informal economy, own-use production work, unpaid trainee work and volunteer work.

- (a) Labour force surveys are the main source of statistics for monitoring labour markets, labour underutilization including unemployment, and the quality of jobs and working conditions of persons in employment and in unpaid trainee work. They are also a useful source when the objective is to capture general patterns of participation of the population in different forms of work. For these purposes, short add-on modules or supplements on own-use production work, unpaid trainee work and volunteer work may be attached to labour force surveys for completion by all or a subsample of respondents on a periodic or continuous basis, as appropriate, with due regard to respondent burden and overall survey quality, including sampling and non-sampling errors.

- (b) Specialized household surveys on topics such as time-use, education and training, volunteering, agriculture, child labour and labour migration may be more appropriate for comprehensive measurement and in-depth analysis of participation in specific

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forms of work, or for focusing on particular subgroups of the population. Time-use surveys, in particular, are a main source of statistics on participation and time spent in own-use production work and volunteer work for purposes of individual, household and macroeconomic level analyses. Their methodology, based on the use of detailed time diaries to record how respondents allocate their time over different activities performed during one or several 24-hour days for a given reference period, makes them particularly well-suited to capture work and non-work activities performed simultaneously or intermittently. They are thus a potentially useful source in developing estimates of total working time that cover the different forms of work. They may also be used for assessing the quality of estimates on employment and volume of work derived from other surveys, and for refining other household-based survey questionnaires.

- (c) General household surveys covering related topics such as living standards, household income and expenditure, and household budget can be used to meet the need for statistics of work and of the labour force by means of the inclusion of dedicated modules, in so far as the sample permits computation of estimates with an adequate level of precision. They are a cost-effective alternative when a dedicated labour force survey is not feasible and are an important source to support analysis of the relationship between different forms of work and household livelihoods, poverty and other economic and social outcomes. Other household surveys that focus mainly on a topic not directly concerned with work, such as health and housing, may serve to produce, in particular, measures of employment, of labour force status or of main form of work in a short or long reference period, as explanatory variables.
- (d) The population census is a main source of statistics for benchmarking purposes, for preparing sampling frames for household surveys and for producing estimates for

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small geographic areas and small groups. This is particularly pertinent in respect of non-nationals living in the country, persons living in collective living quarters and persons without fixed premises, as well as of detailed occupational groups. Questionnaire space and operational considerations, however, place a limit on the work-related topics included, so measurement may be confined to core questions establishing the labour force status and main form of work of the population and capturing essential characteristics of persons in employment, in own-use production work, and in unpaid trainee work, in accordance with the latest international recommendations for this source.

68. Administrative records, when developed for use as a statistical source, may be useful for producing frequent and detailed statistics to support analysis of flows. Registers such as those based on employment services, pension schemes, social security and tax systems, and vocational education and training programmes provide statistics for persons covered by the scheme or register concerned for reference periods of one month, quarter or year. Depending on national circumstances, the statistics may cover employed persons in formal market and non-market units, participants in employment promotion programmes, in paid and unpaid apprenticeship schemes, and in organized paid and unpaid traineeship programmes, as well as recipients of unemployment benefits. Statistics on usual residents who are cross-border workers, short-term workers or contract migrant workers abroad may be obtained from overseas employment administrations, and on work permit holders from labour offices.
69. Economic censuses are essential to develop list and area-based frames for establishment surveys. Establishment surveys are a relevant source of statistics, particularly on employees, including on non-usual residents working in resident producer units, for reference periods of a week, month, year or other pay period. Along with administrative

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records, they are essential for producing estimates of total jobs by industry in the country, of job vacancies, of employee earnings and of labour costs. In addition, these surveys constitute a potential source of information on apprenticeships, internships and traineeships, and on organization-based volunteering.

70. These different statistical sources should be treated as complementary, to be used in combination in order to derive comprehensive sets of statistics, where feasible. The national programme of statistics should seek to ensure the use of common concepts, definitions and classifications and of overlapping reference periods and should assess the coherence and comparability of the results.

## Indicators

71. A set of indicators that serves the principal objectives of the statistics should be selected by countries for dissemination according to the relevant reporting periodicities, as recommended in paragraph 56. Indicators should be computed for the population as a whole and disaggregated by sex, specified age groups (including separate categories for youth), level of educational attainment, geographic region, urban and rural areas, and other relevant characteristics taking account of the statistical precision of the estimates.
72. To reflect national circumstances, the set should comprise selected indicators from among the three groups identified in paragraph 73 to monitor labour market performance, participation in own-use production work, unpaid trainee work, volunteer work, and for assessing volume of work.
73. The three groups of indicators for monitoring labour market performance are:
- (a) headcounts of the labour force, of persons outside the labour force, of persons in employment, of persons in time-related underemployment, of persons in unemployment, of the potential labour force and of subsistence foodstuff producers;

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- (b) rates computed in relation to the working-age population (e.g. employment-to-population ratio, labour force participation rate, rate of subsistence foodstuff producers);
- (c) measures of labour underutilization, of which more than one amongst the following headline indicators is needed so as to reflect the nature of underutilization in different settings and phases of the economic cycle:

**LU1:** Unemployment rate:

$$[\text{persons in unemployment} / \text{labour force}] \times 100$$

**LU2:** Combined rate of time-related underemployment and unemployment:

$$[(\text{persons in time-related underemployment} + \text{persons in unemployment}) / \text{labour force}] \times 100$$

**LU3:** Combined rate of unemployment and potential labour force: <sup>2</sup>

$$[(\text{persons in unemployment} + \text{potential labour force}) / (\text{extended labour force})] \times 100$$

**LU4:** Composite measure of labour underutilization:

$$[(\text{persons in time-related underemployment} + \text{persons in unemployment} + \text{potential labour force}) / (\text{extended labour force})] \times 100$$

- (d) other labour underutilization measures include:

- (i) long-term unemployment rate computed in relation to the labour force;

<sup>2</sup> Replaces optional relaxation of the “seeking work” criterion in the previous standards.



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- (ii) rate of volume of time-related underemployment, according to the international statistical standards on the topic.

74. Indicators for the population of working age in own-use production work, in unpaid trainee work and in volunteer work include:

- (a) headcounts, participation rates and volume measures by activity cluster of own-use producers of goods;
- (b) headcounts, participation rates and volume measures by activity cluster of own-use providers of services;
- (c) headcounts, participation rates and volume measures by programme type of unpaid trainees;
- (d) headcounts, participation rates and volume measures by type of economic unit (market units/non-market units/households) of volunteer workers.

75. Indicators of volume of work should be prepared in accordance with the international statistical standards on working time, for each form of work and for work activities:

- (a) within the 2008 SNA production boundary;
- (b) beyond the 2008 SNA production boundary but inside the General production boundary.

76. As part of the national indicator set, countries should include, additional measures for monitoring labour market performance relating to, in particular:

- (a) the informal economy, especially informal sector employment and informal employment, according to the relevant international statistical standards;
- (b) activities to “seek employment” by persons in employment, indicating pressure on the labour market;

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- (c) inadequate employment situations due to skills, income or excessive working time, according to the relevant international statistical standards;
  - (d) slack work among the self-employed;
  - (e) gross labour market flows between labour force statuses and within employment.

77. To monitor working conditions and the relationship between the different forms of work, poverty and livelihoods, countries should endeavour to compute on a regular basis indicators relating to decent work and quality of employment, in line with emerging policy needs, in particular measures of income poverty and inequality such as rates of low pay and working poor, and distribution of income.

## Tabulation and analysis

78. Statistics of work should be systematically tabulated by significant characteristics, particularly sex, specified age groups, level of educational attainment and by region, including urban and rural areas.
79. For a descriptive analysis of participation in the labour market, tabulations should be prepared of:
- (a) working-age population by labour force status and category of labour underutilization; and transitions (gross flows) between statuses, where possible;
  - (b) persons in employment, in unemployment or outside the labour force by characteristics of their current or last main job, such as industry, occupation, status in employment, type of economic unit (formal market units/informal market units/non-market units/households), institutional sector, geographic location of place of work, type of remuneration, specified bands of employment-related income and specified working-time hour bands, according to the relevant international statistical standards;

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- (c) persons in unemployment by duration intervals of search for employment that permit separate identification of persons in long-term unemployment.

80. For analysis of persons outside the labour force, the following alternative classifications may be used separately or in combination to shed light on specific subgroups affected by discouragement or by gender-based, economic or social barriers to employment:

- (a) degree of labour market attachment of persons outside the labour force:
  - (i) persons “seeking employment” but not “currently available”;
  - (ii) persons not “seeking employment” but “currently available”;
  - (iii) persons neither “seeking employment” nor “currently available” but who want employment;
  - (iv) persons neither “seeking employment” nor “currently available” who do not want employment;
- (b) main reason for not “seeking employment”, not being “currently available” or not wanting employment: personal reasons (own 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, qualifications or jobs matching the person’s skills, lack of jobs in the area, considered too young or too old by prospective employers); lack of infrastructure (assets, roads, transportation, employment services); other sources of income (pensions, rents); estrangement;
- (c) main activity status, as self-declared, in the following categories: own-use production of goods; own-use provision of services; unpaid trainee work; volunteer work; studies; self-care (due to illness or disability); leisure activities (social, cultural, recreational).

