

**12th Meeting of the Advisory Expert Group on National Accounts,  
27-29 November 2018, Luxembourg**

**Agenda item: 4.b**

**Unpaid household activities**

Introduction

One of the more fundamental criticisms when it comes to the (2008) SNA concerns this non-recognition of unpaid services provided within households as being part of the production boundary. The Report by the Commission on the Measurement of Economic Performance and Social Progress, more commonly referred to as the Stiglitz-Sen-Fitoussi Report, also acknowledges this point of critique, and has included a recommendation (nr. 5), to “broaden income measures to non-market activities”. Furthermore, recently international guidance on valuing “unpaid household service work” has been published by the UNECE.

The attached paper deals with the impact of including unpaid household activities on macro-economic aggregates for G7-countries. It builds upon earlier work by Ahmad and Koh (2011) and van de Ven and Zwijsenburg (2016). The report starts off with discussing the pros and cons of including unpaid household activities, or more specifically, the reasons why these activities are currently excluded from the macro-economic aggregates that can be derived from the framework of national accounts. It then discusses how estimates can be compiled using statistics from time use surveys and other available information. Here, also some of the complexities related to the approximate valuation of unpaid household activities are being addressed. Subsequently, results are presented for the level estimates of GDP as well as for economic growth when including the value of unpaid household activities for the G7 economies. The report concludes with a number of recommendations on the way forward, also touching upon some of the (potential) policy implications of the work on valuing unpaid household activities.

Documentation

- Peter van de Ven, Jorrit Zwijsenburg and Matthew De Queljoe (2018), Including unpaid household activities: An estimate of its impact on macro-economic indicators in the G7 economies and the way forward”, OECD Statistics Working Papers, 2018/04, OECD Publishing, Paris. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1787/bc9d30dc-en>
- UNECE (2017), Guide on Valuing Unpaid Household Service Work, Geneva, Available at: [www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/publications/2018/ECECESSTAT20173.pdf](http://www.unece.org/fileadmin/DAM/stats/publications/2018/ECECESSTAT20173.pdf).

Main issues to be discussed

The AEG is requested:

- To provide its opinion on how to move forward the agenda on monitoring unpaid household activities in an internationally comparable way, and to motivate countries to compile such estimates on a more regular basis, say every 3-5 years.
- To provide its opinion on developing a more standardized methodology for measuring unpaid household activities, to arrive at internationally comparable results.