



Economic and Social Council

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Agenda item 18 (c)

Economic and environmental questions: statistics

Resolution adopted by the Economic and Social Council on 18 June 2020

[on the recommendation of the Statistical Commission ([E/2020/24](#))]

2020/5. Strengthening coordination of the statistical programmes in the United Nations system

The Economic and Social Council,

Recognizing the importance of reliable statistical information for monitoring progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,¹

Recalling that, in its resolution [71/313](#) of 6 July 2017, the General Assembly urged that communication and coordination among international organizations be enhanced in order to avoid duplicate reports, ensure consistency of data and reduce response burdens on countries, and urged international organizations to provide the methodologies used to harmonize country data for international comparability and produce estimates through transparent mechanisms,

Recalling also that, in the same resolution, Member States urged United Nations funds and programmes, the specialized agencies and the Secretariat, including the regional commissions, to intensify their support for strengthening data collection and statistical capacity-building in a coordinated manner,

Recalling further General Assembly resolution [68/261](#) of 29 January 2014, in which the Assembly endorsed the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics and stressed that bilateral and multilateral cooperation in statistics contributed to the improvement of systems of official statistics in all countries,

Recognizing that the United Nations statistical system has grown significantly, reflecting the increasing complexity of the development phenomena with which the United Nations is concerned and demonstrating that solid and high-quality statistical information is an indispensable prerequisite for global and sustainable development,

¹ General Assembly resolution [70/1](#).



Taking note of Statistical Commission decision 50/103 of 8 March 2019,² in which the Commission recognized the urgent need for a better coordinated and more efficient United Nations statistical system, to reduce the reporting burden and to raise the standing of official statistics within the United Nations system, and, to that end, supported the following recommendations: (a) to immediately strengthen the existing coordination mechanisms, (b) to then take the issue of official statistics to the higher political level, including the Economic and Social Council, and (c) to ensure the active involvement of the statistical community, as presented in the background document prepared by the High-level Group for Partnership, Coordination and Capacity-Building for Statistics for the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, as appropriate,

1. *Recognizes* that coordination between the statistical programmes of the United Nations system requires streamlining and improving in order to better support the efficiency of the United Nations statistical system to provide harmonized, reliable statistical information for monitoring progress towards the achievement of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development,¹ to minimize the reporting burden, support national ownership and improve coordination of capacity-building;

2. *Also recognizes* that the Statistical Commission remains the primary body for the coordination of the statistical programmes of the United Nations system;

3. *Requests* the Committee of the Chief Statisticians of the United Nations System to more effectively strengthen coordination of statistical programmes within the United Nations system, guided by and in support of the work of the Statistical Commission;

4. *Requests* the Statistics Division of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, as the secretariat of the Committee of the Chief Statisticians of the United Nations System, to provide adequate support to the coordination function of the Statistical Commission as well as related activities of the Committee, by considering pursuing a range of activities that could include the following:

Improved functional coordination

(a) Well-coordinated activities, including a road map and action plan for the United Nations statistical programme with target and performance indicators to monitor the development of United Nations statistical governance towards a strengthened and efficient United Nations statistical system, to be considered by the Statistical Commission;

(b) Improved coordination in the area of data collection, in collaboration with organizations at all levels, to avoid duplication in that area and thus reduce the response burden for Member States;

(c) Modernized statistical processes at the United Nations as well as in Member States, upon their request, to be achieved by improving the efficiency of data collection, implementing new methodologies and emphasizing the impact of statistics, under the leadership and coordination of the national statistical offices, as applicable;

(d) Improved dialogue with the statistical community and decision makers to review the relevance of the current data requests in relation to changing information needs in order to facilitate more optimal statistical services with a view to meeting the information demands;

² See *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2019, Supplement No. 4 (E/2019/24)*, chap. I, sect. B.

(e) Improved coordination in the area of capacity-building (in line with the Cape Town Global Action Plan for Sustainable Development Data), especially in the capacity-building of developing countries, including through the facilitation of South-South cooperation;

Improved regional and national coordination

(f) Support provided to United Nations regional commissions and country offices in facilitating the work of regional and national coordination structures in the field of statistics, as appropriate;

Improved coordination in thematic areas

(g) Improved knowledge-sharing and the establishment of common practices in adopting new data sources through workshops, the development of technical material and a knowledge base;

(h) Established policies and standards for achieving open data, with required data protection for sensitive data, in conformity with the Fundamental Principles of Official Statistics³ and national laws and regulations;

(i) United Nations Statistical Quality Assurance Framework implemented by members of the Committee of the Chief Statisticians of the United Nations System, inter alia, by conducting or facilitating peer reviews of United Nations agencies, upon request;

Improved coordination with other professional networks

(j) Collaboration and cooperation established and maintained between the Committee and the United Nations Geospatial Network in the area of statistical and geospatial integration;

(k) Improved knowledge-sharing among members of the Committee in the area of the use of geospatial information in the collection, processing and dissemination of data;

Improved secretariat coordination

(l) Improved communication through the continued production and distribution of Committee documents and joint statements for the relevant bodies in the United Nations system, including the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination;

5. *Decides* that the cost of all activities that may arise from the implementation of the present resolution should be met from voluntary contributions.

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³ General Assembly resolution [68/261](#).