

Session VI: Time-use international standards and recommendations Minimum Harmonized Instrument

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Minimum Harmonized Instrument for the collection of time-use data

- Why and when using it?
 - For more frequent collections
 - As a starting point for countries not already collecting time-use data
- What does it consist of?
 - Essential Background characteristics
 - Minimum individual and household data
 - List of 25 activities covering a 24-hour period
 - Light diary survey option
 - Stylized questionnaire survey option
- International comparability
 - Correspondence table for activities between MHI and regional classifications (the Harmonized European Time-Use Surveys Classification (HETUS), CAUTAL)



Minimum activity list

- 1. Working in paid job or income generating activities
- 2. Making goods for own household or family use
- 3. Volunteer work
- 4. Preparing and serving food and meals for own household or family members
- 5. Cleaning own or family dwelling
- 6. Maintaining and making small repairs in own or family dwelling
- 7. Cleaning and care of clothing and footwear of own household or family members
- 8. Managing own household
- 9. Taking care of pet of own household or family
- 10. Shopping for own household or family
- 11. Taking care of own (household or family) child
- 12. Taking care of or helping adults (own household or family)

- 13. Education
- 14. Socializing and communication
- 15. Community participation, civic and related responsibilities, and religious practices
- 16. Cultural, entertainment and sports events
- 17. Hobbies, games and other pastime activities
- 18. Sport participation and exercising
- 19. Reading for leisure
- 20. Watching TV/Listening to radio or streaming
- 21. Sleep
- 22. Eating and drinking
- 23. Personal hygiene and care
- 24. Travel
- 25. Other

SDG 5.4.1



Minimum activity list - common language

- 1 Working for pay or doing activities to generate an income for yourself or your family
- 2 Unpaid activities done to produce goods for use by your household or family
- 3 Helping neighbours, friends, or others without receiving payment
- 4 Cooking, preparing or heating meals, setting up or clearing the table or washing the dishes
- 5 Cleaning the inside or outside of the dwelling; disposal of garbage or recycling, water plants
- 6 Making minor repairs to the dwelling, repairing or maintaining furniture, appliances, or household vehicles
- Washing, ironing, hanging drying, mending clothes or cleaning footwear
- Budgeting, paying bills, organizing or planning household-related activities or completing administrative forms such as passports, contracts, applications, or collecting social program benefits
- Taking care of a family pet, feeding, bathing, taking them for walks, cleaning their space or using veterinary or pet services
- Buying household supplies, food, or clothing for family members in person or online
- Taking care of children in your household or family by feeding, bathing, dressing, putting to bed, talking, playing, assisting or supervising homework, attending school or care provider meetings, accompanying to appointments, providing healthcare
- Taking care of adults in your household or family by feeding, bathing, dressing, putting to bed, talking, listening, providing healthcare or planning for health care services or helping with personal business management

- 13 Education, attending classes or courses onsite or online, or education-related assignments, homework
- 14 Getting together with others for social purposes, talking, chatting, writing or reading personal emails or texts
- 15 Joining in community festivities or events, attending civil obligations, or participating in religious celebrations or practices
- 16 Attending cultural, entertainment and sports events
- 17 Participating hobbies such as painting, music, or photography, playing games, or relaxing
- 18 Participating in a sport or exercise
- 19 Reading for leisure (e.g. newspapers, books, e-books, social media, magazines)
- 20 Watching TV, listening to radio or streaming
- 21 Sleeping
- 22 Eating or drinking
- Own personal hygiene such as showering, getting dressed, getting a haircut or personal health care like resting sick or visiting doctors or specialist
- 24 Traveling to and from places
- 25 Other (including no answer or refusal)



Minimum variables to be collected as background characteristics in time-use surveys

Household level	Individual level
□ Minimum	
 □ Household size □ Household composition: classification based on age and sex □ Place of residence (urban/rural) □ Household income 	 □ Age □ Sex □ Marital status* □ Educational attainment* □ Current school attendance (and grade*) □ Current employment status* □ Labour force status * □ Labour force status of spouse/partner*
Additional as relevant in national context	
 □ Access and use of care services □ Presence of persons requiring help with activities of daily living □ Access to utilities □ Household wealth 	 □ Disability status* □ Race/ethnicity □ General health status □ Access to time-keeping devices*
* only individuals selected as respondents	



