

# Modernizing time use surveys

UNSD and the  
Expert Group on Innovative and Effective Ways to Collect Time-Use Statistics

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# WHAT are time-use statistics?



**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.



# WHY time-use statistics?



## For social and economic policies



### QUALITY OF LIFE, WORK-LIFE BALANCE, GENERAL 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 (incl. leisure, sports, cultural activities)



### ECONOMIC CONTRIBUTION OF INVISIBLE & UNPAID WORK

Measure and value unpaid household service work through the compilation of satellite accounts



### GENDER EQUALITY & GENDER ANALYSIS

Analyse the difference in use of time between women and men



## For SDG monitoring



*Target 5.4. Recognizing and valuing unpaid care and domestic work ...*

*SDG 5.4.1. Proportion of **time spent on unpaid domestic and care work** by sex, age and location*



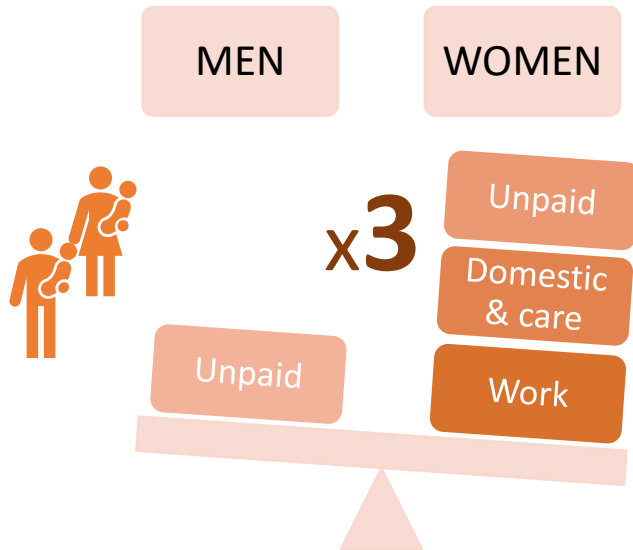
# Key facts on unpaid work (SDG 5.4.1)



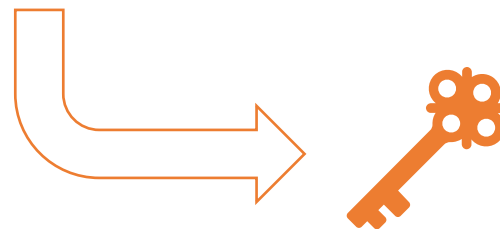
• **Men** spend more time than women in **paid jobs**



• **Women** spend more time in **unpaid care and domestic work**



- **Economic value** of unpaid domestic and care work and volunteer work: **20-60%** of GDP
- Conventional statistics *understate* the total **contribution of women** to the economy
- **Recognition and valuation of unpaid household service work** uncover hidden aspects of the economy and raise vital policy issues that have long remained invisible



Country example	Value of unpaid household service work
<b>Australia</b> (2006)	\$416 - \$586 billion (41.6% - 58.7% of GDP)
<b>Moldova</b> (2014)	\$3.5 billion (43.6% of the GDP)
<b>Switzerland</b> (2013)	401 billion CHF (63% of GDP)
<b>Ecuador</b> (estimate)	15.2% of GDP
<b>Costa Rica</b> (estimate)	25.3% of GDP

