The potential of time-use data for gender statistics

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29 JULY 2026

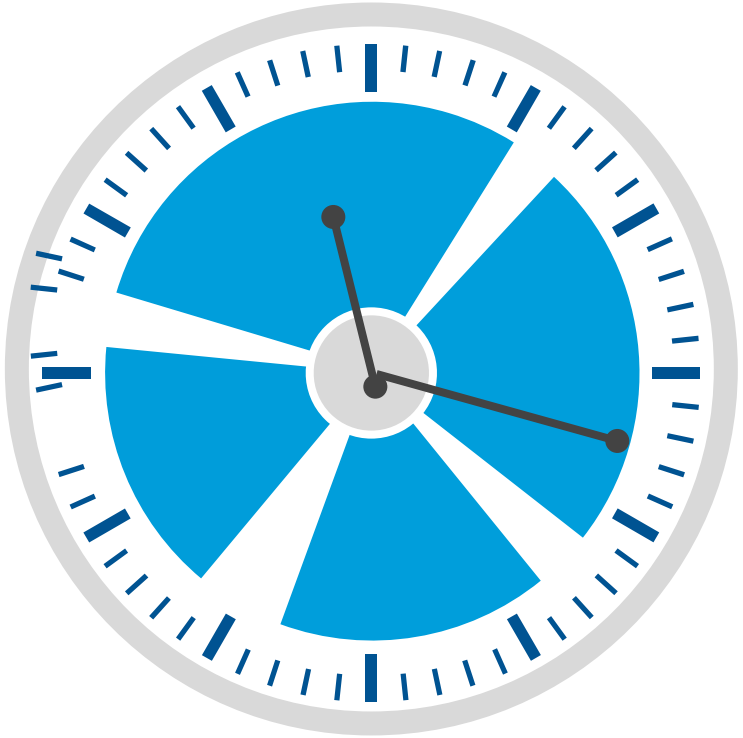
Why time matter?

Time-use statistics are **quantitative** summaries of **how individuals "spend" or allocate their time over a specified period** — typically over the **24 hours** of a day

Time-use statistics shed light on:

What individuals in the reference population **do** or the ***activities*** they engage in.

How much *time* is spent doing each of these activities.



Universal

Everyone has 24 hours

->Enables comparisons across countries and groups

Comprehensive insights

How people allocate time across activities; reflects living conditions and well-being.

Cut across and link pillars/domains

Can inform a myriad of public policies.

Policy relevance of time-use data

Health

Travel

Education

Culture

Leisure and sports

Environment

Paid work

Gender equality

Analyze the types of activities individuals engage in, the differences in the use of time between men and women and their social and economic contributions.

Quality of life and Well-being

Understand the living conditions and well-being of the population and its sub-groups; overall time allocation to the whole range of activities

Unpaid household service work

Measure all forms of work, including the provision of services by households for their own consumption. This production although not included in the SNA production boundary, is significant and time-use data provide information that can complement the GDP.

Time-use Indicators

I.1

Average number of hours spent on **unpaid domestic and care work**, by sex, age and location