Background characteristics to identify employment-related activities and production of goods for own final use

Labour force characteristics of respondents to be included in the background questionnaire are the following:

- ☐ Identification of persons employed during a specified time (week/7 days)
- ☐ For employed persons
 - Multiple job-holding status
 - o Core characteristics of the main, second, or other jobs as relevant:
 - ✓ Status in employment
 - ✓ Occupation
 - ✓ Industry
 - ✓ Institutional sector of employment
 - ✓ Business incorporation for those employed in the private sector
 - ✓ Business registration

For countries where own-account work in agriculture or fishing is commonplace in certain regions or among certain population groups, the background questionnaire should additionally capture, at a minimum, the following items:

- ☐ Participation in own-account farming, animal husbandry and fishing during the specified week
- ☐ Main intended destination (sale versus own-use) of the products from farming, animal



- O Permits self-completion by respondent and/or interviewer-assisted setting
- O Drop down list of activities to select from as well as pre-defined contextual information associated to the activity
- © Contextual variables: Location, With whom, For whom, Information and Communication Technology (ICT) use
- O Collect at least one simultaneous activity using a pre-defined list which is a subset of the MHI list
- Quality checks to be built within the instrument for travel and basic physical needs such as eating and ensure a whole 24 hours was described



What were you doing at 4:00 am?

Dropdown list: (25 MHI activities)



1	working for pay or doing activities to generate an income for yourself or your family
2	unpaid activities done to produce goods for use by your household or family
3	helping neighbours, friends, or others without receiving payment
4	cooking, preparing or heating meals, setting up or clearing the table or washing the dishes
5	cleaning the inside or outside of the dwelling; disposal of garbage or recycling, water plants
6	making minor repairs to the dwelling, repairing or maintaining furniture, appliances, or household vehicles
7	washing, ironing, hanging drying, mending clothes or cleaning footwear
8	budgeting, paying bills, organizing or planning household-related activities or completing administrative forms such as passports, contracts, applications, or collecting social program benefits
9	taking care of a family pet, feeding, bathing, taking them for walks, cleaning their space or using veterinary or pet services
10	buying household supplies, food, or clothing for family members in person or online
11	taking care of children in your household or family by feeding, bathing, dressing, putting to bed, talking, playing, assisting or supervising homework, attending school or care provider meetings,
	accompanying to appointments, providing healthcare
12	taking care of adults in your household or family by feeding, bathing, dressing, putting to bed, talking, listening, providing healthcare or planning for health care services or helping with personal business
	management
13	education, attending classes or courses onsite or online, or education-related assignments, homework
14	getting together with others for social purposes, talking, chatting, writing or reading personal emails or texts
15	joining in community festivities or events, attending civil obligations, or participating in religious celebrations or practices
16	attending cultural, entertainment and sports events
17	participating hobbies such as painting, music, or photography, playing games, or relaxing
18	participating in a sport or exercise
19	reading for leisure (e.g. newspapers, books, e-books, social media, magazines)
20	watching TV, listening to radio or streaming
21	sleeping
22	eating or drinking
23	own personal hygiene such as showering, getting dressed, getting a haircut or personal health care like resting sick or visiting doctors or specialist
24	traveling to and from places
25	other (including no answer or refusal)
Init	

What were you doing at 4:00 am?

Dropdown list: (25 MHI activities)



How long did this activity last?

Hours (00-23) minutes (00-59)

What were you doing at 4:00 am?

Dropdown list: (25 MHI activities)



How long did this activity last?

Hours (00-23) minutes (00-59)

Where were you?

Dropdown list: (places or transportation mode)



- 1 At home
- 2 At place of work or school
- 3 At another residence
- 4 Outdoors (away from home)
- 5 At store or place of service
- 6 Other (non travel)
- 7 Car, van, truck as a driver
- 8 Car, van, truck as a passenger
- 9 Public transportation such as bus, tramway, subway, light train, ferry
- 10 Bicycle
- 11 Walking
- 12Taxi, limousine service
- 13 Plane
- 14 Other transport
- 99 Refusal, no answer



What were you doing at 4:00 am?

