NATIONS
UNIES

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Conseil économique
et social

Distr.
GÉNÉRALE

CES/2003/21
6 novembre 2002

FRANÇAIS
Original: ANGLAIS

COMMISSION DE STATISTIQUE et
COMMISSION ÉCONOMIQUE POUR L'EUROPE

CONFÉRENCE DES STATISTICIENS EUROPÉENS

Cinquante et unième session plénière
(Genève, Suisse, 10-12 juin 2003)

RAPPORT DE LA RÉUNION DE TRAVAIL DE LA CEE SUR LES STATISTIQUES DIFFÉRENCIÉES EN FONCTION DU SEXE, TENUE EN SEPTEMBRE 2002

Note du secrétariat

1. La réunion de travail de la CEE s'est tenue à Genève du 23 au 25 septembre 2002. Y ont participé des représentants des pays ci-après: Albanie, Autriche, Canada, Chypre, Danemark, Espagne, Estonie, États-Unis, Finlande, Géorgie, Hongrie, Irlande, Israël, Italie, Lettonie, Lituanie, Norvège, Pays-Bas, Pologne, Slovénie, Suède, Suisse et Royaume-Uni.
La Commission européenne était représentée par Eurostat. Ont également participé à la réunion des représentants de la Division de statistique de l'ONU, de la Division de statistique de la Commission économique et sociale pour l'Asie occidentale (CESAO), de l'Organisation des Nations Unies pour l'éducation, la science et la culture (UNESCO), de l'Organisation pour l'alimentation et l'agriculture (FAO) et du Bureau international du Travail (BIT).

2. L'ordre du jour a été adopté.

3. M^me^ Victoria Velkoff (États-Unis) a été élue Présidente de la réunion.

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ORGANISATION DE LA RÉUNION

4. Sur la base des communications et contributions demandées, les participants ont examiné les questions de fond suivantes:

i) Conséquences différentes, selon le sexe, des changements sur le plan macroéconomique et des décisions prises par les pouvoirs publics; utilisation d'enquêtes institutionnelles (de conjoncture) et de registres pour mesurer la place respective des hommes et des femmes dans le développement économique;

ii) Indicateurs de l'égalité entre les sexes aux niveaux national, régional et local; formulation d'une démarche sexospécifique en statistique afin d'établir des ensembles réalistes d'indicateurs, en prêtant un intérêt particulier à leur comparabilité sur le plan international et à leur intérêt pratique, ainsi qu'aux efforts communs des statisticiens et des décideurs;

iii) Les mentalités, normes et valeurs considérées comme des facteurs de nature à faire évoluer l'inégalité entre les sexes et questions apparentées de mesure et de méthodologie;

iv) Maintien d'un équilibre entre les responsabilités professionnelles et familiales à différentes étapes de l'existence; enquêtes sur les budgets-temps, la population active, etc., utilisées comme moyens d'observation.

5. Les participants ci-après ont animé les débats: sujet i) − M^me^ Mary Chamie (Division de statistique, ONU) et M^me^ Anita Svarckopfa (Lettonie); sujet ii) − Jacob Oudhof (Pays-Bas); sujet iii) − Stein Vikan (CEE); sujet iv) − Beatrix Wiedenhofer-Galik (Autriche).

TRAVAUX FUTURS

6. Les participants à la réunion ont recommandé qu'une autre réunion de travail sur les statistiques différenciées en fonction du sexe soit organisée en vue d'examiner les sujets suivants:

i) Liens à instaurer entre statisticiens et décideurs et autres utilisateurs des statistiques différenciées en fonction du sexe;

ii) Rationalisation de la production de statistiques différenciées en fonction du sexe, et coordination des travaux entrepris en matière de statistiques différenciées en fonction du sexe;

iii) Réseaux sociaux et différences entre les sexes;

iv) Violence et relations entre hommes et femmes.