I.2

Average number of hours spent **on total work (paid and unpaid)**, by sex

SDG 5.4.1

Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location

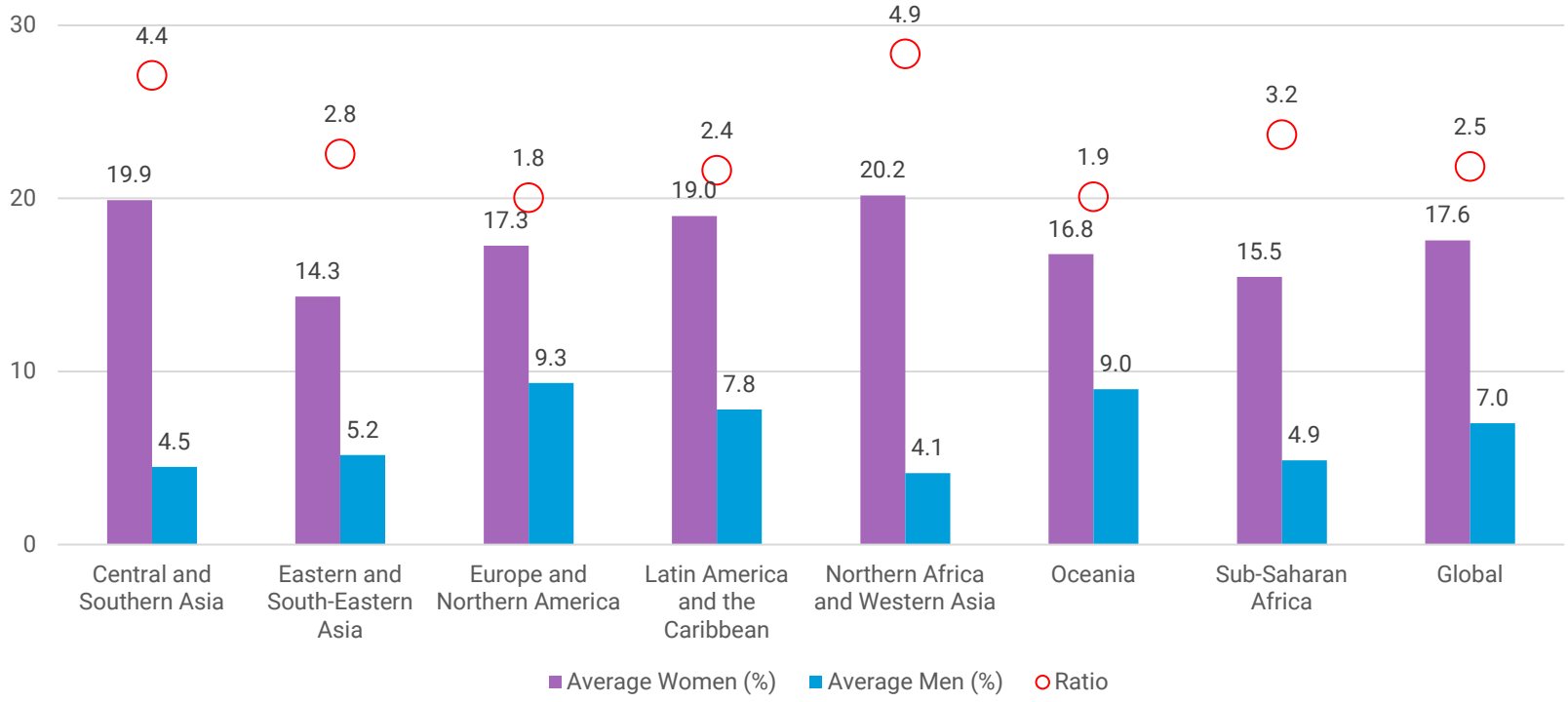
National time–use survey/data collection

Unequal distribution of unpaid care work

Women and girls continue to bear a disproportionate share of unpaid domestic and care work.

