

International Labour Organisation

THE
THIRTEENTH
INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE
OF
LABOUR STATISTICIANS

(Geneva, 18–29 October 1982)

Geneva
International Labour Office
1983

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Resolution I: Resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment I/1

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APPENDIX II

II/1-31

LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

Members of Delegations and Officers of the Conference II/1

Members of Committee and Working Groups II/27

Secretariat of the Conference II/31

PREFACE

The Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians was held in Geneva (Switzerland) from 18 to 29 October 1982.

The International Conference of Labour Statisticians are primarily concerned with the establishment of international standards in the field of labour statistics and are convened at irregular intervals by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office. The Twelfth International Conference of Labour Statisticians was held in 1973 and the Eleventh Conference in 1966.

Invitations to the Conference are issued to all Member States of the International Labour Organization, to employers' and workers' representatives nominated by the ILO Governing Body, to the statistical offices of the United Nations System including its regional commissions and of the specialized agencies, and to various inter-governmental and non-governmental organizations concerned with the topics under review. The representatives and their advisers, designated by the respective governments and organizations, are in most cases senior officials who are responsible for or deal with the particular statistics under consideration. The conclusions of each Conference are expressed as resolutions addressed to the Governing Body of the International Labour Office.

The Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians adopted two resolutions which were submitted to the Governing Body of the International Labour Office at its 223rd Session (Geneva, May-June 1983). The Governing Body authorized the Director-General of the International Labour Office to transmit the Report of the Conference to the United Nations and to the governments of Member States of the ILO and, through the latter, to the national employers' and workers' organizations concerned, drawing particular attention to two resolutions adopted by the Conference, namely Resolution I: "Resolution concerning statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment" and Resolution II: "Resolution II: "Resolution concerning statistics of occupational injuries". These two resolutions containing the new recommendations on the concepts, definitions, methods of collection and compilation of such statistics are reproduced in Appendix I of this Report.

INTERNATIONAL LABOUR ORGANISATION

THIRTEENTH INTERNATIONAL CONFERENCE OF LABOUR STATISTICIANS

(Geneva, 18-29 October 1982)

Report of the Conference

INTRODUCTION

Convocation and agenda

1. At its 217th Session (Geneva, June 1981), the Governing Body of the International Labour Office authorised the Office to convene the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians to meet in Geneva from 18 to 29 October 1982. The main objectives of this Conference were to revise existing or adopt new international standards in the field of labour statistics, in particular with respect to statistics of labour force, employment, unemployment and underemployment, and of occupational injuries, and to obtain professional views and guidance from national labour statisticians in respect of the ILO's statistical activities. The following items were placed on the agenda:

1. General Report.
2. Labour force, employment, unemployment and underemployment.
3. Occupational injuries.
4. Revision of the ILO October Inquiry on Occupational Wages.
5. International coding of labour statistics.
6. Paid holidays.

Preliminary work

2. Six reports dealing with the respective items on the agenda were prepared by the Office for submission to the Conference.

3. The general report comprised a review of the work of the Bureau of Statistics in recent years, addressing principally the collection and dissemination of labour statistics, work in standard setting, and in the provision of technical advice and assistance. The first part dealt with developments regarding the Year Book of Labour Statistics and the quarterly Bulletin of Labour Statistics, as well as progress in the computerisation of statistics contained in these publications. The second part covered conceptual and methodological developments, including a recently published manual on wage statistics,¹ and work that had begun in areas such as the informal sector, labour cost, labour turnover and industrial disputes. Mention was also made of the recently commissioned report on possible future action with respect to the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO), and the programme of technical assistance to developing countries to aid them in their development of labour statistics was described. The last part of the report dealt with possibilities for the future work of the Bureau of Statistics.

¹ ILO: An integrated system of wages statistics: A manual on methods (Geneva, 1979).

4. The need to update the existing international recommendations concerning statistics of the labour force, employment, unemployment and underemployment had been discussed in numerous forums, reports and publications of the ILO and other international organisations as well as national statistical authorities. At its 213th Session (May-June 1980), the Governing Body of the International Labour Office recognised the need for revision, and convened a Meeting of Experts to advise on the updating and revision of definitions, classifications, coverage and nature of statistics on labour force, employment and unemployment. This meeting took place in Geneva in May 1981 and, in the light of the apparent shortcomings of the existing labour force approach as a model for national standards in different types of economy, i.e. industrialised market, centrally planned and developing economies, and also for valid international comparisons, an approach to revision was suggested that would provide for alternative definitions of employment, unemployment, etc. and for flexibility in aggregating and disaggregating labour force data for alternative purposes and uses.

