

## DECISIONS

(Rapporteur's text, subject to editing)<sup>1</sup>

### **Decision 1: Global indicator framework for the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) Expressed its appreciation to the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators, supported its report, congratulated the group on its accomplishment, and commended its country-led, open, inclusive and transparent process in developing the global indicator framework;
- (b) Asked the IAEG-SDGs to continue to work with the same level of focus, determination and ambition, maintaining the same level of inclusiveness and transparency of the process so far;
- (c) Agreed on the revised terms of reference of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators (IAEG-SDGs), as presented in annex I of the report;
- (d) Agreed as a practical starting point with the proposed global indicator framework for the Goals and targets of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development as reflected in the list of indicators presented in annex IV of the report, subject to future technical refinement;
- (e) Requested the IAEG-SDGs to take into account the specific proposals for refinements of indicators made by Member States during the discussion;
- (f) Recognized that the development of a robust and high-quality indicator framework is a technical process that will need to continue over time, including by making use of expertise in other related expert processes, and requested the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators to provide its proposals and a plan for reviews of the indicator framework, to the 48<sup>th</sup> session of the Statistical Commission;
- (g) Agreed with the proposed programme of work by the Inter-agency and Expert Group on Sustainable Development Goal Indicators for the implementation of the global indicator framework, as described in section IV.B to the report, including in particular the establishment of the tier system for the indicators to be discussed and agreed at the 3<sup>rd</sup> meeting of the IAEG-SDGs in Mexico City, and its proposed work plan for the coming year, as described in section IV.C;
- (h) Asked the IAEG-SDGs to report back to the Commission at its 48<sup>th</sup> session on progress made in developing and improving the global indicators, especially on plans to develop methodologies for indicators in tier III, including for work on definitions and standards to be agreed at the international level with a view to guaranteeing international comparability;

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<sup>1</sup> This document contains the final decisions of the Statistical Commission as compiled and released by the Rapporteur on 18 March 2016. This text will be submitted for editing and translation as part of the full report of the Statistical Commission. This text must not be quoted.

- (i) Emphasised that the global indicators proposed are intended for global follow-up and review of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and are not necessarily applicable to all national contexts. Indicators for regional, national and subnational levels of monitoring will be developed at the regional and national levels;
- (j) Emphasized that national ownership is key to achieving sustainable development and that national reviews are voluntary and country-led, will take into account different national realities, capacities and levels of development and will respect policy space and priorities for all countries including the least developed countries, the landlocked developing countries, the small island developing states and other countries in special situations;
- (k) Stressed that the implementation of the indicator framework will present a challenge in many countries and that appropriate efforts to strengthen national statistical capacities will need to be made, including by ensuring coordination between the IAEG-SDGs and the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development (HLG); Also stressed, in accordance with ECOSOC resolution 2006/6 that capacity building will be particularly important in developing countries, especially African countries, the least developed countries, the landlocked developing countries, the small island developing states and other countries in special situations;
- (l) Agreed that the compilation of global indicators will be based to the greatest extent possible on comparable and standardized national official statistics, provided by countries to the international statistical systems and that when other sources and methodologies are used, these will be reviewed and agreed by national statistical authorities and presented in a transparent manner;
- (m) Agreed that coordination between national statistical systems and international organizations is important, including in order to ensure transparency and efficiency in reporting, avoiding duplications, and that attention should be given to strengthening the reporting capacity of poorer countries;
- (n) Agreed that improving data disaggregation is fundamental for the full implementation of the indicator framework and to fully reflect the principles of the 2030 agenda to ensure that no-one should be left behind and stressed that efforts should be made to strengthen national capacities in this area and to develop the necessary statistical standards and tools, including by establishing a working group to work on data disaggregation as a subgroup of the IAEG-SDGs.