7. Les participants ont adopté le rapport de la réunion lors de la séance de clôture. D'autres conclusions auxquelles sont parvenus les participants au cours de la réunion sont exposées dans l'annexe au présent rapport (en anglais seulement).

ANNEX

SUMMARY OF THE MAIN CONCLUSIONS REACHED AT THE WORK SESSION

Session I: Gender differences as a consequence of macro-economic changes and policy decisions, The use of institutional business surveys and registers as measurement tools for gender dimensions in economic development processes.

Invited papers: Italy, Poland, UNECE.

Contributed papers: Estonia, Georgia, Sweden.

1. The presentation by Italy (WP 1) analysed the situation of women entrepreneurs in Italy based on three sources: the industry and services census, the labour force survey, and the ISTAT Multi-Purpose survey on everyday life. The presentation by Poland (WP 2) focussed on gender differences at the Polish labour market in the light of macro-economic changes, but also having regards to changes in law and political actions during the period of economic transition. The UNECE presentation (WP 3) analysed available data on gender differences in economic participation in transition economies and emphasised both the need for more data and for bringing together policy makers and statisticians.

2. Three contributed papers (by Estonia – WP 5, Georgia – WP 6, and Sweden – WP 4) dealt with the existing gender discrepancies in the labour market. In Estonia, the field of gender statistics is yet to be further developed but main work is carried out to analyse the labour market from a gender perspective. Georgia emphasised that gender statistics refers to the whole population (women and men), but also that the production of relevant statistics heavily depends on available funds. Sweden's contribution looked into the issue of who is best in organising elderly care – the public or the private sector.

3. The participants highlighted the importance of the producer/user dialogue. There is an increasing demand for data from policy makers and programme planners. The demand, however, is often not in accordance with what the statistical offices can produce. An urgent need to bring together policy makers and planners (users) and statisticians (producers) can therefore be identified. Together, data needs could be specified and suggestions made how to best use existing data sources for compiling gender-sensitive information.

4. The users and producers are not an homogeneous entity and in order to have a fruitful dialogue, we need to look at which policy makers and statistics producers have a common point of interest, which primary sources of programme information and statistics could be used, who are the stakeholders in maintaining the sources (e.g. business registers) and which other partners should be involved in the dialogue (inside and outside the Statistical Office).

5. A new approach to linking gender and economy can be observed. Gender issues have for a long time been regarded as largely a social issue. However, several phenomena that have been

considered as women's issues have a longstanding economic impact on society, for example the declining fertility, lower economic activity rates of women while their education levels are higher than men's. These translate into increasing economic burden to support and provide services to the aging population and decreasing labour force. Showing the associated economic impact will help convince policy makers of the importance of these social issues.

6. The data for evaluating gender differences in economic participation are still considered to be weak. Since launching new surveys is very costly, it is worthwhile to investigate more closely the existing data sources. They might be just under-utilised and the statisticians are often not aware of which gender related data could be derived from them. It was pointed out that in some cases it could be relatively easy to introduce a gender context into the existing registers and business surveys. For example Sweden is in contact with the groups proposing the business surveys in order to find out whether it would be possible to add the issue of gender. Pro-activity in relatively new fields (e.g. services statistics, IT) is also recommended – new surveys should be gender mainstreamed right from the beginning. This requires cooperation between gender statistics experts and experts of the respective subject-matter area.

7. Not much has yet been done in analysing the potential use of business registers (BRs) and establishment surveys for gender analyses of the economy. Concerns arose as regards confidentiality, the non-mandatory up-dating of some fields in BRs that would be relevant to gender analyses, the lower coverage of establishment surveys versus other sources such as the labour force survey, and a certain lack of clarity on what can be derived from BRs and establishment surveys. Still some interesting variables were identified such as sex of chief/operating officer, earnings, analyses concerned with full-time employees etc. It was concluded that further research in this area is necessary. Making use of the reporting system of bankruptcies was mentioned as a potential source that could provide data giving insight into the gender differences in economic decision-making.