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81. For analysis of the characteristics and conditions of work of persons in unpaid trainee work, tabulations may be prepared by industry, occupation, specified working-time hour bands, programme type and length, contract characteristics and coverage, existence of participation fees and nature of certification.
82. For participation in own-use production work and in volunteer work and for assessments of their contribution to the economy tabulations should be presented by activity clusters and by specified working time hour bands; in the case of volunteer work, they should also be presented by type of economic unit (market units/non-market units/households).
83. Persons in own-use production work may usefully be classified as:
- (a) own-use producers of both goods and services;
  - (b) own-use providers of services who do not produce any goods; or
  - (c) own-use producers of goods who do not provide any services.
84. To shed light on their integration into the labour market, tabulations of persons in own-use production work, of subsistence foodstuff producers and of persons in volunteer work are needed by their labour force status, labour underutilization category and related characteristics.
85. For macroeconomic purposes and to inform labour and other social policies related to quality of employment, tabulations of the total number of jobs in resident producer units are needed by selected characteristics, in particular by industry, specified working-time hour bands and by type of economic unit (formal market units/informal market units/non-market units/households).
86. Since participation in employment and in other forms of work often depends on family or household-level characteristics, particularly in rural areas of developing countries where

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work is largely organized on a household or extended family basis, it is essential to prepare tabulations for:

- (a) persons in employment, by marital status and by presence of dependents or persons requiring care (young children, the elderly, others);
- (b) households, by number of working-age members according to their labour force status and main form of work, by main sources of income (income from self-employment, from wage employment, from own-use production work, and other sources), by bands of household income;
- (c) households without members in employment and households with members who are subsistence foodstuff producers, by size, composition, main sources of income and other relevant economic and social characteristics.

## **Evaluation, communication and dissemination**

- 87. In producing work statistics, countries should adhere to statistical standards and other requirements as set out in the United Nations Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and the Guidelines concerning dissemination practices for labour statistics endorsed by the 16th International Conference of Labour Statisticians (1998).
- 88. To facilitate and promote a careful interpretation of the statistical results produced as part of the national programme of statistics, procedures should be put in place to monitor the quality of the statistical production process from planning and design to data collection, processing, estimation and dissemination, and to indicate when changes in time series are of statistical significance.
- 89. The implementation of a sound, publicized communication strategy to disseminate official statistics involving government, social partners and the public is as important as the data collection programmes themselves. This strategy must ensure that statistics of work are

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made available by the official statistical agency on an impartial basis to all users of the statistics, including other government units.

90. Official statistics on different forms of work, on the labour force and on labour underutilization should be disseminated in a variety of formats, including electronic 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. Existing public-use files that guarantee the confidentiality of persons and establishments (i.e. anonymized, confidentialized micro-datasets) should also be made available to analysts and other interested users.
91. To enhance the transparency of the statistics, whether produced on a sub-annual, annual or less frequent basis, countries are urged to report them accompanied by the appropriate methodological information, with particular regard to: scope and coverage; concepts and definitions; data collection methods used; sample size and design, where relevant; any estimation or adjustment methods, including seasonal adjustments or imputation procedures; and, where possible, measures of data quality and precision, including response rates, relative standard errors that account for complex survey designs, where relevant, and non-sampling errors.
92. The impact of revisions, new time series or indicators deriving from this resolution and of changes in historical series should be evaluated over a specified period of time before their release. They should be adequately indicated and documented, including through publication of dual estimates or series, for at least one year, following their implementation.

## International reporting

93. For international reporting, countries should routinely report statistics of work and the labour force, in particular headline indicators of labour underutilization (from among LU1,

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LU2, LU3 and LU4) for the population as a whole, by sex, by urban/rural areas and, to the extent possible, by broad levels of educational attainment and by standard age ranges. Five-year age bands should be used for the main aggregates, where the lowest age bracket refers to persons aged 15–19 years and the highest age bracket to persons aged 75 years and above. Where concerns regarding the precision of the estimates 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 and above.

94. The classifications applied to the statistics of work and of the labour force should adhere to, or be convertible to, the most recent version of international standard classifications, such as the International Classification of Status in Employment (ICSE), the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO), the International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC), the International Classification of Activities for Time-Use Statistics (ICATUS), the International Classification of Non-profit Organizations (ICNPO), and the International Standard Classification of Education (ISCED), as appropriate.
95. To enhance and promote the transparency and comparability of statistics reported internationally, countries are urged to compile and disseminate adequate information on the source, coverage and methodologies used, including national concepts, definitions and reference periods, noting any departures from the relevant international statistical standards. Countries should, therefore, design or adjust their data collection and processing procedures so as to permit them to document fully any differences between relevant national statistical or administrative concepts and definitions and this resolution and, where possible, to compute and report main aggregates on the basis of both the national and the international definitions.

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## Future work

96. To promote the implementation of this resolution, the ILO should carry out its work through a collaborative mechanism between countries, international, regional and subregional organizations, and workers' and employers' representatives, focused on:
- (a) wide dissemination and communication of these standards, their impact and interpretation;
  - (b) timely development of technical manuals and model data collection instruments, to be made available in the three official languages, and in other languages with the support of partner institutions;
  - (c) further conduct of conceptual and methodological work including testing;
  - (d) sharing good practice among countries;
  - (e) technical assistance through training and capacity building, especially to national statistical agencies and relevant statistical services in line ministries; and
  - (f) analysis and presentation of work statistics.
97. The ILO should, in collaboration with interested countries, international, regional and subregional organizations, and workers' and employers' representatives, continue methodological work in reference to this resolution, on the measurement of underutilization or inadequate employment related to skills, to employment-related income, and to excessive working time and report to the 20th International Conference of Labour Statisticians, with a view to adopting future international statistical standards.