**Decision 2: High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) Expressed its appreciation to the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development for its report and the work conducted;
- (b) Agreed in principle on the revised terms of reference of the High-level Group and asked the Bureau of the Statistical Commission to approve their final version, taking into account the comments including the introduction of a member rotation system as in IAEG-SDGs received during the discussion; Recommended, in particular that the Terms of Reference more clearly indicate the role of

the HLG as the UN focal point for coordinating with partnerships (as well as with other agencies of the UN system) in addressing data and statistical gaps pertaining to the SDGs;

(c) Expressed its appreciation to the Friends of the Chair group on Broader Measures of Progress and agreed that the group has now completed its work;

(d) Welcomed the draft concept note for the organization of the UN World Forum on Sustainable Development Data and requested the High-level Group to finalize it in full consultation with all relevant stakeholders in line with the UN Secretary-General's synthesis report "The Road to Dignity";

(e) Noted the draft outline of the Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data, which will provide a roadmap for the modernization and strengthening of statistical systems for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to be developed further in consultation with all relevant stakeholders and taking into account existing regional roadmaps, and welcomed the opportunity to comment on it by the deadline of 22 March 2016;

(f) Endorsed the proposal to establish a joint-subgroup of the High-level Group and the IAEG-SDGs tasked with developing a plan to address the immediate priorities including statistical capacity-building and financial framework for the implementation of the global SDG indicators;

(g) Approved the proposed programme of work for the High-level Group and asked the group to report back to the Commission on its implementation at its 48<sup>th</sup> session.

### **Decision 3: Transformative agenda for official statistics (Item 3b)**

The Statistical Commission:

(a) Welcomed the SG's report on a Transformative Agenda for Official Statistics;

(b) Reconfirmed the necessity to modernise and strengthen statistical systems at national, regional and global level built around standard-based architecture, taking into account national specificities, in order to respond more effectively and efficiently to emerging users' needs and, in particular, to address the data demand in relation to the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and related initiatives;

(c) Acknowledged the complementarity between the transformative agenda and various initiatives at national and regional level, in particular the good work done by the High Level Group on the Modernisation of Official Statistics, and suggested to further promote the crosscutting nature of a limited set of thematic areas for the modernisation of statistical systems and contribute to the formulation of a global action plan prepared by the High-level Group for Partnerships, Coordination, and Capacity Building for statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

(d) Encouraged the completion of the series of regional conferences and the formulation of regional roadmaps for a Transformative Agenda through the moderation of the five thematic areas, described in the report, and by taking stock of existing programmes and activities for integrating and modernising statistical systems in close consultation with member countries, regional commissions and agencies, and other stakeholders and eventually mobilising funds and sharing innovative technology, know-how and good practices;

(e) Recommended to build on the outcome of the Friday Seminar on 4 March 2016 and related

initiatives and programmes at regional level and highlighted that the transformation of statistical systems is more than a technical issue and therefore requests:

- High-level political commitment for access to and use of administrative sources, Big Data and geospatial information for statistical purposes through appropriate national legislative frameworks;
  - partnerships with data providers and enhance training of senior managers in handling the transformative processes based on a culture of performance and integrity;
  - interregional collaboration in cross cutting thematic areas by establishing global coordination mechanisms building on existing regional initiatives and programmes such as in the areas of integrated business statistics and modernization of statistical production processes;
- (f) Requested a final report on the outcomes and recommendations from the regional conferences on a Transformative Agenda to be submitted to the 48th Session of the Statistical Commission.
- (g) Agreed that the progress of the High Level Group on the Modernisation of Official Statistics be reported regularly under this agenda item.