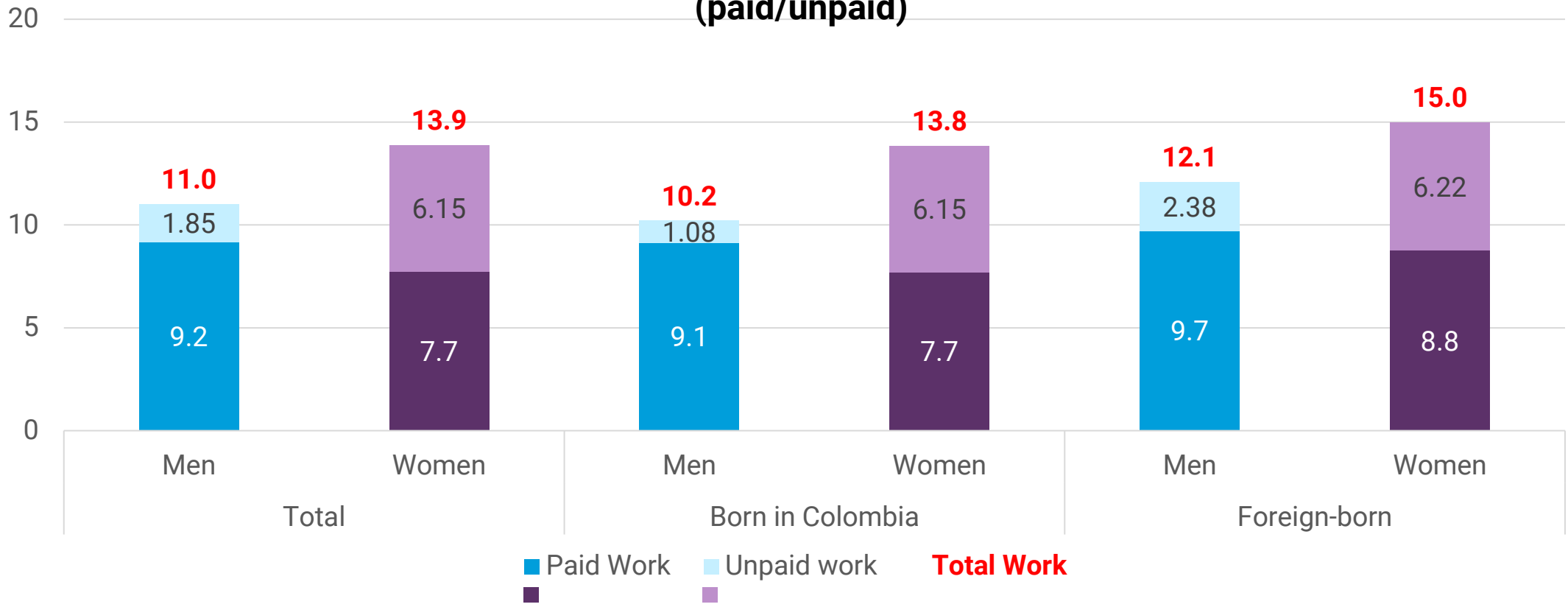
On average, women devote **2.5x** as many hours per day to these tasks as men.

Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex and region (bars) and ratio between women and men (bubbles) (latest available year, 2000-2024)



Data to inform public policies

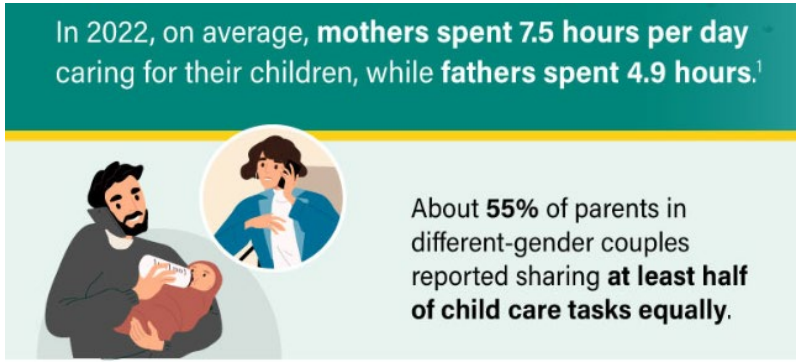
Colombia (2024-2025): Average time spent on total work, by sex, place of birth, and type of work (paid/unpaid)



