

ISSUES RELATING TO PUBLICATION AND
DISSEMINATION POLICIES AND PRACTICES

Report prepared by the International Labour Office

Issues

Two major problems have surfaced in recent years, both of which are closely linked to the prevailing financial constraints. One concerns translation. In the past, the Bureau of Statistics has had a policy of producing all its publications in the three working languages of the Organisation. Recently, the resources available for the translation of documents have declined, and the result has been the issuing of some statistical publications in one language only. The other problem concerns the publication itself. In a number of cases, resources have not been available for printing and binding, even when the basic work of translation has already been carried out. One solution envisaged is to reproduce the document as a working paper, uncosted, which can be made available on request.

The Bureau of Statistics would be interested to learn of the experience, if any, of other organisations in connection with these issues and the solutions adopted.

Restructuring of data base

During the past year the ILO Bureau of Statistics has started work on a complete restructuring of its data base LABORSTA. The structure of the current data base was conceived in 1980 with the principal objective of producing by computer the Year Book and the Bulletin of Labour Statistics. As the Bureau of Statistics is increasingly being called upon to furnish data and meta data for comparative studies and longitudinal analyses to other United Nations agencies, to the general public as well as for its own use and for that of other ILO users, it soon became evident that the present structure whereby data are stored by subject in files representing the different tables of the Year Book did not lend itself easily to this kind of work. It was therefore decided that in order to be able to provide the kind of data which was now frequently being sought, LABORSTA should be entirely restructured and data collected and stored by source and linked together and arranged in the form of time-series.

Once the restructuring of LABORSTA has been completed (early in the 1990s) data will be presented by source instead of subject in the Year Book and Bulletin of Labour Statistics.

Publications of the Bureau of Statistics

Compared to when?

In order to permit the inclusion of the maximum amount of data for the previous year, it has been decided to change the publication date of the Year Book to the third quarter of the year figuring on the cover. The next issue of this publication will thus appear in the third quarter of 1990.

Whilst there will be no regular edition of the Year Book in 1989, a Retrospective Year Book presenting data from Population Censuses conducted during the period 1946-89, will be published early in 1990.

The Statistical Sources and Methods series are currently being updated and expanded:

Volume 1 (Consumer price indices) will be revised and expanded in order to take into account the resolution concerning consumer price indices adopted by the 14th International Conference of Labour Statisticians. The new edition will describe national practices on the measurement of major components of consumer price indices and will also attempt to describe country practices with respect to some of the major issues on which the Conference did not take any definite stand or did not make any definite recommendation.

*Manual
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Rec on
Consumer
prices*

Volume 2 (Employment, wages and hours of work - establishment surveys) will in future include methodological descriptions of the labour cost statistics series published in the Year Book.

Volume 3 (Economically active population, employment, unemployment and hours of work - household surveys) will be expanded to cover the methodology of statistics derived from population censuses.

Volume 4 (Employment, unemployment, wages and hours of work - administrative records and related sources) has recently been published in English. Due to budgetary restrictions, it is not expected to publish the French and Spanish versions in bound form (which was also the case for Volume 2). However, it is envisaged to make them available on demand in the form of STAT Working Papers.

Work has been completed on the Revised International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO-88) and it is expected that all three language versions (English, French and Spanish) will be issued before the end of 1989. It is also planned to publish a manual on the development, maintenance, revision and use of national occupational classifications. In addition, a documentation centre is in the process of being set up in the Bureau of Statistics on literature and practices concerning national occupational classifications. This centre will be responsible for the continuous updating of ISCO-88 occupational titles and descriptions, and will contain all the relevant information available in the ILO.

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An updated 1988 edition of Current International Recommendations on Labour Statistics has been issued in English, French and Spanish. This publication includes the Labour Statistics Convention, 1985 (No. 160) and Recommendation, 1985 (No. 170), adopted by the International Labour Conference and a number of resolutions adopted by the International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 1982 and 1987 to supersede earlier ones.

Work has continued on household income and expenditure surveys and two publications are envisaged on this subject. The first will be a compendium on methodology of household income and expenditure surveys carried out during the period 1977-1988. The compendium will provide information on a number of issues especially with regard to the measurement of income components (with particular emphasis on income from self employment) and expenditure (including the classification of goods and services). It will also provide users of HIES statistics with background information on such data, which will facilitate international comparisons, and will be especially useful to national statisticians when they have to decide on the methodology of their own household income and expenditure surveys. The second publication will contain comparative basic statistics on the structure, composition and distribution of household income and expenditure. (1)

Work is progressing on the subject of internationally comparable annual estimates of employment and unemployment, and it is planned to publish data for a certain number of Member States in a special chapter of the new restructured Year Book. The first pilot tables will appear in the Bulletin of Labour Statistics late 1989 or early 1990. A document entitled "Methodological and Practical Guide to the ILO-Comparable Employment and Unemployment Estimates" is in preparation and will be issued during the next biennium.