#### **Decision 4: Big data for official statistics (Item 3c)**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) Appreciated the report of the Global Working Group, and supported the outcome of the second International Conference on Big Data for Official Statistics in Abu Dhabi in 2015;
- (b) Agreed generally with the conclusions of the 2015 global survey on Big Data strategies and projects, especially regarding the need for training and more pilot projects with participation from developing countries;
- (c) Supported the proposed priorities of the work programme of the group and requested the group to:
- complete the package of initiatives to improve access to proprietary data, such as Big Data, including increased political support at the national and international level, improved legislation, and fostering of mutual beneficial partnerships with the data owners, while considering and maintaining the confidentiality of data;
  - develop training courses, in cooperation between the European Statistical Training Program and the United Nations Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific (SIAP) and other training institutes and especially targeted at developing countries, on the topics of processing and use of Big Data and of transparent methodologies and estimation methods for Big Data;
  - undertake more pilot projects in the use of Big Data for official statistics, including those aimed to support measuring SDG indicators; and in this respect to make use of the Big Data Sandbox in Ireland; and
  - Further develop the Big Data quality framework to ensure trust in the compiled official statistics;
- (d) Requested adding to the work programme: (i) a review of web-scraping of proprietary data; (ii) improvement of the group's website and the Big Data repository; (iii) advocacy of Big Data in

developing countries; and (iv) linking of the work of the group to the work of High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, to the Transformative Agenda and to the work of the High-level Group on Modernisation of Statistics.

(e) Agreed that the NSOs play a key role in coordinating the use of big data for official statistics, which needs to be strengthened, especially if not regulated by existing laws governing official statistics.

#### **Decision 5: National accounts (Item 3d)**

The Statistical Commission:

(a) Welcomed the report of the Intersecretariat Working Group on National Accounts, expressed its appreciation for the activities undertaken by the Working Group members, regional commissions, other regional organizations and countries to facilitate the implementation of the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics, and endorsed the 2016 programme of work of the Working Group and the Advisory Expert Group on National Accounts;

(b) Appreciated the progress with resolving SNA research issues related to the implementation of the 2008 SNA, noted the emergence of some conceptual issues that extend beyond the 2008 SNA and requested the Working Group to report on the progress with addressing these issues to the Commission, taking into consideration the integration of economic, social and environmental statistics and frameworks for measuring progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;

(c) Expressed appreciation for the guidance provided on issues emerging from the implementation of the SNA, including the completion of several manuals, handbooks and guidelines that facilitate the implementation of the 2008 SNA and supporting statistics, and urged the Working Group to continue to give priority to practical guidance on issues that would facilitate the implementation of the SNA;

(d) Welcomed the progress with implementing the 2008 SNA, expressed concern at the relatively low compliance to the minimum required data set and urged countries to develop basic source data for the compilation of national accounts that are policy relevant and fit for purpose. In this regard, the global and regional agencies are called upon to provide a focused, funded and coordinated programme on integrated household and business statistics in support of the compilation of national accounts;

(e) Recognized the needs of countries, especially small island developing States, land locked developing countries and least developed countries for continued statistical capacity building for the implementation of national accounts, based on an integrated statistics programme using multi-source and multi-mode statistics; and

(f) Noted the progress of the SDMX data transmission mechanism for national accounts and recognised that the implementation the SDMX technology by countries will facilitate data transmission and thereby significantly reduce the response burden in submitting data to international organizations.

#### **Decision 6: Environmental-economic accounting (Item 3e)**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) Expressed its appreciation for the work of the Committee of Experts on Environmental-Economic Accounting in advocating the importance of the System of Environmental-Economic Accounting (SEEA), advancing its implementation and developing documents in support of the SEEA implementation;
- (b) Requested that the Committee of Experts continue to contribute to the development of metadata for relevant Sustainable Development Goal indicators to ensure consistency with the SEEA and encourages the Committee to support the implementation in countries;
- (c) Noted the importance of developing and strengthening basic environment statistics to compile environmental-economic accounts;
- (d) Noted also the importance of capacity building in national accounts as essential element for compilation of environmental-economic accounts;
- (e) Urged the Committee of Experts to scale up its implementation activities based on an updated implementation strategy including developing in-depth courses on SEEA modules at global, regional and national level, finalizing core accounts and associated technical notes on selected SEEA modules and advancing the research agenda of SEEA Central Framework and SEEA Experimental Ecosystem Accounting;
- (f) Agreed in principle with the implementation strategy, urged the Committee of Experts to finalize its work on coordination and partnerships at global, regional and national level to support the implementation, including the compilation of SEEA coherent data based on existing international databases. It requested the Committee of experts to take into account existing inter-agency mechanisms for coordination in its consideration of establishing an appropriate mechanism and to take into account the importance of Framework for the Development of Environment Statistics (FDES 2013) to provide source statistics for SEEA;
- (g) Requested the Committee of experts to finalize the SEEA Energy and SEEA Agriculture with urgency given their importance for the implementation of energy accounts and agriculture, forest and fisheries accounts in support of the implementation of the SEEA Central Framework for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and encouraged their expedient implementation in countries.