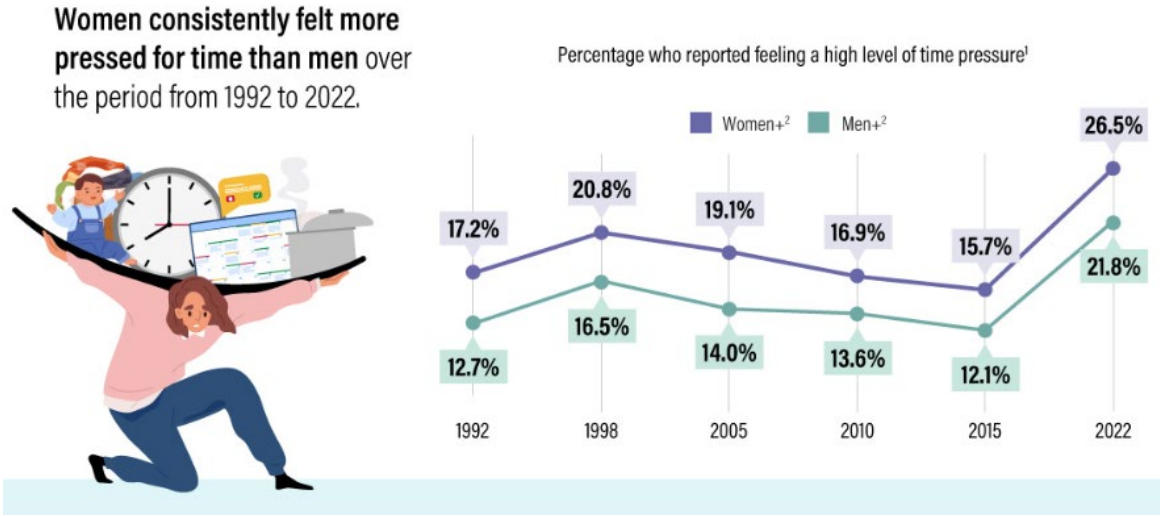
Source: Colombia National Time Use Survey (ENUT)
Notes: Average time is computed only for the population that reported participating in paid work.

Data to inform public policies

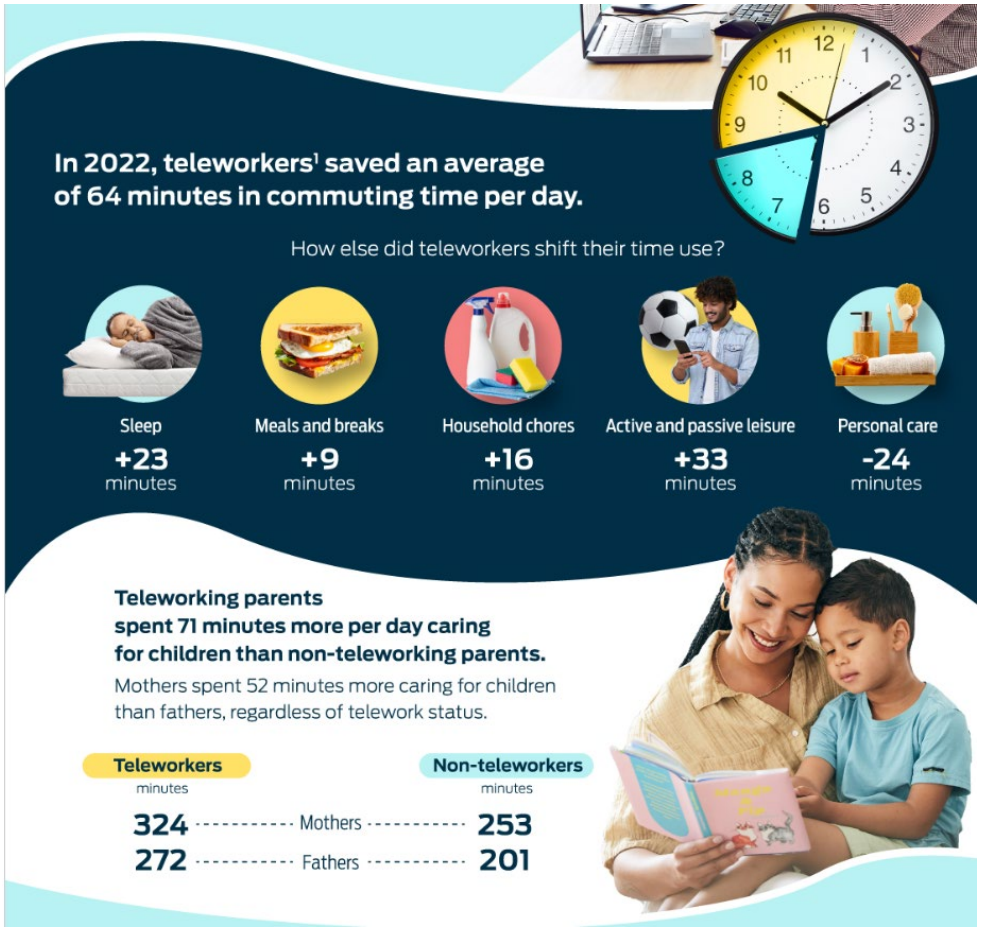
How do parents share child care?