5. On the basis of the report of the Meeting of Experts, the Governing Body of the International Labour Office authorised the Director-General in May 1981 "to work out revised draft international recommendations for statistics of labour force, employment and unemployment to be put before the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians". Report II was accordingly prepared, taking into account the deliberations of the Meeting of Experts and extensive further study and consultation since that time. The report contained a draft resolution updating present international recommendations concerning statistics of the labour force, employment and unemployment (resolution adopted by the Eighth International Conference of Labour Statisticians, 1954) and concerning the measurement and analysis of underemployment and underutilisation of manpower (resolution adopted by the Eleventh International Conference of Labour Statisticians, 1966).

6. A number of International Conferences of Labour Statisticians had considered the subject of employment injury statistics, and the Tenth ICLS (1962) adopted a resolution recommending standard concepts and definition in this area, as well as guidelines for their classification and presentation so as to facilitate the development of the statistics with a higher degree of both national and international comparability. The recommendation did not deal with standard methodologies for collection or calculations. However, since 1962, increasing demands had been registered with the Office for improvements in the concepts and methodology. As a result, the Office took up the work by first studying the different types of national statistics available and their sources.

7. A Meeting of Experts was subsequently convened in Geneva in January 1980 by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office to consider questions relating to a consistent standard statistical reporting of occupational injuries, including incidence and severity rates. The findings of the Meeting of Experts revealed a number of problems. The types of data compiled by countries were of a heterogeneous nature, mainly due to differences in their sources, the agencies responsible for them and their field of interest, and the methods used for their collection. Great variations also existed in the methods and concepts used in the calculation of the different measures, such as frequency and severity rates.

8. In the light of these conclusions, the subject was placed on the agenda of the Thirteenth ICLS. A report including a draft resolution to replace that of the Tenth ICLS was prepared by the Office for the consideration of this topic by the Conference. The objectives of the draft resolution were to promote sound national practices, to increase the comparability of statistics between countries, and generally to enhance the usefulness of aggregative statistics of occupational injuries.

9. In 1924, the Governing Body of the International Labour Office authorised the Office to undertake an inquiry on occupational wages and retail prices on a continuing basis, following a resolution adopted by the First International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 1923. The aim of the inquiry was to compile statistics in order to make tentative comparisons of the levels of real wages in different countries. Over the years, various International Conferences of Labour Statisticians had reviewed the scope and periodicity of the inquiry, and as a result of their recommendations, the number of occupations and items covered was modified, as well as its frequency.

10. Since 1953, the structure and content of the October Inquiry had remained unchanged, apart from a redefinition of the occupations in October 1973 to conform with the revised International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) of 1968. Also, since 1953, no computation was made of food purchasing power, and the types of data collected were considered to have a number of limitations and deficiencies. In addition, a growing demand had been registered with the ILO for more extensive occupational wage data than were presently available through the Inquiry.

11. Accordingly, it was decided to revise Parts 1 and 2 of the October Inquiry, following a redefinition of its objectives, to take account of the emerging data needs expressed by a number of users. The purpose of Report IV, "Revision of the ILO October Inquiry on Occupational Wages", was to inform the Conference of the objectives and details of this revision, including the presentation of a draft questionnaire.

12. Report V, "International Coding of Labour Statistics", was the result of preliminary thinking on the part of the Secretary-General as to whether a computerised schema for the retrieval of information about available national statistical data could not be devised analogous with systems for the retrieval of bibliographic references.

13. The purpose of presenting this report to the Conference was to seek confirmation or otherwise that the idea of an international coding schema was a useful one and, if so, to consider how the present formulation might be developed further.

14. Report VI had been prepared following a review of a variety of national practices with regard to statistics of paid holidays. Paid holidays were a subject of growing importance from both the social and the economic points of view. For employees, the increasing length of paid holidays which they received was an indication of improvements in working conditions, and a component in rising living standards. For economic purposes, they were an element in the computation of total hours actually worked, necessary for the analysis of labour productivity and labour costs, inter alia.

15. The report did not propose any resolution on paid holiday statistics. It was left to the Conference to formulate a resolution if it wished.