#### **Decision 7: International Comparison Programme (Item 3f)**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Friends of the Chair group and expressed appreciation to the members of the group and the co-chairs for their work on the comprehensive evaluation of the 2011 ICP round;
- (b) Supported the recommendations of the Friends of the Chair group contained in the report on future rounds of the ICP as a permanent element of the global statistical programme to be conducted at more frequent intervals;
- (c) Agreed with the proposal to adopt a rolling benchmark approach of surveys to be spread over a three-year cycle starting in 2017 that allows flexibility in conducting the surveys according to the

specific conditions of the participating countries, and supported the objective of producing results with the possibility of extrapolating the rolling survey data;

- (d) Endorsed the strengthening of the governance structure of the ICP consisting of the Governing Board, the Inter-Agency Coordination Group and the Technical Advisory Task Force, to be established initially as proposed in the report, to ensure efficient functioning and balanced representation of countries and coordinating agencies in the governing bodies;
- (e) Welcomed and supported the proposal to establish the Global Office as a permanent team at the World Bank responsible for the global coordination, data validation and calculation of the global results and related day-to day organizational activities;
- (f) Agreed that for the 2017 cycle no major changes in the methodology should be introduced and a research agenda to be developed and undertaken by the Technical Advisory Task Force should focus on methodological improvements considered for future comparison cycles;
- (g) Emphasized the need to link ICP capacity building activities with efforts to enhance statistical capacity for the monitoring of Sustainable Development Goals;
- (h) Suggested exploring closer alignment of ICP price surveys with Consumer Price Index compilation by countries and encouraged involving existing working groups engaged in price statistics;
- (i) Decided that the work of the Friends of the Chair Group is completed with the submission of the final report of the Friends of the Chair group on the evaluation of the 2011 round of the International Comparison Programme;

### **Decision 8: International statistical classifications (Item 3g)**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Expert Group on International Statistical Classifications and expressed its appreciation for the work of the Expert Group, its Bureau and UNSD;
- (b) Reconfirmed the role of the Expert Group as the central coordination body for current and future work on all international statistical classifications;
- (c) Confirmed that the initiation of any international classification development by international agencies should be coordinated with the Expert Group;
- (d) Endorsed the undertaking of a revision of the Classification of Individual Consumption according to Purpose (COICOP);
- (e) Endorsed the 5<sup>th</sup> Revision of the Classification by Broad Economic Categories for use as an international statistical classification;
- (f) Recognized the need of developing countries for technical assistance in the implementation of the current international statistical classifications.

### **Decision 9: Industrial statistics (Item 3h)**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and supported the work programme on industrial statistics contained in the report;
- (b) Called upon developing countries to give high priority to industrial statistics, considering it as an essential data source for the compilation of macroeconomic statistics and other applications, including the SDGs;
- (c) Requested international and regional organizations to continue and increase the technical assistance activities related to industrial statistics, such as for the implementation of the latest international recommendations (IRIS and IRIIP) and classifications, in a coordinated way considering also specific country needs and preferences;
- (d) Requested development partners to increase assistance for capacity-building programmes on industrial statistics in developing countries, especially in the context of the SDGs.