8. The following areas where main data gaps can be identified were mentioned in the discussion: the services sector, part-time employment (and its impact on pensions), care of the elderly, entrepreneurship, migration and the labour market (reference was also made to the UNECE Work session on migration statistics to be held in April 2003), access to knowledge/education, women and men's participation in IT processes.

9. Although there is quite a lot of information to show the situation of women and men as regards their labour market participation, education, earnings, unemployment, etc., these data are often not sufficient to explain why the situation of women and men is different. In analysing the labour market situation of women and men, various dimensions have to be considered, like what is the impact of macro-economic changes, what is due to changes in law, what is due to policy actions, etc. Economic statisticians are often not focused upon concerns with the underlying mechanisms that explain the differences between women and men but this could allow to make the data more pertinent to policy makers.

Session 2: Gender equality indicators at national, regional and local levels, identification of a gender perspective in statistics in order to establish feasible sets of indicators, with special attention to international comparability and policy relevance, common efforts of statisticians and policy makers.

Invited papers: U.S. Census Bureau, ESCWA, UNECE.

Contributed papers: Albania, Canada, Georgia, U.K., FAO, UNESCO.

10. The presentation by the U.S. Census Bureau (WP 8) examined some of the commonly used gender indicators to evaluate the status of women and men and to guide and evaluate policies, specifically in the areas of health, education and economic status. The presentation by ESCWA (WP 13) provided an overview of a project initiated by the Statistics Division to support work on gender statistics in the Arab countries. Countries participating in the project proposed a series of national strategies in the areas of capacity building, institutional arrangements, concepts and definitions and dissemination of statistics in order to facilitate gender policy initiatives. The presentation by UNECE (WP 10) reported on progress of the UNECE/UNDP regional gender statistics website project for which the notion of "linkage" between statistics and policy was a crucial consideration. The website provides indicators in the following seven areas: population, families, households, work and the economy, education and communication, public life and decision making, health, crime and violence.

11. The contributed papers gave an overview of the work on gender statistics in selected countries and provided many examples of gender indicators used. Useful experiences and checklists for developing gender indicators were included in several papers.

12. Albania (WP 15) reported on the considerable progress in gender statistics during the economic transition period and the areas for future work, in particular concerning violence and crime, changing women`s image in the media, and in obtaining gender data from business surveys. Georgia (WP 16) reported on the gender equality indicators in the country and the available statistical sources.

13. Canada (WP 7) surveyed the evolution of gender statistics from one initially focused on the status of women to one focused on both women and men and equality between them. It proposed a third phase of development in the production of gender statistics called "gendering" which reflects the societal forces and social constructions at work in the process of differentiating the gender roles of women and men. The United Kingdom (WP 12) overviewed the framework of gender statistics in Great Britain and the development of a key set of statistical indicators designed to map women`s position relative to that of men.

14. FAO (WP 14) examined agricultural gender sensitive indicators and reported on the FAO Socio-economic and Gender Analysis (SEAGA) Programme which operates at three levels of analysis: the field level, intermediate level (institutional) and macro level (policymakers). UNESCO (WP 11) reported on the indicator system in education in which disparity measures

were a key indicator. It is planned to eliminate gender disparities in primary and secondary education by 2005.

15. The participants highlighted the importance of relating indicators as closely as possible to policy and the need to stimulate the use of indicators as part of a statistical office`s dissemination policy. The question should be asked: for whom and for what purpose are the indicators being made? A good measure of the success of an indicator is the extent to which it is used.

16. The importance of the simplicity of indicators was stressed as opposed to complexity, as this has been found in the past to facilitate the extent to which the indicators achieve public effectiveness. When their meaning is clear and understandable, this increases their impact and use by the public. Providing too much data has been found to be detrimental to public use and understanding of the indicators. The challenge lies in finding a simple indicator that could effectively reflect the underlying complexity of issues.