Organisation of the Conference

16. The Conference opened on 18 October 1982 in the Governing Body Room of the International Labour Office in Geneva.

17. The meeting was attended by delegates from 62 countries, Employers' and Workers' representatives nominated by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and representatives of the United Nations Statistical Office, the Economic Commission for Europe, the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development, the International Research and Training Institute for the Advancement of Women, the World Health Organisation, the World Bank, the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, the Statistical Office of the European Communities, the Arab Labour Organisation, the International Confederation of Free Trade Unions, the World Confederation of Labour, the International Organisation of Employers, and the International Social Security Association.

18. Mr. S.K. JAIN, Deputy Director-General of the International Labour Office, opened the Conference and welcomed the delegates on behalf of the Director-General. He drew attention to the relatively heavy agenda before the meeting, dealing with many issues which had emerged in the field of labour statistics during the nine years since the last International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 1973. He emphasised the importance of the work of the Conference for labour statisticians and users of statistics throughout the world, both in technical and professional terms and in the light of the current state of the world economy. Mr. Jain also welcomed the representatives of the many international organisations and agencies, interpreting their presence as a testimony to the reality of the co-operation between them.

19. Mr. Jain outlined the scope of the activities and the organisation of the ILO. Its basic objective was the protection of labour through the improvement of working conditions, and he described the means at the disposal of the ILO towards this end: the development of employment programmes and policies, standard setting, technical co-operation and assistance. The ILO's unique tripartite structure ensured that workers and employers, as well as governments, were represented in all aspects of its undertakings. He explained that the resolutions adopted by the Conference would be passed on to the Governing Body of the International Labour Office for its consideration and, if approved, would become international recommendations. These were not mandatory, but were intended to be universally useful. The task of the Conference was purely professional: to produce useful resolutions.

20. Following his address of welcome, Mr. Jain introduced the Secretary-General and other officials of the ILO designated to serve the Conference.

21. The Conference elected Mrs. J.L. NORWOOD (United States) as Chairman of the Conference, Mrs. C. JUSTIDMAN (Mexico), Mr. E. OUABA (Benin) and Mr. K.C. SEAL (India) as Vice-Chairmen, and Mr. D.A. WORTON (Canada) as Rapporteur. In addition, Mr. B. GRAIS (France) was elected as Chairman of the Committee on Labour Force, Employment, Unemployment and Underemployment.

22. The Standing Orders were those for International Conferences of Labour Statisticians adopted by the Governing Body on 19 November 1981 at its 218th Session. The reports presented at the Conference were made available in English, French and Spanish, as well as in Arabic, German and Russian. Interpretations were also given in those languages.

Decisions of the Conference

23. The Conference adopted two resolutions, which are presented in Appendix I.

24. Resolution No. I concerns statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment. It provides for a flexible framework of concepts, based on a "building block" approach, which can be adapted to different national requirements, while simultaneously permitting the reclassification of national data into internationally comparable categories. The resolution provides definitions of the concepts, and includes recommendations with regard to the different types of statistical programmes for meeting objectives of data collection, analysis and classifications, and the evaluation and dissemination of information.

25. The resolution also recommends that the International Labour Office prepare a manual on statistics of the economically active population, detailing such aspects as the methodology of data collection, tabulation and analysis.

26. Resolution No. II concerns statistics of occupational injuries. Taking into account the definitions with regard to employment injuries contained in Convention No. 121, it recommends standard methodology, definitions and concepts relating to statistics of occupational injuries, and guiding rules for the classification and presentation of such statistics.

Other business

Terminology

27. In expressing its general satisfaction with the work of the Conference, the meeting drew attention to the ways in which, under the various topics of discussion, the role of women in the labour force had been recognised, along with the requirements for appropriate statistical measurement of their participation in, and their contribution to, the economy and society.

28. With a view to directly encouraging the future use of sex-neutral terminology in the documentation of the ILO Bureau of Statistics, thereby enhancing, inter alia, the impact of proposals relating to women, the Conference recommended to the Bureau of Statistics the formal adoption of explicit policies and procedures relating to the application of sex-neutral terminology. Such practices would be consistent with and supportive of the UN Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, which had been ratified by many of the countries represented at the Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians, as well as the ILO Declaration and Resolution on Equality of Treatment for Women Workers, adopted during the 60th Session of the International Labour Conference in 1975.