Dropdown list: (25 MHI activities)



How long did this activity last?

Hours (00-23) minutes (00-59)

Where were you?

Dropdown list: (places or transportation mode)



Who was with you?

Dropdown list:



- 1 Alone
- 2 Spouse or partner
- 3 Household children
- 4 Other household or family
- 5 Friends
- 6 Workmates, colleagues, classmates

7 Other

For whom did you mainly provide this unpaid household work?



Drop down based on the selected activity

For volunteer wo	k (MHI activity 3)
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- Friends
- Neighbours
- Colleagues from work, school or community organization
- Acquaintances
- Other

For **unpaid domestic work (**MHI activities 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, or 10)

- •For paid job / own or family business
- •For use by own family or household member(s)
- •For use by family member(s) from another household
- For use by other

For **unpaid care work (**MHI activities 11 and 12)

- Family members living in your household
- Family members living outside your household
- Unrelated household members
- Other

For whom did you mainly provide this unpaid household work? Drop down based on the selected activity



Were you **using any type of ICT** for this activity?

Question shown for specific activities such as working, socializing, education, shopping

For whom did you mainly provide this unpaid household work?



Drop down based on the selected activity

Were you using any type of ICT for this activity?

Question shown for specific activities such as working, socializing, education, shopping

Please indicate if you were doing any of these activities at the same time.

Drop-down list for secondary activities (abridged)

- Housework (such as dishwashing, table cleaning, taking away garbage, laundry, etc.)
- Child care (such as supervising homework, watching child swimming, minding)
- Adult care (such as supervising someone else's medication consumption/ or treatment)
- Organizing, planning or paying bills
- Pet care

Data collection tools - Stylized questionnaire instrument

- O Permits CAPI or CATI collection settings
- Asks one question for each of the 25 recommended activities (probing questions may be required for some activities).
 It captures the total amount of time a person spent on each specific activity.
- The instrument is administered using eight sections or modules tailored to specific groups of activities within the minimum set of 25. The groupings are:
 - self-care and learning
 - employment and production of goods for own final use
 - Unpaid domestic work activities for own household
 - Unpaid care activities for own household
 - Unpaid domestic and care activities for non-household persons
 - volunteering
 - socializing and leisure
 - Other activities
- O The set of questions proposed include travel and waiting time in the total amount of time for each activity (except for employment and education)
- O Countries can set their reference period to a day or a week
- Ontextual information and simultaneous activities are not asked as it cannot be linked to one single episode

Data collection tools - Stylized questionnaire instrument

Example:

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A1. (Yesterday/Assigned day/Last week) how much time did you sleep?
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A2. (Yesterday/Assigned day/Last week) how much time did you spend on personal hygiene (taking showers, getting dressed, getting a haircut) or personal health care (resting sick, visiting doctors)?

A3. (Yesterday/Assigned day/Last week) how much time did you spend eating or drinking?

A4.a. (Yesterday/Assigned day/Last week) did you attend any education classes, participate in an online course or work on education-related assignments?

1.Yes→A4.b

2. No→A5.a

A4.b How much time did you spend on it?

A5.a. (Yesterday/Assigned day/Last week) did you commute to and from school, college, or university?

1.Yes→A5.b

2.No→B1

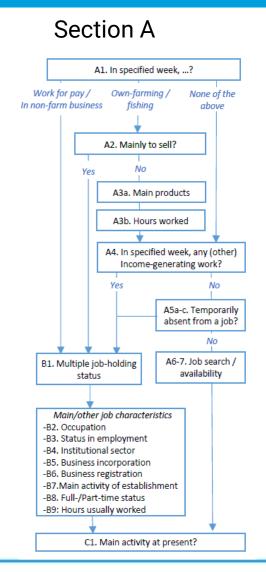
A5.b How much time did you spend on it?