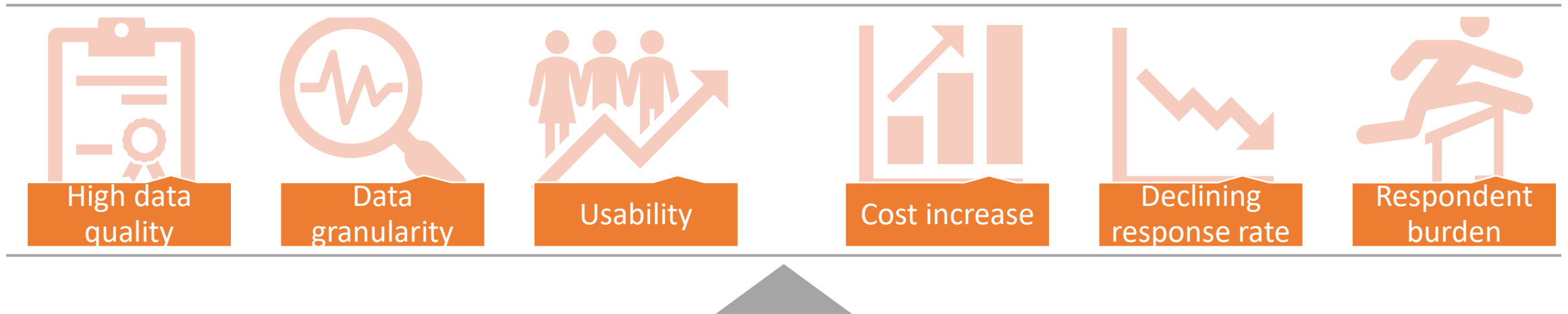
**Unlock Beyond GDP incl. satellite accounts**

# Challenges faces by NSOs with TUS



## Data expectations

## Current challenges



## Indicator 5.4.1 in SDGs global database

- **92** countries, with data disaggregated by sex (2000-2020)  
⇔ **72 countries** by 2010
- **49%** of countries with at least 2 data points (2000-2020)

How can time-use data be produced more regularly and efficiently?





# Modernizing TUS – UNSD and Expert Group

## Overall objective:

To improve national capacity in producing comprehensive time-use data, in line with ICATUS 2016 and other international standards, and using the latest technologies



## Countries:

- Australia
- Canada (chair)
- Colombia
- China
- Finland
- Italy
- Japan
- Mexico
- Mongolia
- Morocco
- New Zealand
- South Africa
- Thailand
- United Kingdom
- United States

## Agencies

- UNSD (Secretariat)
- ILO
- UNICEF
- UNWomen
- UNECE
- UNECLAC
- Eurostat
- IATUR


# UN Expert Group on Innovative and Effective Ways to Collect Time-Use Statistics



Solutions to modernize time-use data collection in line with ICATUS 2016 and SDGs

Output

Outcomes

  
**Adoption by  
Statistical  
Commission**



Making the case for time-use data

Promoting consistent concepts and definitions

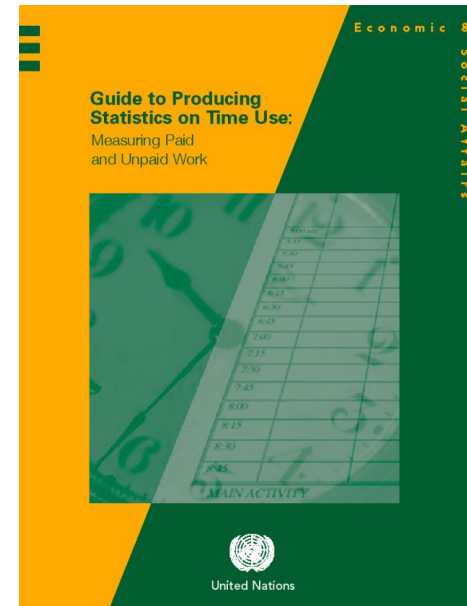


Minimum harmonized instrument

Digitalization - Applying latest technologies



Data quality



**Updated UN  
Guidelines on the  
production of  
time-use statistics**

More:

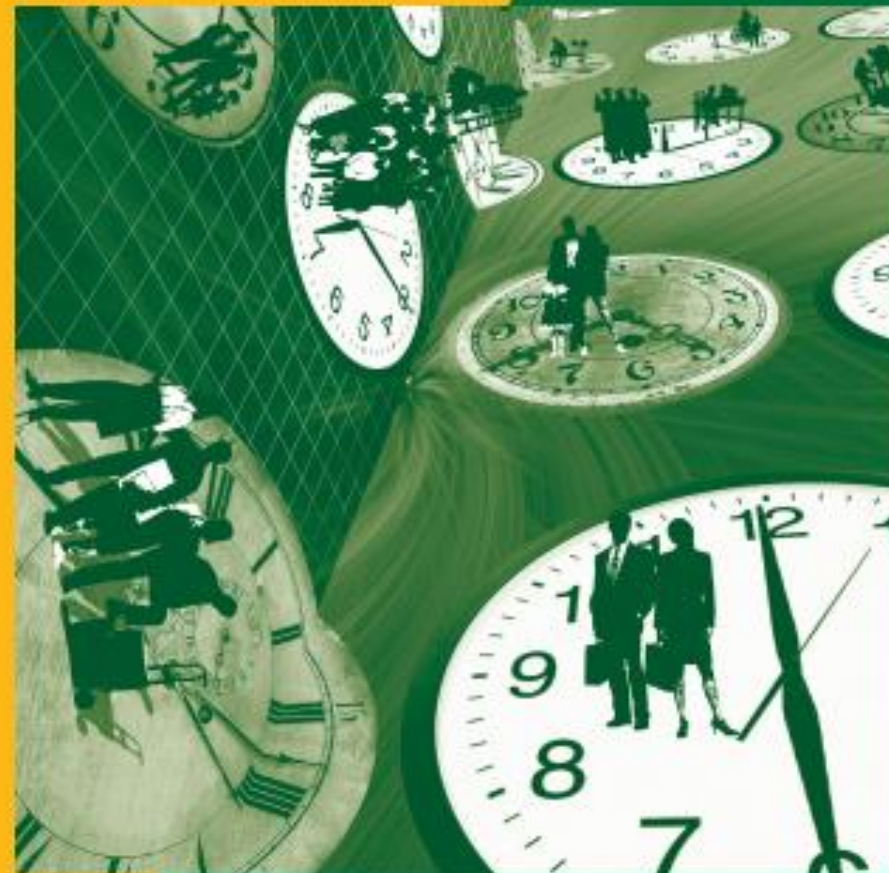
- Relevant
  - High-quality
  - Comparable
  - Frequent
  - Timely
  - Cost-effective
  - Accessible
  - Consumable
- time-use data in all countries

## International Classification of Activities for Time-Use Statistics 2016

# What is ICATUS 2016?

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International Classification  
of Activities for Time-Use  
Statistics





# ICATUS 2016



## International Classification of Activities for Time Use Statistics

- International statistical classification endorsed by the UNSC in 2017
- Classification of grouped activities a person may spend time during 24h
- Consistent standard framework harmonized with SNA, 19<sup>th</sup> ICLS, other standards, concepts and classifications

Productive  
activities

1. Employment and related activities
2. Production of goods for own final use
3. Unpaid domestic services for household and family members
4. Unpaid caregiving services for household and family members
5. Unpaid volunteer, trainee and other unpaid work

Personal  
activities

6. Learning
7. Socializing and communication, community participation and religious practice
8. Culture, leisure, mass-media and sports practices
9. Self-care and maintenance

# ICATUS and its relation to the forms of work\* and the SNA

Intended destination of production	For own final use			For use by others							
	Own-use production work			Employment (work for pay or profit)	Unpaid trainee work	Other work activities	Volunteer work				
Forms of work	Services	Goods	2. Production of goods for own final use				11. Employment in corporations, government and non-profit institutions	12. Employment in household enterprises to produce goods	13. Employment in households and household enterprises to provide services	53. Unpaid trainee work and related activities	59. Other unpaid work activities
				Goods	Goods	Services					
ICATUS 2016	4. Unpaid caregiving services for household and family members	3. Unpaid domestic services for household and family members	2. Production of goods for own final use	1. Employment and related activities			5. Unpaid volunteer, trainee and other unpaid work				
									51. Unpaid direct volunteering for other households <sup>b</sup>	52. Unpaid community - and organization-based volunteering <sup>b</sup>	
Type of work	Unpaid work (unpaid care work, domestic work and production of goods for own final use <sup>a</sup> )						Unpaid work (community, volunteer, trainee work)				
Relation to SNA				Activities within the SNA production boundary							
	Activities inside the SNA general production boundary										

*Note:* Text in the "ICATUS 2016" row corresponds to the categories (major divisions or divisions) in the classification.

