

Statistical Commission  
Fifty-third session  
1 – 4 March 2022  
Item 3(h) of the provisional agenda  
**Items for discussion and decision: gender statistics**

Background document  
Available in English only

**Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics (IAEG-GS)'s initial proposal on  
integrating a gender perspective into the work of the Statistical Commission,  
in response to Decision 51/115, b**

Prepared by UNSD

**United Nations Secretariat**  
**Department of Economic and Social Affairs**  
**Statistics Division**

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**Inter-agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics (IAEG-GS)'s initial proposal on integrating a gender perspective into the work of the Statistical Commission, in response to Decision 51/115, b\***

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\* This document has not been formally edited.

1. In 2020, at the 51st session of the United Nations Statistical Commission, the global statistical community “Requested that a gender perspective be adopted and integrated into all the agenda items of the Commission, as is, for example, the current practice in the Statistical Conference of the Americas”<sup>1</sup> (Decision 51/115, b).<sup>2</sup>

2. At its 15<sup>th</sup> meeting (December 2021), the IAEG-GS discussed the general mandate of the Group on mainstreaming a gender perspective in all phases of planning, production and usage of data and statistics, in all statistical areas as well as ways to integrate a gender perspective into the agenda items of the Commission and monitor related progress. The Group discussed at length the unique opportunity provided by Decision 51/115, b; and highlighted the challenges it carries, particularly when making the case for mainstreaming a gender perspective into all statistical areas, including in economic and environmental pillars. The importance of positioning gender statistics as statistics not only about women but rather as statistics providing evidence to inform policies that benefit everyone was acknowledged.

3. The Group also agreed to learn from and build on the related ongoing work by ECLAC for the Statistical Conference of the Americas (SCA). In particular, the Group was informed by the Technical Secretariat of SCA about the availability of a set of overall guidelines for gender mainstreaming<sup>3</sup>, and leaned about targeted recommendations for each working group of the regional Conference, which were developed to ensure their work and final products incorporate a gender approach and contribute to gender equality. Even though the structure, architecture and working methods of the Statistical Commission differ from those of the Statistical Conference of the Americas, there are lessons from this regional experience and exercise that will be valuable at the global level.

#### Need for a diverse advisory group

4. At the LAC level, it was determined necessary to have a multidisciplinary and multidomain advisory group who could participate in the process of monitoring the implementation of gender mainstreaming in the working groups reporting to SCA. It was highlighted that the advisory group needs to include experts on gender issues as well as experts on other substantive areas or to have resource persons who could be called to support decisions on specific thematic/subject matter issues.

5. At the global level, the need for a group that advises and guides this work is equivalently valid, and the role of advisory group would naturally fall in the realm of the Inter-Agency and Expert Group on Gender Statistics (IAEG-GS) whose members have conducted activities in all three pillars of development (Social, Economic, Environmental and cross-cutting) since 2007. Members of the IAEG-GS mainly consist of gender statistics experts routinely liaising with experts in other subject areas in their organisations and country. This virtuous long-standing partnership would be an asset while implementing gender mainstreaming into the work of the Statistical Commission.

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<sup>1</sup> ECLAC (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean) (2020), Report of the tenth meeting of the Statistical Conference of the Americas of the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (LC/CEA.10/9), Santiago.

<sup>2</sup> United Nations (2020), Report on the fifty-first session (3–6 March 2020) (E/2020/24-E/CN.3/2020/37), New York, Statistical Commission.

<sup>3</sup> ECLAC (Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean) (2021), Guidelines for gender mainstreaming in the working groups of the Statistical Conference of the Americas (LC/CEA.11/9), Santiago.

## Importance of monitoring all phases of work with emphasis on initial stages

6. At the LAC level, the gender mainstreaming will take place in the context of SCA working groups. At the global level, the Statistical Commission oversees work in the areas of methodology, capacity development, data and coordination,<sup>4</sup> not only from groups working under its purview, but also from the Secretariat, and the UN System as a whole.

7. Thus, the mechanics for monitoring would take a different shape. The IAEG-GS is proposing to play the role of steward or “**reference group**” and be consulted at various stages of the work being conducted or developed. Such a role already exists in the working methods of the Commission, i.e. the *Expert Group on International Statistical Classifications*, which effectively acts as a gatekeeper for any revised or new statistical classification. Groups working on revisions of existing statistical classifications or developing new ones engage with that Expert Group at different stages of development of the classification.<sup>5</sup>

8. Therefore, the IAEG-GS at its 15<sup>th</sup> meeting in December 2021 decided to establish a new *Advisory Group on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective into the work of the Statistical Commission*, with the task of developing a concrete proposal on the scope and modalities of the IAEG-GS’s contribution to the implementation of Decision 51/115, b.<sup>6</sup> It was stressed that the composition of the Advisory Group must benefit not only from gender statisticians, but also statisticians in other subject matters and thematic experts.

### IAEG-GS’s Advisory Group on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective into the work of the Statistical Commission:

*Members:* Colombia, Finland, India, Mexico, Switzerland, USA, Vietnam, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP, UNCTAD, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, WB, and UNSD

9. Based on presentations delivered by UNCTAD on measuring gender in trade as well as by UNSD on climate change indicators and gender; and based on follow up discussion by the Group, international trade statistics and climate change statistics were identified as initial priority topics, where a gender lens should be integrated. Methodological developments and statistical guidance for countries are still ongoing and the integration of a gender perspective is an emerging issue in both statistical areas, therefore representing an optimal opportunity for the IAEG-GS to timely provide recommendations and influence the ongoing work in the respective areas/agenda items of the Statistical Commission.

10. It was agreed that the Advisory Group will also review the Statistical Commission’s multiyear programme to suggest to the Bureau of the Commission which thematic areas might be addressed including order of priority, as a way to define a roadmap. This would include also the scope, content/outputs and process to support the ongoing work undertaken by the Bureau of the Commission to integrate a gender perspective into the work of the Statistical Commission. Such priority setting might be defined by a tier system determined, among other things by the existence of ongoing methodological activities, policy data needs and willingness of stakeholders to form partnerships. Concrete steps for

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<sup>4</sup> See E/CN.3/2020/27

<sup>5</sup> See E/CN.3/2020/27

<sup>6</sup> Members of the Advisory Group are: Colombia, Finland, India, Mexico, Switzerland, USA, Vietnam, ECE, ECLAC, ESCAP, UNCTAD, UNFPA, UNICEF, UN Women, WB, and UNSD.

pilot work will then be identified by the Advisory Group in collaboration with the relevant groups working under the auspices of the Commission (e.g. initially with groups working on trade statistics, business registers, and environment statistics). It is proposed that the results of such pilot work on concrete examples, and lessons learned thereof, will be reported back to the Commission in 2024.

11. The IAEG-GS agreed that this report, containing the salient aspects of the Group's discussion at its 15<sup>th</sup> meeting, including the formation of the new *Advisory Group on Mainstreaming a Gender Perspective into the Work of the UN Statistical Commission*, and initial related decisions, will be submitted to the Statistical Commission in 2022 as a background document.<sup>7</sup>

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<sup>7</sup> <https://unstats.un.org/unsd/statcom/53rd-session/>