**Decision 10: Information and communications technology statistics (Item 3i)**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) Appreciated the report of the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development, congratulated the Partnership for the excellent work done, and expressed support for the continuation of its activities;
- (b) Supported the recommendations made by the Partnership in its report, in particular with respect to a regular review of the core list of ICT indicators; the work on disaggregation of the use of ICT by gender; measuring international trade in ICT services and ICT-enabled services; and national coordination of ICT statistics;
- (c) Acknowledged the role of ICT as an enabler for achievement of the SDGs and the ICT sector as a major provider of big data, and recommended in that context that the Partnership develops guidance to improve cooperation with the different stakeholders for the purposes of producing high quality and timely ICT statistics and of leveraging the potential benefits of using big data for official statistics;
- (d) Recommended to increase efforts for strengthening capacity of national statistical systems in producing ICT statistics;
- (e) Requested that the Partnership reports back to the Commission in 2018 with a review of the status of official ICT statistics and their integration into the monitoring framework of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development;
- (f) Noted that the Partnership on Measuring ICT for Development, created to support ICT statistics, may be a useful model for the organization of other partnerships, such as those that are anticipated to emerge in support of the UN World Data Forum, which will be organized taking into account the Secretary-General's Synthesis report "The Road to Dignity", under the leadership of the High Level Group on Partnerships, Coordination and Capacity Building for statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development.

**Decision 11: Refugee statistics (Item 3j)**

The Statistical Commission:



- (a) Appreciated the report on refugee statistics and internally displaced persons (IDPs), jointly submitted by Statistics Norway, the Turkish Statistical Institute, Eurostat and UNHCR, and commended the work undertaken by the group to explore strategies to improve the compilation and dissemination of refugee and asylum statistics;
- (b) Acknowledged the urgent need to build more efficient information systems, against the backdrop of rapidly growing volume of forcibly displaced persons due to new humanitarian crisis.
- (c) Took note of the outcomes of the first International Conference on Refugee Statistics held in Antalya, Turkey in 2015, which examined various sources of information and addressed the importance of improving comparability, quality and timeliness of refugee statistics;
- (d) Endorsed the establishment of the Expert Group on Refugee Statistics, and requested that the TOR of this Expert Group be prepared and submitted to the Bureau of the Statistical Commission for approval at the earliest convenience;
- (e) Suggested that the work of the Expert Group 1) includes IDPs in its scope of work; 2) takes the users' perspectives into account; 3) refines statistical concept of refugees; and 4) builds on existing technical work, such as the UN Recommendations on Statistics of International Migration, and the UNECE Recommendations for the 2020 Censuses of Population and Housing;
- (f) Requested the Expert Group to develop 1) Recommendations on refugee statistics, as a reference guide for national and international work concerning asylum statistics; and 2) a refugee statistics compilers manual, as operational instructions on how to collect refugee statistics, in consultation with a wide range of stakeholders including migration authorities and offices in charge of registration of displaced persons;
- (g) Further requested the Expert Group to organize a technical meeting on refugee statistics in late 2016, as a follow up to the first International Conference on Refugee Statistics, to review the progress of the work conducted by the group, and took note of requests by several countries to be a member of the Group;
- (h) Also requested the Expert Group to early on conduct a global consultation on the draft Recommendations on Refugee Statistics to widely solicit comments, and submit the Recommendations to the Commission at its 49th session in 2018 for adoption.

### **Decision 12: Climate change statistics (Item 3k)**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) Welcomed the Secretary-General's report on climate change statistics, which summarizes the work done on climate change statistics;
- (b) Urged countries to develop and strengthen environment statistics that are necessary for effective monitoring of key aspects of climate change;
- (c) Urged the international statistical community to expand their regional, sub-regional and national capacity-building efforts in climate change statistics in line with the Paris Agreement adopted by the United Nations Conference on Climate Change 2015 and the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development