17. It was mentioned that while the problem often seems to be the lack of data, overloading users with data can also have a negative impact by discouraging users. Some useful examples were mentioned in how to select indicators that are both simple and policy relevant.

18. The need to differentiate between gender indicators and gender statistics was pointed out. They have very different characteristics and are used for different purposes. A good indicator helps to understand the situation: where you are, where you are going and how far you are from where you want to be. Detailed tables of data are not indicators but statistics. Some key features of indicators mentioned were: providing the factual basis for policy development, providing a warning signal when problems occur, generating debate, evaluation of policy effectiveness and getting together the interested parties and policy actors in the monitoring process.

19. Concerning the policy relevance, the meeting considered how indicators can be used in a normative sense. For that purpose, the context, background information and national specifics should be taken into account. At the same time, it was stressed that it is desirable to maintain international comparability. The discussion brought out many common trends in countries which can provide the basis for looking for common objectives and comparability in the use of indicators.

20. Questions also arose as to the appropriate role statisticians should play in providing indicators: whether they should respond primarily to expressed user needs or whether they should conduct the research to reveal underlying social dynamics and trends which may be reflected in statistics.

Session III: Attitudes, norms and values as factors in changes of gender inequality and related measurement and methodological issues.

Invited papers: Finland, Netherlands.

21. The presentation by Finland (WP 18) was based on a study of experiences of equality at workplaces in Finland, which stemmed from the need to improve the questionnaire in two surveys, The Quality of Work Life Survey and the Gender Barometer. A qualitative approach was used to get information from key respondents on how they perceived the surveys, using the "thinking aloud" method and the theme interview method. This information was used to better understand the issue of gender equality at the work place, and to improve the different questionnaires used in the surveys.

22. The presentation by the Netherlands (WP 17) gave a theoretical overview of attitudes and related concepts. It then elaborated on how gender attitudes can be linked to gender policies, and how the statistical analyses could assess the distribution of attitudes. This was illustrated using data on decision-making in the Dutch society. The analyses identified two underlying attitudinal dimensions: a desirability of larger female participation in decision-making and an approval of affirmative action policies.

23. The discussion showed that there were very few National Statistical Offices (NSOs), apart from the Netherlands and Finland that have conducted studies on gender attitudes. However, quite a few countries have either had questions on gender attitudes in surveys not directly focusing on gender issues, or questions on related issues that could be used to analyse gender attitudes. USA, UK, Canada, Italy, Sweden and Israel, all highlighted that information on gender attitudes was available in some form, but might not have been put into a systematic analysis of gender attitudes and its relation to behaviour and policies.

24. In measuring gender attitudes and values, a lot of research needs to be done in an initial phase of establishing a set of questions or indicators to guarantee that it comprehensively and accurately measures what it is supposed to measure. It is therefore quite costly, and it is not very likely that many surveys on gender attitudes will be undertaken by NSOs outside Western Europe and North America in the near future.

25. The session agreed that there is a need for further development and elaboration of the methodologies to be used in measuring gender attitudes. This work will normally be difficult for NSOs to handle alone, and there is a need to collaborate with research environment in this work.

26. The participants agreed that qualitative methods, as shown by the Finnish presentation, can be very useful in the further understanding of the issue in question and in the improvement of the survey questions. In depth qualitative analysis in a pre-testing phase is a necessary tool for designing the questionnaire.

27. The meeting underlined the need to develop indicators in this field, to better make the information available and understandable for policy makers. The development of indicators in this area is, however, a difficult task that requires more theoretical work, and more research on how this can be used to inform and evaluate policies.

28. The need for questionnaires on gender attitudes to be stable over time was highlighted by many participants. To be able to measure changes in gender attitudes, and not just superficial changes in opinions, the questions should be carefully selected and stable over time.

