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## Statistical Commission

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Item 4 (d) of the provisional agenda\*

**Items for decision: governance statistics**

## Report of the Praia Group on Governance Statistics

### Note by the Secretary-General

In accordance with Economic and Social Council decision 2025/315 and past practices, the Secretary-General has the honour to transmit the report of the Praia Group on Governance Statistics, which is submitted to the Commission for decision.

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\* E/CN.3/2026/1.



## I. Background

1. In the present report, the Praia Group provides a summary of its recent activities and accomplishments since its previous report (E/CN.3/2024/7), submitted to the Commission at its fifty-fifth session, in 2024, with particular emphasis on the methodological work undertaken by the task teams on non-discrimination and equality and on participation in political and public affairs to finalize the four instruments presented herein to the Commission.

## II. Recent activities

### A. Methodological developments in governance statistics

2. During its second term, the Praia Group supported the development of standardized measurement for dimensions of governance that are methodologically less advanced. Two task teams were established in November 2021 – one on non-discrimination and equality and the other on participation in political and public affairs – to advance international statistical guidance and measurement instruments for these two dimensions. Each team comprises more than 100 members, primarily from national statistical offices but also from research institutions, civil society organizations and regional and international organizations.

3. Four instruments<sup>1</sup> (two survey-based and two addressing administrative sources) have been completed by the task teams:

Task team on participation in political and public affairs

(a) A survey on participation in political and public affairs, with an indicator list and survey guidance;

(b) Guidance on utilizing electoral administrative data to produce statistics on inclusive political participation;

Task team on non-discrimination and equality

(a) A survey on discrimination, with an indicator list and survey guidance;

(b) Using administrative data to measure non-discrimination and equality: guidance for national statistical offices.

4. For the survey questionnaires, the task teams developed both a long version for use as a stand-alone survey and a shorter set of questions intended to be attached to an existing survey. The latter facilitates regular data collection for a small set of global core indicators at minimal cost. Questions in the shortlist were selected to measure core aspects of participation and discrimination and for their universal applicability across countries. The longer versions of the questionnaires may be administered as stand-alone surveys, incorporating complementary questions that may be further tailored to national contexts, priorities and available resources.

5. Each questionnaire is accompanied by comprehensive technical guidance on survey implementation. The guidance covers a range of topics, including sampling considerations, interviewer training and conduct when addressing sensitive questions, as well as ethical and data privacy considerations throughout data collection, analysis and dissemination. Additional implementation notes are provided beneath each survey question to facilitate the contextualization of the questionnaires across diverse national settings. A set of core and complementary indicators derived from the survey

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<sup>1</sup> The four instruments are included as background documents to the present report.

data is also provided, with core indicators designed to support global monitoring and dissemination.

6. The two guidance documents on the use of administrative data for measuring inclusive political participation and non-discrimination and equality provide national statistical offices with concepts, details of data collection by primary producers and recommendations for data-sharing and data utilization. They were developed on the basis of extensive mappings of current practices and consultations with national statistical offices and other relevant data-producing institutions across regions.

7. The culmination of three years of cognitive and pilot-testing by a total of 26 countries and a key milestone in finalizing the methodologies was a workshop held on 20 and 21 May 2025 at Statistics Norway in Oslo. The workshop was co-hosted by the Praia Group, Statistics Norway and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), with the participation of 14 national statistical offices that pilot-tested the questionnaires, as well as representatives from UNDP, the United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UN-Women) and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR). Following the workshop, the Ghana Statistical Service field-tested the revised short set of questions (and selected complementary questions) and reported that the questions in both questionnaires were well understood and generated strong interest among respondents.

#### **1. Praia Group task team on participation in political and public affairs**

8. The task team on participation in political and public affairs is chaired by Statistics Norway and supported by UNDP and UN-Women. Since its establishment, the task team has held a total of 12 virtual meetings on the two products developed. The questionnaire built on the conceptual and measurement framework for participation in political and public affairs outlined in the *Handbook on Governance Statistics*, as well as on a mapping of existing surveys in this thematic area, including those undertaken by national statistical offices. The questionnaire includes a series of policy-relevant items that address participation in electoral processes and referendums, other forms of participation in political and civic life and the enabling environment of participation. It is designed as a post-election survey and is intended to be applicable in different electoral contexts worldwide.