How does time use affects well-being



How does teleworking impact time use?

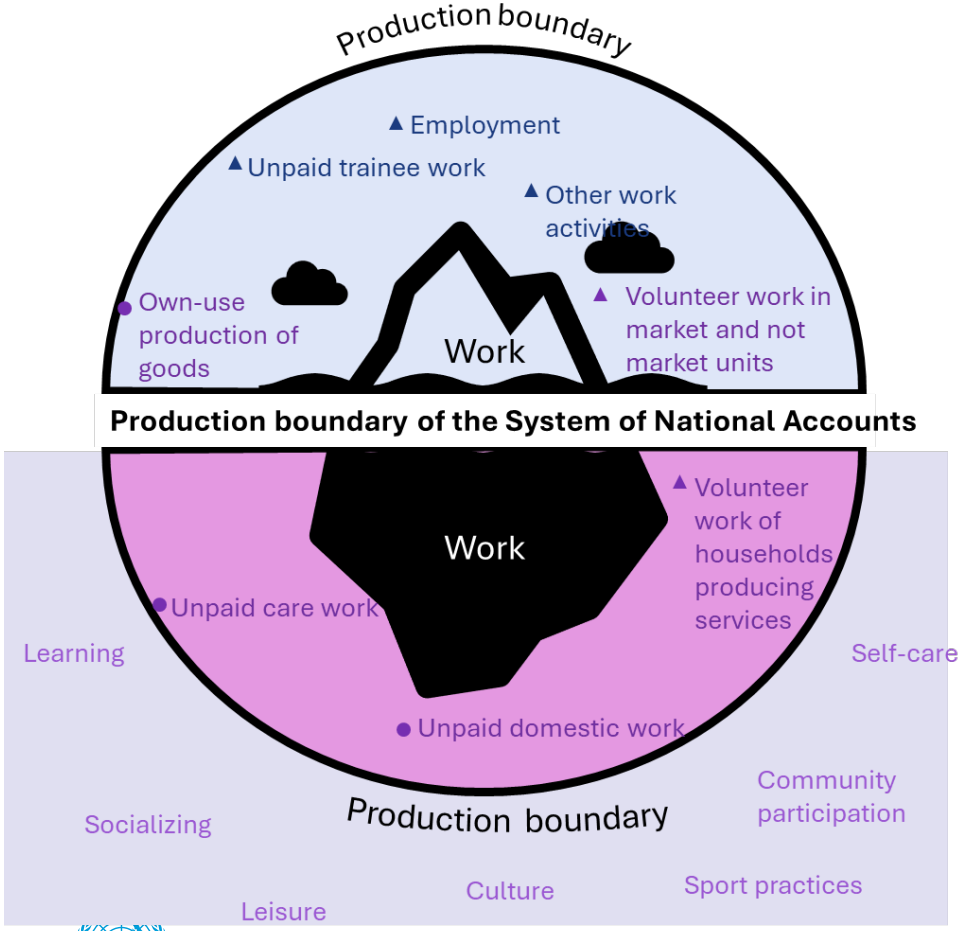


Source: Statistics Canada, General Social Survey - Time Use, 1992, 1998, 2005, 2010 and 2015, and Time Use Survey, 2022