Periodicity of International Conferences
of Labour Statisticians

29. In view of the rapidly changing circumstances in the labour markets of all countries, and the need to ensure the relevance of national statistical systems for the effective measurement of these changes, the meeting recommended that more frequent International Conferences of Labour Statisticians be held. The nine years that had elapsed since the Twelfth ICLS in 1973, during which there had been many developments, both economic and social, had been too long; every four-to-five years was considered to be the optimal periodicity. It was suggested that the next International Conference of Labour Statisticians be held no later than 1987.

Closing of the Conference

30. The Conference thanked the Secretary-General and the Secretariat, and commended them for the careful preparation for the meeting, for their co-operation and for their assistance. The Conference also expressed its appreciation to the Chairman for the professional and laudable manner in which she had executed her duties. The Secretary-General added his thanks to all the delegates who participated in the Conference, to the Chairman and to the Rapporteur, for their important contributions to the success of the meeting.

31. In closing the Conference, the Chairman expressed her appreciation of the work performed by the Secretariat and all those engaged in the various activities of the meeting. She praised all the representatives participating in the Conference for the professionalism with which they had acted, and for the spirit of international co-operation which they had evidenced in all that had been accomplished during the meeting.

CONFERENCE PROCEEDINGS

1. General Report

32. The first item on the agenda of the Conference was the discussion of a general report on the work of the Bureau of Statistics prepared as Report 1. A number of general comments were made at the outset. One of these related to the desirability of more frequent International Conferences of Labour Statisticians. Some concerns were also expressed about the perceived artificiality of jurisdictional boundaries relating to the migration of persons of working age, although it was stressed by the Secretariat that the United Nations Statistical Office was only involved with statistics of migration and that the ILO had responsibility for substantive questions on migration. A similar point was also made in respect of social security statistics.

33. In the matter of publications, there appeared to be general support for the Year Book, although a view was expressed that it might be shortened - possibly by publishing in one language only. It was explained that this would not be feasible and that much of the recent increase in length had resulted from the ILO's commitment to show as many figures as possible separately according to sex. Problems with the Bulletin appeared to centre around its periodicity, with some preferences being indicated for monthly statistics to be published. The question of the timeliness of the data published was also raised. On these points, the Secretariat noted that there was in fact a monthly supplement in which the latest information received by the ILO between two quarterly issues of the Bulletin was published, and that attempts were being made to speed up timeliness in general through the use of computerised shuttle questionnaires. One country urged the reinstatement of labour productivity statistics in the Year Book, and also noted the need for methodological research in this area. It was further suggested that, while the reported progress on computerisation was welcome, a next step might be on-line access to country statistics. It was pointed out that, for the present, this would not be a feasible objective because of the lack of standard retrieval languages. However, all or any part of the Year Book could be made available on magnetic tape.

34. The view was expressed by several countries that Part 3 (retail prices) of the October Inquiry was inappropriate and outdated. While some were of the opinion that this part should be abandoned, a number considered that it should be retained, but in a revised form. It was suggested that a short list be established of items representative of those included in the construction of the CPI of most countries (including such elements as transportation and postal charges), with detailed specifications of the items (perhaps giving international brand names) and eliminating broad groups of items (such as bread and fish). It was generally recognised, however, that for purposes of comparisons of living costs between countries, the CPI was frequently a better indicator.

35. EUROSTAT reported that it had been engaged for over seven years in the calculation of purchasing power parities for the member States of the EEC and a number of other countries. These purchasing power parities are used, inter alia, to adjust the national income data published by EUROSTAT for most of its member States. Detailed price data used as the basis of the PPP calculations were planned for publication during 1983. Meanwhile, research was still being carried out in this field.

36. The third phase of the ongoing International Comparisons Project had recently been completed by the UNSO in close co-operation with EUROSTAT, OECD and some 30-40 countries. However, the resources available in this area were limited, while the need for further work was growing.

37. It was noted as being important to differentiate between the different types of price statistics and their uses: purchasing power parities as national income deflators, consumer price indices for calculating real wages, purchasing power parities for studying levels of living, etc. In some cases, the price data required may be available, while the wage or income data may not. For instance, ideally, the disposable earnings after taxes and social security and other contributions have been deducted should be used for calculating real wages, since this would give a better measure of real purchasing power.

38. It was recommended by a number of countries that the existing international standards concerning the construction of consumer price indices be re-examined by the ILO in the light of current needs and experience to determine whether these could be improved upon. It was also suggested that the ILO could organise its work in this field as clearly defined project studies concentrating on individual aspects of CPI. It was important that the development of methodology of data collection and calculation procedures for CPI be carried out by the ILO, particularly with respect to the needs of those developing countries lacking expertise in this area. In this connection, the Office pointed out that it would be preparing a manual on the construction of CPI jointly with the UNSO. The aim would be to formulate good practice for methods of producing CPI, with the particular problems of the developing countries in view.

