

# **Guidance on Communicating Gender Statistics**



United Nations Economic Commission for Europe  
Conference of European Statisticians

# Guidance on Communicating Gender Statistics

Prepared by  
the Task Force on Communicating Gender Statistics

## Acknowledgements

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This document presents “Guidance on communicating gender statistics” prepared by the Task Force on communicating gender statistics, consisting of the following individuals:

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The Guide was developed and approved by the entire Task Force. Each chapter was drafted by a team under the leadership of one or more individuals, as follows:

- 1) Communicating about the Gender Pay Gap, Melissa Moyser;
- 2) Communicating statistics on gender-based violence, Andrew Moore;
- 3) The language of gender in statistical communication, Karen Hurrell;
- 4) Maintaining impartiality when communicating gender statistics, Marjut Pietiläinen;
- 5) Interacting with users of gender statistics, Cristina Freguja and Sara Demofonti;
- 6) Addressing data gaps, Eleanor Carey.

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## Acronyms

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CES	Conference of European Statisticians
EIGE	European Institute for Gender Equality
EU	European Union
GBV	Gender-based violence
GPG	Gender Pay Gap
ILO	International Labour Organization
LFS	Labour Force Survey
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
ONS	Office for National Statistics (United Kingdom)
OSCE	Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe
NACE	Statistical classification of economic activities in the European Community
NSI	National Statistical Institute
NSO	National Statistical Office
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
UNECE	United Nations Economic Commission for Europe

# I. Introduction

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## A. Background

1. Gender statistics, like statistics on any other topic, are valuable to users only if they are easily found and accessible, and if users find them relevant and easy to understand. The responsibility of national statistics offices (NSOs) does not stop at production or dissemination. Action must be taken to communicate gender statistics, that is to promote their awareness, understanding and use. This is true of all statistical areas but brings particular challenges for gender statistics.

2. Firstly, gender-related data come from many different sources, may be spread around many products and hard to find, or in some cases, not published at all. Secondly, gender issues occupy a unique place in policymaking. This means that NSOs must take extra care when communicating gender statistics to balance the need to remain impartial with the obligation to produce relevant data to inform policymaking and answer the needs of those who require the data. Producers of gender statistics are thus faced with a need to communicate the statistics themselves and also their meaning and value.

3. The growing importance of communication is not unique to gender statistics. For example, the High-Level Group for the Modernisation of Official Statistics (HLG-MOS) in 2018 developed a strategic framework for communicating with data users and the general public. UNECE has produced guidance in the form of the Making Data Meaningful series of publications. The 2010 publication *Developing Gender Statistics: A Practical Tool* includes a chapter on “Improving the use of gender statistics” which clarifies the distinction between communication and dissemination.

## B. Establishment and the work of the Task Force

4. The CES Bureau established the Task Force on communicating gender statistics in February 2018 (terms of reference in document ECE/CES/BUR/2018/FEB/8<sup>1</sup>). The objective of the Task Force was to develop guidance for NSOs and other producers of gender statistics on communicating gender statistics, focusing on both communication with policymakers and with the public. The Task Force concentrated on those aspects that are specific or especially pertinent to gender statistics, while ensuring coherence with and avoiding duplication of other initiatives on statistical dissemination and communication.

5. The terms of reference called for the Task Force to identify communication challenges for gender statistics; review current practices and collect examples of good practice; and produce a set of recommendations for tackling the challenges identified.

6. CES member countries and international organizations nominated 37 individuals representing 18 countries<sup>2</sup>, 7 organizations<sup>3</sup> and one independent expert. The Task Force was chaired by Helen Cahill of Ireland.

7. The Task Force decided not to produce a traditional final report in printed form. Instead, the recommendations are presented in a concise electronic format of guidance notes since the

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<sup>1</sup> Additional information on Task Force [here](#).

<sup>2</sup> Albania, Australia, Belarus, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Canada, Chile, Czechia, Finland, Ireland, Italy, Luxembourg, Mexico, Republic of Moldova, Russian Federation, Slovenia, South Africa, Turkey, United Kingdom.

<sup>3</sup> CIS-Stat, Council of Europe, Data2X, Eurostat, UN Women, UNECE, UNICEF.

target audience of the products are primarily those working in communications in statistical offices (among others).

8. The Task Force began its work with a brainstorming exercise. After distilling down the ideas generated, the Task Force decided to focus on the six major thematic areas identified during the brainstorming exercise on which guidance would be helpful for those involved in the production, dissemination and communication of gender statistics.

### **C. First output: a set of electronic guidance notes**

9. The Task Force identified six major thematic areas where guidance would be helpful for those who produce and/or disseminate and communicate gender statistics. The themes are:

- (a) Communicating about the Gender Pay Gap;
- (b) Communicating statistics on gender-based violence;
- (c) The language of gender in statistical communication;
- (d) Maintaining impartiality when communicating gender statistics;
- (e) Interacting with users of gender statistics;
- (f) Addressing data gaps in gender statistics.

10. Each of these six guidance notes follow a common template developed by the group. The guidance notes contain the following brief sections:

- (a) Explanation of what the issue or challenge is;
- (b) Explanation of why it poses a particular challenge for gender statistics;
- (c) Recommendations;
- (d) Examples, including case studies, images and links.

11. The Task Force prepared the six guidance notes collaboratively. For each theme a leader was identified to coordinate the work. Contact information for the theme leader will be included in each electronic guidance note. The guidance notes are presented in section II.

12. The guidance notes are planned to be hosted on a dedicated website (see subsection E “Housing and maintaining the products”).

### **D. Second output: an online repository of good practice examples**

13. In line with the terms of reference, the Task Force decided to establish a repository of examples of good practice, organized in a systematic way, enabling people to consult and learn

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