Economic value of unpaid domestic and care work

Time use data

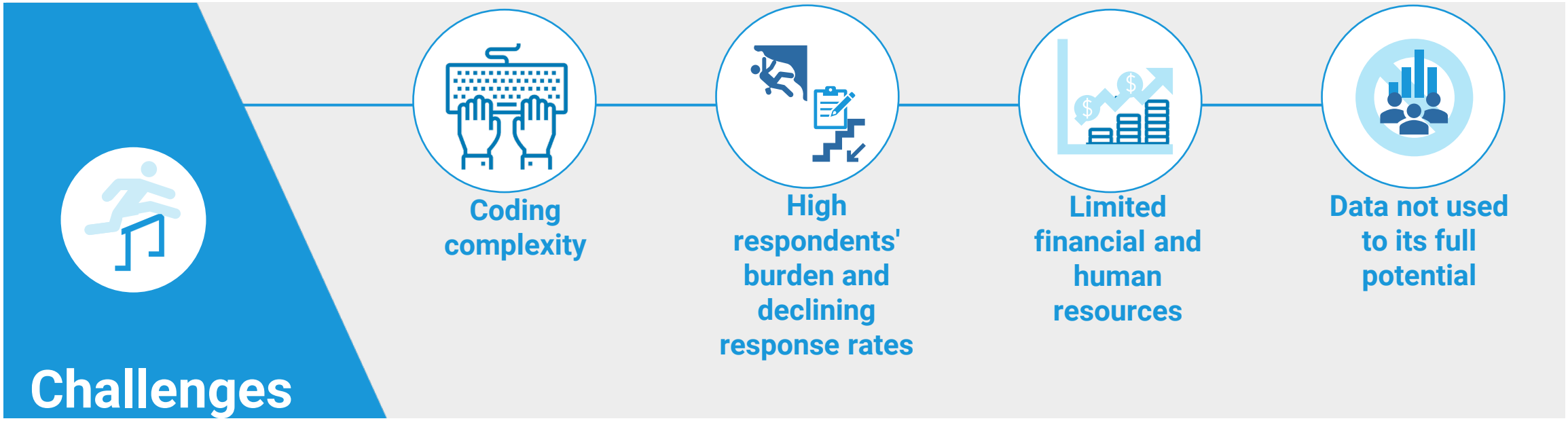
Provide information to measure and value **unpaid household services work**



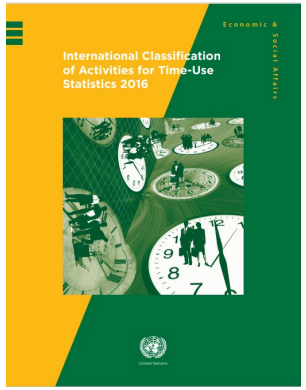
Country	Year	Economic value of unpaid work of households relative to GDP
Argentina	2020	21.8
Australia	2006	43.9
Canada	2019	25.2
Chile	2020	25.6
Colombia	2021	19.6
Costa Rica	2022	21.3
Ecuador	2017	19.1
El Salvador	2017	24.7
Georgia	2021	23.3
Guatemala	2014	18.8
Kenya	2021	18.7
Mexico	2024	23.9
Morocco	2012	19.4
Peru	2010	20.4
Republic of Korea	2019	25.5
Senegal	2021	16.3
Switzerland	2020	41.4
UK*	2023	62.0
Uruguay	2021	23.8

▲ Production for use by others
● Production for own final use
Paid work
Unpaid work
Non productive/personal activities

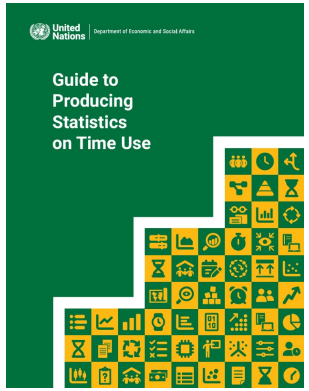
Challenges for NSOs in collecting time-use data