29. The meeting agreed that even though relatively little work has been done by NSOs in this area, it is an important topic to continue to investigate and to possibly develop. At the moment, comparison on gender attitudes between countries is very difficult, but it would be an interesting issue to pursue.

Session IV: Balancing work and family responsibilities in different life-cycle positions, time-use, labour force and other surveys as relevant monitoring vehicles

Invited papers: Canada, U.S. Bureau of Labour Statistics, ILO.
Contributed papers: Norway, Spain, Eurostat.

30. The presentation by Canada (WP 19) examined the concept of work/family balance and on how several national surveys can be used to measure this phenomenon, underscoring the importance of data on the perception of satisfaction and well being. The presentation by the US Bureau of Labour Statistics (WP 20) reported on a study of the "sandwich generation" - a term describing people who are caring simultaneously for their aging parents and supporting their dependent children. The presentation by the ILO (WP 9) examined good practices for mainstreaming gender in the production of labour statistics, the characteristics needed of labour statistics to effectively reflect gender differences and similarities and how these statistics can be improved. It emphasized in particular the need for good coverage, detail and presentation of the data.

31. The contributed paper from Norway (WP 21) examined the development during the 1990s of employment patterns and working hours among married/cohabiting fathers and mothers with children 0-6 years of age. The analysis was an effort to gain insight into the so called "new father`s role". It can be concluded that the gender gap in labour market is diminishing concerning the formal arrangements of work but is still more visible in parents' actual time spent on income-producing work.

32. The contributed paper from Spain (WP 23) presented results of a study on differences between men and women in time use for personal needs, housework, education, paid work and spare time. The study concluded that in Spain the social position of men is four times better than that of women, particularly considering the amount of time dedicated by each gender to housework.

33. The contributed paper from Eurostat (WP 22) provided an overview on gender statistics in their work programme. There has been strong emphasis on examining gaps in gender pay and the reconciliation of work and family life. It reported on the current Eurostat projects examining care for children and other dependents; and the time use surveys in six member states and six

candidate countries. It also reported on gender statistics presented in two publications: Statistics in Focus; and Panorama of the European Union.

34. Participants stressed the usefulness of time use surveys in providing one of the most comprehensive pictures reflecting gender inequalities. It will be important to further investigate how to make time use surveys more relevant for policymakers. A key factor for effective gender mainstreaming is proactive management. Support is needed at all levels, including the need for a strong political will as well as the need for people to lead research in the area and provide guidance and advice to policymakers.

35. The interest and support of policy makers has implications on the financing and organisation of time-use surveys. In some countries the time use surveys are rather scarce while in some other countries (like Italy) they are compulsory by law. Several accession countries are conducting time-use surveys but in other transition countries it is often considered unfeasible because of the high cost. Often the Labour Force Survey is used as a vehicle to get information about time-use when it is not possible to carry out a time-use survey.

36. The balance between work and family responsibilities has a strong impact the whole of society, both women and men. It has been analysed to this point primarily through the use of objective measures. Incorporating subjective considerations of well-being in the analysis might help to shed important insight into gender (in)equality. However, the subjective indicators must be very carefully interpreted.

37. When examining reconciliation of work and family life it is necessary to consider as many variables as possible and to look in more detail at the simultaneous activities, primary and secondary activities, etc. Background information on national policies is often needed to understand differences between countries. Linking surveys and registers (e.g. population register) can be another source for data in this regard. The desirability to carry out longitudinal surveys and the analysis of occupational careers of women and men was pointed out.

38. Caretaking is becoming an issue for which it is important to increase the collection and analysis of data. The need to examine the informal care networks and the time spent in caring for other people than children and parents was pointed out. Developing indicators in this area can be challenging as n° simple statistics can be used to characterise the dynamics of caretaking. The public childcare and other forms of caring facilities need to be taken into account. There were differing opinions as to whether it would be possible to have normative indicators in this area. Some participants considered that it might be possible on the basis of equal sharing of work and family responsibilities between partners.