- (d) Recommended that countries use the FDES 2013 to guide the development of climate change statistics and indicators given the close inter-relationship between environment statistics and climate change statistics;
- (e) Noted the link between climate change and disaster reduction and requested that the Sendai Framework for Disaster Risk Reduction 2015-2030 be considered in the development of climate change statistics and indicators;
- (f) Encouraged national statistical systems to invest adequate resources in the development of climate change statistics, in particular the underlying environment, energy, agriculture and industry statistics, and environmental-economic accounts that relate to the climate-economy interface and the physical flow accounts for GHGs emissions;
- (g) Urged the donor community to mobilize additional resources to enable capacity-building in environment and climate change statistics in developing countries;
- (h) Expressed its appreciation of the work being undertaken by the ECE Task Force on Climate Change-related Statistics and Indicators in particular their efforts to develop a set of climate change-related statistics and indicators, and requested UNSD to review and consider it as a basis for developing a global set of climate change statistics and indicators, applicable to countries at various stages of development;
- (i) Requested Climate Change Statistics to appear on the multi-year program of the Statistical Commission with higher frequency and asked UNSD to develop a work plan for submission to the Commission at its 48th session.

### **Decision 13: Governance statistics (Item 3l)**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) Expressed its appreciation to the Praia Group on governance statistics for its report and work conducted in an open, inclusive and transparent manner;
- (b) Welcomed and supported the proposed road map and actions towards the development of a handbook on governance statistics for national statistical offices, stressed the importance of identifying best practices and developing common standards, and requested the Praia Group to report back to the Statistical Commission at its 49<sup>th</sup> session in 2018;
- (c) Welcomed the support of the Praia Group for the relevant development of indicators for targets of SDG 16;
- (d) Encouraged the Praia Group to promote participation of all countries and to maintain an inclusive and transparent approach in their work;
- (e) Encouraged the Praia Group to consider the roadmap and work derived from it as presented in the “Report of the National Institute of Statistics and Geography of Mexico and the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime on a road map to improve the quality and availability of crime statistics at the national and international level” at the Statistical Commission in 2013;
- (f) Stressed the importance of capacity building and training pertaining to governance statistics.

### **Decision 14: Regional statistical development in western Asia (Item 3m)**

The Statistical Commission:

- (a) Welcomed the report of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia on the main achievements of statistical development in the region;
- (b) Expressed appreciation for the work undertaken in the region over the past five years since the last report, especially in regard to improved cooperation and coordination in statistical capacity development and training efforts, and in addressing requests from countries in the region;
- (c) Noted the challenges faced by countries in the region, in particular in relation to the new data requirements for the development of SDG indicators.

### **Decision 15: Programme questions**

The Commission took note of the oral report presented by the Director of the United Nations Statistics Division concerning the current activities, plans and priorities of the Division. In particular, the Commission took note of the proposed strategic framework for the biennium 2018-2019, as set out in an informal background document that had been circulated.

### **Decision 16: Information items (3b, 3f, 4a – 4n):**

The Commission took note of the following reports:

Report of the Economic Commission for Europe high-level group on the modernization of official statistics

Report of the World Bank on the International Comparison Programme interim activities

Report of the Secretary-General on the World Statistics Day

Report of the Secretary-General on demographic statistics

Report of the Secretary-General on gender statistics

Report of the Secretary-General on the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on Household Surveys

Joint report of the Secretary-General and the Washington Group on Disability Statistics

Report of the Secretary-General on international trade and economic globalization statistics

Report of the Inter-Agency Task Force on International Trade Statistics

Report of the Secretary-General on the work of the Committee for the Coordination of Statistical Activities

Report of the Partnership in Statistics for Development in the Twenty-first Century (PARIS21) and the World Bank

Report of the Secretary-General on environment statistics

Report of the UNESCO Institute for Statistics on cultural statistics

Report of the Ottawa Group on Price Indices

Report of the Ulaanbaatar Group on statistics for economies based on natural resources

Report of the Expert Group on the Integration of Statistical and Geospatial Information

Note by the Secretary-General on policy decisions of the General Assembly and the Economic and Social Council that are relevant to the work of the Statistical Commission