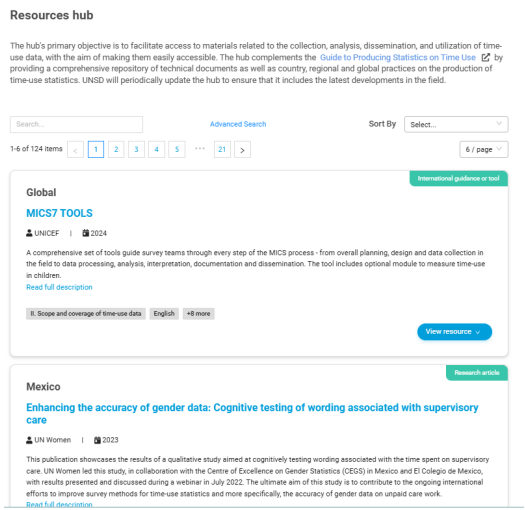
Guidance and international support exists



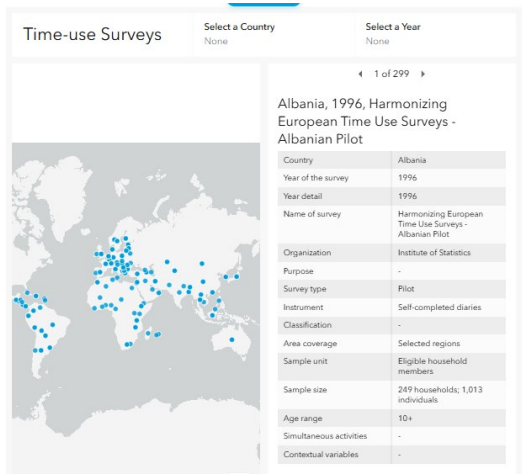
[The International Classification of Activities for Time-Use Statistics 2016 (ICATUS 2016)]



[The Guide to Producing Statistics on Time Use, 2024]



[Time-use data resources hub]



[Time-use data surveys]

SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT GOALS

Goal 5. Achieve gender equality and empower all women and girls

Target 5.4: Recognize and value unpaid care and domestic work through the provision of public services, infrastructure and social protection policies and the promotion of shared responsibility within the household and the family as nationally appropriate