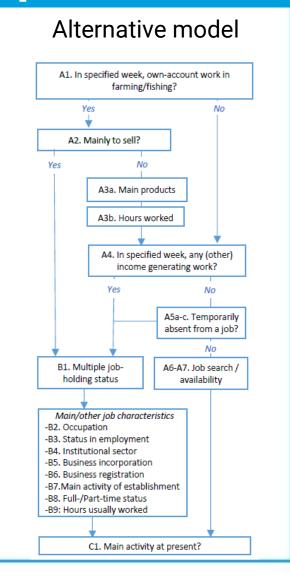
Reference period a day	Reference period a week
[] hours and [] minutes	Hours and minutes
	Monday to Friday [] and []
	Saturday and Sunday [] and []



Data collection tools - Set of questions capturing economic and labour characteristics of respondent

Section	Description
Section A	Contains questions for the identification of persons employed in the reference week. ALTERNATIVE MODEL contains a question sequence model for the identification of persons employed in the reference week to be used by countries where small-scale family farms and fishing activities are prevalent (starting with own-account agriculture work);
Section B	Contains questions related to the employment characteristics
Section C	Contains the question about the main activity status as self-perceived.
Section D	Contains questions to be asked during and after the diary.





Set of questions capturing economic and labour characteristics of respondents

Section A: Identification of persons employed in reference week

QUESTION	NOTES
A1. Last week, from (DAY) to (DAY), did you do any of the following?	Essential
1.Work for pay ([as employee, labourer,]) → B1	Part of sequence to identify the
2.Work in your own or the family farming or fishing activities	employed
3. Work in any other kind of business activity \rightarrow B1	
4.None of the above → A4	
A2. Are the farming or animal products that you worked on intended?	Essential
1.Only for sale → B1	To distinguish employment
2.Mainly for sale → B1	from own-use production in
3.Mainly for family consumption	agriculture / fishing
4.Only for family consumption	
A3a. What are the main products/animals that you are working on?	Essential
(WRITE MAIN GOODS –e.g. maize, rice, apples, oranges, cattle, sheep, fresh water fish)	To assign ICATUS-16 code 21
	and code occupation and
	industry for own-use producers
	in agriculture
A3b. Last week, how many hours did you work in these farming or fishing activities?	Optional
A4. Last week, did you?	Essential
1.Do any (other) activity to generate an income, even for 1 hour (e.g. casual work, make things to sell, provide	Part of sequence to identify the
services for pay,) → B1	employed
2.Help without pay in a family business \rightarrow B1	
3.Did not do any income generating activity, not even for 1 hour.	

Set of questions capturing economic and labour characteristics of respondents

Section A: Identification of persons employed in reference week

QUESTION	NOTES
A5a. Even though you did not work, last week, did you have a paid job or business to which you expect to return?	Essential
1.YES	Part of sequence to
$2.NO \rightarrow A6$	identify the employed
A5b. Why did you not work last week?	Essential
1.SHIFT WORK, FLEXI-TIME, NATURE OF WORK → B1	Part of sequence to
2.VACATION, HOLIDAYS → B1	identify the employed
3.0WN ILLNESS, INJURY, ACCIDENT \rightarrow B1	
4.MATERNITY, PATERNITY LEAVE \rightarrow B1	
5.LOW OR OFF SEASON	
6.WORK-RELATED REASONS (DISPUTE, LAY-OFF, WORK BREAK)	
7.OTHER REASONS (SPECIFY):	
A5c. Including the time that you have been absent, will you return to that same job or business in 3 months or less?	Essential
1.YES → B1	Part of sequence to
2.NO	identify the employed
A6. In the last 4 weeks, from [DATE] up to [DAY last week], did you look for a paid job or try to start a business	Optional
1.YES	Part of sequence to
2.NO	identify the unemployed
A7. If a job or business opportunity became available, could you start working [last week/within the next two	Optional
weeks]	Part of sequence to
1.YES → C1	identify the unemployed
2.NO → C1	

Set of questions capturing economic and labour characteristics of respondents Section A: *Identification of persons employed in reference week* Alternative model for countries where small-scale family farms and fishing