9. The questionnaire underwent a multi-stage testing process across 11 countries in diverse contexts.<sup>2</sup> This included two initial rounds of cognitive testing by seven national statistical offices (Cabo Verde, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mali, Nigeria, Norway and Slovakia), followed by field-testing or piloting by eight national statistical offices (Burundi, Cabo Verde, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Ghana, Mexico, Nigeria and Uganda), of which three of the pilots were nationally representative (Colombia, Uganda and Nigeria). A third round of cognitive testing, conducted by five national statistical offices (Cabo Verde, Colombia, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Mexico and Nigeria), further fine-tuned selected questions. The test results<sup>3</sup> confirmed the global relevance and applicability of the full questionnaire. They also demonstrated the feasibility of integrating core questions into larger surveys and of administering the questionnaire through computer-assisted personal interviewing, computer-assisted telephone interviewing or computer-assisted web interviewing. In addition, participating national statistical offices reported respondents' strong interest in responding to questions on their participation in political and public affairs.

<sup>2</sup> The testing process was led by Statistics Norway and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).

<sup>3</sup> Detailed pilot-test results are available at: <https://grupopraia.com.cv/multimedia/event/4008>.

10. The guidance on utilizing electoral administrative data to produce statistics on inclusive political participation was developed to support national statistical offices in expanding official statistics in this thematic area by leveraging readily available data. It explains how national statistical offices can utilize electoral data – on registered voters, voter turnout, candidates and elected candidates – to produce robust indicators and analysis that can be tracked over time. The guidance is practical and addresses different contexts. It provides national statistical offices with recommendations for integrating electoral data into official statistics, offers a range of examples of how national statistical offices can analyse and disseminate electoral data, includes suggestions for building effective partnerships with electoral management bodies and presents models of data-sharing.

11. In the run-up to a global consultation held in October 2025, an internal review of the two instruments developed by this task team was conducted among members of the task team and the Praia Group steering committee. A total of 15 reviewers provided valuable feedback, which was incorporated into the final drafts. Overall, the reviewers found both instruments to be of high quality and supported their submission for global review by the international statistical community.

## **2. Praia Group task team on non-discrimination and equality**

12. The task team on non-discrimination and equality is co-chaired by the national statistical offices of Finland and Peru and supported by UNDP and OHCHR. Since its establishment, the task team has held a total of 13 virtual meetings on the two products developed. The questionnaire built on the conceptual and measurement framework for non-discrimination and equality outlined in the Handbook on governance statistics, as well as on a mapping of existing surveys in this thematic area, including those undertaken by national statistical offices. The questionnaire includes a series of policy relevant items that address perceptions of discrimination, experiences and reporting of discrimination, social attitudes towards people from different backgrounds and public awareness of the national legislative and institutional anti-discrimination framework.

13. The questionnaire underwent a multi-stage testing process across 15 countries in diverse contexts.<sup>4</sup> This included two initial rounds of cognitive testing by seven national statistical offices (Cabo Verde, Colombia, Djibouti, Ireland, Madagascar, Peru and Viet Nam), followed by field-testing or piloting by 10 national statistical offices (Belize, Burundi, Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Israel, Lesotho, Mozambique, Peru and Uganda), of which four pilots were nationally representative (Belize, Israel, Uganda and Lesotho). A third round of cognitive testing, conducted by three national statistical offices (Cabo Verde, Côte d'Ivoire and Peru) served to further fine-tune selected questions.

14. The test results<sup>5</sup> highlighted the need to formulate separate but complementary questions capturing different experiences of discrimination – specifically, unfair or unequal treatment based on prohibited grounds (e.g. sex, race or religion) and harassment, which is considered a form of discrimination under international human rights law when based on such grounds – in order to more accurately reflect relevant experiences.<sup>6</sup> The testing also demonstrated the feasibility of integrating core questions into larger surveys, and of administering the questionnaire through computer-assisted personal interviewing, computer-assisted telephone interviewing or computer-assisted

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<sup>4</sup> The testing process was led by Statistics Ireland, the National Institute of Statistics and Informatics (INEI) of Peru, UNDP and the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR).

<sup>5</sup> Detailed pilot-test results are available at: <https://grupopraia.com.cv/multimedia/event/3009>.

<sup>6</sup> This is also consistent with the internationally agreed Sustainable Development Goal indicator 10.3.1/16.b.1.

web interviewing. In addition, participating national statistical offices contributed to simplifying definitions of discrimination and harassment based on prohibited grounds, after finding that many respondents were unfamiliar with these concepts.

15. The guidance on using administrative data to measure non-discrimination and equality adopts an expansive view of administrative sources, encompassing not only public sector data (from the police, courts, national human rights institutions, equality bodies and service provision institutions, inter alia) but also data maintained by relevant private entities addressing discrimination or working with groups at risk, such as civil society organizations, legal aid providers and similar organizations. An initial 20 indicators derived from administrative data are proposed as a starting point for national statistical offices to systematically monitor non-discrimination and equality across key areas of life, including education, employment, health, justice and personal security and participation in public life. Recommendations for national statistical offices include strengthening partnerships with data holders, linking administrative sources with other data sources and using effective dissemination strategies while applying necessary human rights and ethical safeguards.