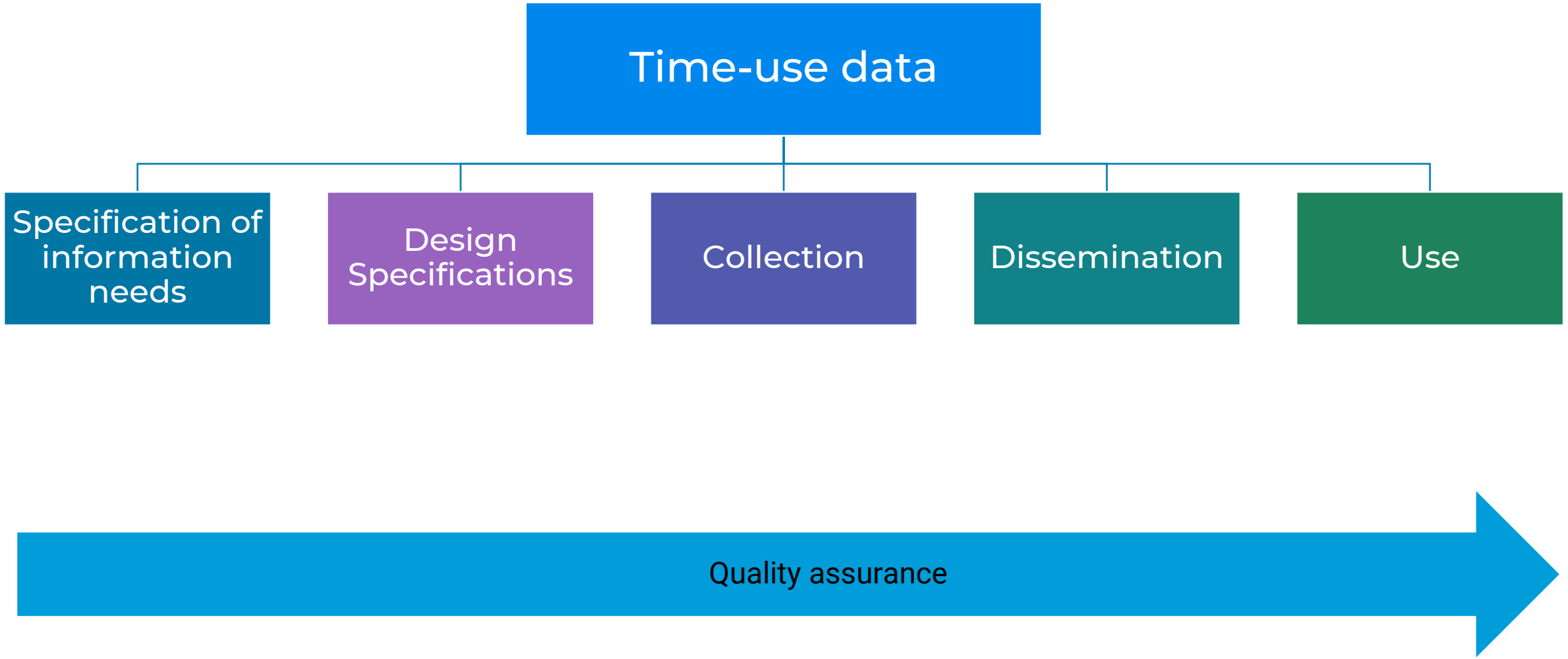
- **Indicator 5.4.1:** Proportion of time spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location

  See Metadata :

Indicator I.1: Average number of hours spent on unpaid domestic and care work, by sex, age and location

Indicator I.2: Average number of hours spent on total work (paid and unpaid), by sex

Key methodological decisions



Minimum Harmonized Instrument for the collection of time-use data

Cost-efficiency and Scalability

The minimum harmonized instrument is a specialized "light" survey solution consisting of **25 activity categories** designed to help countries produce comparable data with lower costs and resources.

The instrument **allows countries to collect data more frequently** or can be used as a **starting point** for those that do not currently collect such data.

WHY AND WHEN USING IT?

- For more frequent collections
- As a starting point for countries not already collecting time-use data
- To facilitate the inclusion of time-use modules in household surveys

WHAT DOES IT CONSIST

- List of 25 activities covering a 24-hour period
  - Light diary survey option
  - Stylized questionnaire survey option
- Essential Background characteristics: Minimum variables to be collected both individual and household level.

INTERNATIONAL COMPARABILITY

- Fully consistent with ICATUS 2016 and other international standards to ensure global data comparability.
- Correspondence table for activities between MHI and regional classifications (HETUS, CAUTAL)

1.	Working in paid job or income generating activities	13.	Education
2.	Making goods for own household or family use	14.	Socializing and communication
3.	Volunteer work	15.	Community participation, civic and related responsibilities, and religious practices
4.	Preparing and serving food and meals for own household or family members	16.	Cultural, entertainment and sports events
5.	Cleaning own or family dwelling	17.	Hobbies, games and other pastime activities
6.	Maintaining and making small repairs in own or family dwelling	18.	Sport participation and exercising
7.	Cleaning and care of clothing and footwear of own household or family members	19.	Reading for leisure
8.	Managing own household	20.	Watching TV/Listening to radio or streaming
9.	Taking care of pet of own household or family	21.	Sleep
10.	Shopping for own household or family	22.	Eating and drinking
11.	Taking care of own (household or family) child	23.	Personal hygiene and care
12.	Taking care of or helping adults (own household or family)	24.	Travel
		25.	Other

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