39. With regard to the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO), which was last revised in 1968, the majority of countries expressed their support, in principle, of the proposed revision, since the present version no longer adequately served the purposes for which it was originally intended. Several developing countries drew attention to the difficulties involved in using the 1968 version of ISCO, mainly due to the fact that many of the occupations, as well as the underlying criteria for classification, were inappropriate for their own national circumstances. A number of countries had in recent years revised their classifications of occupations to meet their own national needs, often using different criteria or categories from those used in the ISCO. It was therefore more difficult, if not impossible, for them to provide occupational data for international comparisons which would be compatible with the 1968 version of ISCO. Thus, the two basic objectives of the ISCO of providing guidelines for the development of national classifications of occupations, and of promoting the international comparability of occupational data, were no longer being served. In addition, since 1968, new occupations had come into being as a result of developments in new technologies, which were not reflected adequately in the ISCO, and certain occupations had disappeared, while occupations existing in the informal sector in developing countries were not represented at all.

40. There was consensus that the revision of ISCO should not merely be an updating of the present system. Many countries expressed the need for a classification scheme which could be integrated with systems for classification by status, education, qualifications, levels of skill, and so on, in order that meaningful groupings of different types of socio-economic categories could be made.

41. Some countries were concerned about the conceptual and operational difficulties involved in the proposed revision. Before embarking on this task, the objectives of the new ISCO should be clearly defined. It was suggested that a working group of national experts on occupational classifications from both developing and developed countries be set up to provide guidance in the selection of criteria and methods to be employed in developing a new ISCO.

42. It was pointed out by the Secretary-General that the proposed revision of ISCO was intended for purely statistical purposes. The needs for occupational classifications designed to serve the requirements of job placement activities, manpower planning or vocational training programmes were considered to be too country-specific to be usefully served by an international classification scheme.

43. In response to a question concerning the cost of the proposed revision, the Secretary-General stated that this had been estimated at US\$1.5 millions. This high cost was partly due to the need for developing the ISCO in the three working languages of the ILO. This work could not be taken up by the ILO Bureau of Statistics within its regular budget, nor did it have at its disposal any experts on occupational classifications. The decision to revise the 1968 version of ISCO rested with the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, which would have to allocate the necessary resources.

44. Another point raised concerned the timing of a revision of ISCO. ISCO was one of the most widely used of the existing international standard classifications. In particular, the UN guidelines concerning population censuses recommended the use of the latest revision of ISCO. Since the next round of population censuses was scheduled to take place in the 1990s, it would be advisable that a revised ISCO be available by 1987, in order that countries could make the necessary arrangements for its implementation.

45. In view of the general support shown for a revision of the present International Standard Classification of Occupations, a number of delegates suggested that the Conference should adopt a resolution to this effect. To this end, a Working Group was set up which considered the issue and then reported back to the plenary session. The text of the report of the Working Group, containing its views on the need for a revision of ISCO, the factors to be taken into account, and its recommendations for action to be taken by the ILO, is given in the attached Annex. The list of participants in the Working Group is presented in Appendix II. The meeting thanked the Working Group for its report and unanimously approved its recommendations for ILO action. The Conference noted, however, that there was no provision in the Office's 1982-83 budget for the work that would have to be undertaken in 1983 as a preliminary to the major substantive work, referred to earlier, that would be involved in the revision itself. This preliminary work was estimated to cost US\$106,750.

46. The utility of Convention No. 63 concerning statistics of wages and hours of work (adopted by the International Labour Conference in 1938) had been questioned by several International Conferences of Labour Statisticians. There was general agreement that this Convention was outdated, and some of the 30 or so countries which had ratified it wanted to de-ratify, since it was no longer suitable for their statistical needs. A paper was to be submitted to the Governing Body of the ILO in November 1982 proposing the revision of Convention No. 63, which had been superseded by the resolution on an integrated system of wages statistics adopted by the Twelfth ICLS in 1973. The proposed revision would clearly delineate the division of responsibilities between the International Labour Conference and the ICLS; thus, it was foreseen that while a revised Convention would commit ratifying countries to the collection and publication of labour statistics, recommendations concerning concepts and methodology would fall within the competence of the ICLS.