QUESTION	NOTES
A5a. Even though you did not work, last week, did you have a paid job or business to which you expect to return? $1.YES$ $2.NO \rightarrow A6$	Essential Part of sequence to identify the employed
A5b. Why did you not work last week? 1.SHIFT WORK, FLEXI-TIME, NATURE OF WORK → B1 2.VACATION, HOLIDAYS → B1 3.OWN ILLNESS, INJURY, ACCIDENT → B1 4.MATERNITY, PATERNITY LEAVE → B1 5.LOW OR OFF SEASON 6.WORK-RELATED REASONS (DISPUTE, LAY-OFF, WORK BREAK) 7.OTHER REASONS (SPECIFY):	Essential Part of sequence to identify the employed
A5c. Including the time that you have been absent, will you return to that same job or business in 3 months or less? $1.YES \rightarrow B1$ $2.NO$	Essential
A6. In the last 4 weeks, from [DATE] up to [DAY last week], did you look for a paid job or try to start a business 1.YES 2.NO	Optional Part of sequence to identify the unemployed
A7. If a job or business opportunity became available, could you start working [last week/within the next two weeks] $1.YES \rightarrow C1$ $2.NO \rightarrow C1$	Optional Part of sequence to identify the unemployed

Set of questions capturing economic and labour characteristics of respondents Section A: *Identification of persons employed in reference week* Alternative model for countries where small-scale family farms and fishing

QUESTIONS	NOTES
 A1. Last week, from (DAY) to (DAY), did you do any of the following activities on your own-account or help the family with? READ AND MARK ALL THAT APPLY 1. Farming or growing food in a plot or kitchen garden 2. Raising or tending farm animals [3. Fishing, fish farming, collecting shellfish] [4. Hunting or gathering wild foodstuff] IF NO TO ALL → A4, ELSE CONTINUE 	Essential To capture all persons working in own-account agriculture activities
 A2. Are the farming, animal [or fishing] products that you worked on intended? 1.Only for sale → B1 2.Mainly for sale → B1 3.Mainly for family consumption 4.Only for family consumption 	Essential To distinguish employment in agriculture from own-use production in agriculture
A3. What are the main products/animals that you are working on? (WRITE MAIN GOODS -e.g. [maize, rice, apples, oranges, cattle, sheep, fresh water fish])	Essential To assign ICATUS code 21, to code occupation and industry for own-use producers in agriculture
A3b. Last week, how many hours did you work in these farming or fishing activities?	Optional
 A4. Last week, did you? 1.Do any (other) work for pay or in a business activity? → B1 2.Do any activity to generate an income, even for 1 hour (e.g. [casual work, odd jobs, make things to sell, provide services for pay,]) → B1 3.Help without pay in a family business → B1 4.Did not do any income generating activity, not even for 1 hour. 	Essential Part of sequence to identify the employed

Set of questions capturing economic and labour characteristics of respondents SECTION B: Employment characteristics

For persons employed in reference week	NOTES
B1. Last week, did you have more than one job or [business / income generating activity]?	Essential
1.Only one job/business → B2	
2.More than one job/business	
READ: The next questions are about the job or income generating activity in which you usually work the most	Essential
hours	
THE BELOW QUESTIONS SHOULD BE REPEATED FOR MAIN, SECOND JOB	
B2. In your (main/other) job, what kind of work do you do?	Essential
	Occupation
(Write the occupation title and main tasks and duties –e.g [Cattle farmer –breed, raise and sell cattle; Policeman –	
patrol the streets; Primary school teacher –teach children to read and write])	
MAIN TASKS AND DUTIES:	
OCCUPATION TITLE:	
B3. Do you work?	Essential
1.As an employee	Status in employment
2.On your own account, as a free-lancer (without hired employees) \rightarrow B5	
3.As an employer (with hired employees) →B5	
4. Helping without pay in a family business or farm \rightarrow B5	
5.Paid apprentice, intern	
6. OTHER (specify):	



Set of questions capturing economic and labour characteristics of respondents SECTION B: Employment characteristics