16. In the run-up to a global consultation held in October 2025, an internal review of the two instruments developed by this task team was conducted among members of the task team and the Praia Group steering committee. A total of 14 reviewers provided valuable feedback, which was incorporated into the final draft. Regarding the survey, reviewers welcomed the separation of questions capturing different experiences of discrimination (namely, unfair or unequal treatment based on prohibited grounds and harassment based on such grounds) as a significant methodological improvement for producing reliable and globally comparable statistics on the prevalence of discrimination. Reviewers of both the survey and the administrative data guidance also noted strong demand from a wide range of national institutions for discrimination statistics disaggregated by prohibited grounds, in particular when presented by the different areas of life in which they occur (as recommended in both instruments), since such data can help institutions design targeted equality interventions.

### **3. Global consultation**

17. From 15 October to 7 November 2025, the Praia Group invited national statistical offices to participate in a global consultation on the four methodological instruments developed by the task teams. As at 18 November 2025, 48 entities had contributed to the consultation. Of those which reviewed the participation survey, 86 per cent (36 entities) found that it adequately measured participation in political and public affairs, and 97 per cent of reviewers found the survey questions and implementation notes to be clearly worded and easy to understand. The indicator list and survey guidance were considered useful by 97 per cent and 92 per cent of reviewers, respectively. While most reviewers found the questionnaire comprehensive, some identified additional topics of interest in their national context that fall within the Praia Group's broader plan of work on globally harmonized surveys covering various dimensions of governance. Lastly, 91 per cent of those who reviewed the electoral data guidance (35 entities) found it relevant in their national context, and 97 per cent rated the information, explanations, analysis and examples provided in the guidance to be of high quality.

18. Similarly, 98 per cent of reviewers of the discrimination survey (45 entities) found that it adequately measured discrimination, and 95 per cent said that the survey questions and implementation notes were clearly worded and easy to understand. The indicator list was found useful by 98 per cent of reviewers, and all reviewers considered the survey guidance useful. The inclusion of new forms of discrimination

or harassment occurring online or through digital platforms was welcomed by several reviewers, some of whom suggested expanding methodological work on this topic. Lastly, 88 per cent of those who reviewed the guidance on using administrative data to measure non-discrimination and equality (35 entities) found it relevant to their national context, and 94 per cent rated the information, explanations, analysis and examples provided in the guidance to be of high quality. A more detailed analysis of the global consultation results is presented in a separate background document.

## **B. Capacity-building and awareness-raising on governance statistics**

19. The Praia Group has actively advanced governance statistics through global collaborations and events with United Nations agencies, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development and regional bodies, focusing on participation, equality and trust. Details of these events are provided in a background document to the present report.

## **III. Future activities of the Praia Group**

20. With the completion of the four methodological instruments supporting the production of statistics on non-discrimination and equality and on participation in political and public affairs, the Praia Group has fulfilled the core tasks assigned to it for the 2021–2025 period. The evolving field of governance statistics presents important opportunities for growth, in particular following the recent adoption of a dedicated governance domain under the revised Classification of Statistical Activities (CSA 2.0), as well as a cross-cutting human rights domain. Priorities for the coming years include promoting the uptake of the four new instruments, strengthening national statistical offices' capacities to apply them and further advancing methodologies for governance subdomains that remain less developed.

21. The Praia Group therefore recommends the continuation of its activities for the 2026–2031 period (March 2026 to March 2031). The proposed terms of reference for this next phase are included in a background document to the present report. The configuration of future task teams, whether through the continuation of existing teams or the creation of new ones, will be defined through consultations with the Praia Group membership.

## **IV. Action to be taken by the Statistical Commission**

22. **The Commission is invited:**

- (a) **To endorse the survey on participation in political and public affairs;**
- (b) **To endorse the guidance on utilizing electoral administrative data to produce statistics on inclusive political participation;**
- (c) **To endorse the survey on discrimination;**
- (d) **To endorse “Using administrative data to measure non-discrimination and equality: guidance for national statistical offices”;**
- (e) **To support the continuation of the Praia Group on Governance Statistics and its work under the proposed revised terms of reference, with a focus on furthering the development of standardized methodologies in selected governance subdomains and on strengthening the capacities of national statistical offices in producing and compiling governance statistics.**