\*19<sup>th</sup> International Conference of Labour Statisticians resolution concerning statistics of work, employment and labour underutilization

# Core elements of the upcoming UN Guidelines on the production of time-use statistics

## Guide to Producing Statistics on Time Use:

Measuring Paid and Unpaid Work



United Nations



# Minimum Harmonized Instrument to promote more frequent collections



Questions capturing economic characteristics



Linking information

International Classification of Activities for Time-Use Statistics – ICATUS 2016



A minimum list of 25 predefined activities + contextual information + probing questions

Activity	0	30	1 am	30	2 am	30	3 am	30	4 am	30	5 am	30	6 am
1. Working in paid job or in	→												
2. Making goods for own ho	→												
3. Volunteer work	→												
4. Preparing and serving fod	→												
5. Cleaning own or family d	→												
6. Maintaining and making	→												
7. Cleaning and care of clo	→												
8. Managing own househ	→												
9. Taking care of pet or own	→												
10. Shopping in own house	→												
11. Taking care of own (hou	→												
12. Taking care of or helpin	→												
13. Education	→												
14. Socializing and commur	→												
15. Community participatio	→												
16. Cultural, entertainment	→												
17. Hobbies, games and oth	→												
18. Sport participation and	→												
19. Reading for leisure	→												
20. Watching TV/Listening t	→												
21. Sleep	→												
22. Eating and drinking	→												
23. Personal hygiene and ca	→												
24. Travel	→												
25. Other	→												
Probing questions													
Contextual information													

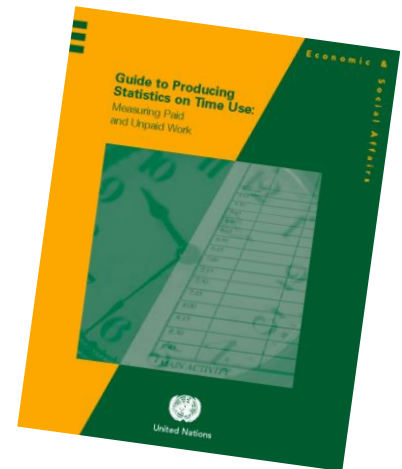


# Minimum Activity List (ICATUS 2016)



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**



# Options & tools for data collection



## Digital & light diary instrument

- Permits self-completion by respondent and/or interviewer-assisted setting
- Drop down list of activities & pre-defined contextual information associated to activity
- Breakdown: location, with whom, for whom, information and communication technology (ICT) use
- Collect at least one simultaneous activity using a pre-defined list, which is a subset of the MHI list
- Built-in quality checks in the instrument for travel and basic physical needs (e.g. eating) to ensure a description of 24h

## Stylized questionnaire

- Permits CAPI or CATI collection settings
- Asks a question for each of 25 recommended activities
- Probing questions may be required for some activities
- Contextual information and simultaneous activities are not asked as it cannot be linked to one single episode
- Quality checks to ensure coverage of 24h (reference day) or 168h (reference week)



# Digitalization - Applying latest technologies



Collection methods	Mode
Traditional	Paper
	Telephone
Modernized	Online
	Mobile app
	Mixed

## Modernizing through electronic collection (whether self-completion or interviewer)



↘ **collection cost** (no more printing of questionnaire or diaries)



↗ **quality and security / data protection**



↗ **accuracy in registration of activities**



↘ **respondent burden** (select activity from a pre-defined list or limit the number of questions)



↘ **processing time** (no more verbatim answers to be recoded)




# Takeaways



Light methods and modern solutions to produce time-use statistics are available

ICATUS 2016 as reference for agreed concepts and definitions on statistics on unpaid work obtained from time-use surveys

Importance of time-use statistics for informing economic and social policies

...including to  “recognize”/measure unpaid household work (5.4.1) before it is valued in extended accounts

Beyond GDP





Thank you!  
Any questions?

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Check our work!



**United  
Nations**

Department of Economic and Social Affairs  
Statistics