For persons employed in reference week	NOTES
B4. Do you work in?	Essential
1.A government agency or state-owned enterprise →B7a	Institutional sector
2.A private business or farm	
3.An NGO, non-profit, or religious institution \rightarrow B7a	
4.A household as a domestic worker →B8	
5.An international organization or a foreign embassy →B7a	
B5: Is (your business/the business or farm where you work)?	Essential
1.An incorporated company ([e.g. Ltd, co.,]) →B7a	Business incorporation
2.An independent, personal or family (business/farm)	
9.DON'T KNOW	
B6. Is the (business/farm) where you work registered (in/with) [NATIONAL BUSINESS REGISTER OR	Essential
RESPONSIBLE AGENCY]?	As proxy information to
1. YES	support identification of
2. NO	employment in
	unincorporated
9. DON'T KNOW	household market
	enterprises

Set of questions capturing economic and labour characteristics of respondents SECTION B: Employment characteristics

For persons employed in reference week	NOTES
B7a. What is the name of (your business/the place where you work)?	Essential
NAME:	Industry of establishment
□ WITHOUT NAME	
B7b. What is the main activity of the place where you work?	Essential
(Write the type of establishment and main products or services provided –e.g., Restaurant serving meals, Street-stall selling fruit; Taxi bike transporting passengers; Farm growing maize & raising cattle)	Industry of establishment
ESTABLISHMENT TYPE:	
MAIN GOODS/SERVICES:	
B8. In this (job /business) do you work?	Optional
1.Full-time	Self-perceived full-time /
2.Part-time	part-time status
B9. How many hours per week do you usually work in your (main/other) job?	Optional
1.Number of hours (specify):	Hours usually worked
2.Hours vary	
9. DON'T KNOW	

Set of questions capturing economic and labour characteristics of respondents SECTION C: Main activity status as self-perceived

For all persons aged N+	
C1. Which of the following best describes what you are doing at present?	Optional
1.Working (for pay/to generate an income)	Main activity status
2.Taking care of the home or family	
3.Studying	
4.Doing an unpaid apprenticeship, internship	
5.[Farming or fishing to produce food for the family]	
6.Looking for work	
7.[Doing military or civilian service]	
8.Doing unpaid voluntary, community, charity work	
9.Retired, pensioner	
10.With a long term illness, injury, disability	
11.OTHER (specify:)	
END OF MODULE	

Set of questions capturing economic and labour characteristics of respondents SECTION D: Questions asked during and after the DIARY

Clarifying questions, asked during diary	NOTES
D1. [If "working" is reported in the diary, but respondent has been classified as not employed]: I need to verify some information with you. I recorded earlier that you do not own either a business or a farm, that you did not do any work for pay in the last week, and that you did not have a job, including a job from which you were absent. Is this correct? 1.YES → Continue with diary 2.NO → Correct responses to relevant labour force questions	This clarifying question would pop-up when the inconsistency occurs.
D2 . [If a multiple jobholder reports working, but does not specify at which job]: Was that for your main job or your other job?	To link diary responses to specific jobs.
Summary questions, asked after completion of the diary, to learn more about specific activities:	Useful for identifying and coding activities done for pay or profit.
SUM1 . [For employed respondents]: You said you were working from [start and stop time for diary reports of working associated with the main/only job] [at your main job]. Were there any [other] activities that were done as part of your [main] job or business? Please do not include getting ready for work or commuting.	If diary does not include a report of working associated with the main/only job, skip the first sentence. If needed, review or show reported diary activities.
SUM2. [For respondents with more than one job]: You said you were working at your other job from [start and stop time for diary reports of working associated with a second job]. Were there any [other] activities that were done as part of your other job or business?	If diary does not include a report of working associated with a second job, skip the first sentence. Repeat and tweak the question to ask about work for each of the respondent's jobs/businesses.
SUM3 . [Asked of respondents with own-account farming/fishing] Were there any activities done as part of your (own/household/family) farm/fishing activities? Which ones?	
SUM4. [Asked of all respondents]: Were there any [other] activities that you were paid for or will be paid for?	