47. In the discussion of future possibilities for the programmes of work for the Bureau of Statistics, the general point was made that, in the currently constrained financial climate, attention must be given to consistent over-all objectives and the avoidance of possible unconscious contradictions such as supporting more occupational detail for the October Inquiry while simultaneously down-playing the need for revision of ISCO. Other general points related to the need to emphasise quality as against quantity in international statistical reporting, while not at the same time imposing unrealistic reporting requirements upon developing countries.

48. On the eight specific possibilities outlined in Report 1 for the future work of the Bureau of Statistics, there was positive - although varying - support for all except number (8), i.e. the production of an historical abstract which was singled out by a number of countries as a low priority item. On number (1), dealing with the revision and updating of past resolutions, most comment centred on Convention No. 63 which has already been dealt with earlier in this report.

49. Point number (2), relating to the examination of new subjects, drew extensive comment and support - even in the light of acknowledged staff shortages - and the specific suggestions on training and effective hours of work were endorsed by a number of countries. Additional suggestions put forward included: income statistics and the desirability of a bridge between these and employment statistics; measures of the duration and frequency of unemployment; measures of working life; statistics of collective bargaining, strikes and lockouts; new methodology of projections; statistics on conditions of work; statistics of multiple job-holding and other sources of income; methodology of gross flows and turnover of labour; methodology of identifying and reaching statistical "publics" - both users and respondents - and of developing appropriate collection methodologies and apparatus of dissemination; the preparation of a special compendium to mark International Youth Year in 1985; work on the informal sector which was thought to be important in developed as well as in developing countries; and finally the identification and analysis of structural changes with emphasis on the rural sector. On the questions of the informal sector and strikes, the Secretary-General noted that work had already begun within the ILO Bureau of Statistics on methodology of statistics for the urban informal sector and also of strikes.

50. In endorsing point number (3), dealing with the organisation of training seminars for statisticians from developing countries, several countries drew attention to work they had recently undertaken in this connection. The Secretariat stated that, while ILO had its own experts in this area, financial problems precluded

the holding of ILO-sponsored seminars. On a cautionary note, the Conference was warned against the transfer of experience that might not be wholly relevant to developing countries and the point was made that the sharing of experience among developing countries might frequently be more useful. It was also pointed out that short-term training was only effective if there was an adequate foundation of basic training, and it was therefore important that this latter aspect not be overlooked.

51. Finally, in the context of training, it was suggested that the ILO Bureau of Statistics mount a systematic effort to keep itself informed on what was going on in the various countries, and to use its good offices to co-ordinate the activities so as to avoid duplication and overlap.

52. On point number (4), which referred to the adjustment of national statistics so as to produce and publish more internationally comparable estimates, it was noted that any improvements to be made in statistics published by the ILO should not be limited to "estimates". Again, with regard to point number (5), dealing with the publication of seasonally adjusted figures in the Bulletin of Labour Statistics, it was agreed that seasonal adjustment of series would be most useful in relation to monthly figures. On this latter point, however, it was noted that effective seasonal adjustment required a very detailed understanding of the source data such as could only be provided by producers at the national level, so that, if the ILO Bureau of Statistics undertook such work, there would have to be extensive consultation.

53. On point number (6), relating to the provision of further information on the sources and methods of national labour statistics, there was generalised support and useful specific suggestions, although at least one country did not see the work as a high priority.

54. In response to a comment that the labour force projections seemed to be "the captives of past methodology", the Secretariat responded that the projections had a good track record of accuracy. Nevertheless, the methodology had been reviewed from time to time, and this would continue.

55. On the matter of point number (7), referring to further possible work on the comparability of changes in consumer price indexes, most of the discussion can be subsumed in the broader discussion of prices reported above. As a point of factual correction, it was noted that the example cited in this connection as to the effects on the US CPI of a 10 per cent rise in old and new mortgage rates was incorrect. It was also suggested that any ILO work in this area should include a review of the methodology of family expenditure surveys. Generally, the prospect of an ILO initiative in this area appeared to be welcome, although it was cautioned that a great deal of work would be required and that much would depend upon contributions from national statistical offices.

56. Finally, as noted earlier, point number (8), referring to the production of an historical abstract of labour statistics, appeared to be generally viewed as a low priority area of work.

ANNEX

Report of the Working Group on the Revision of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO)

The following 21 countries were represented on the Working Group: Algeria, Angola, Austria, Belgium, Denmark, Finland, France, Gabon, Federal Republic of Germany, Ghana, Greece, India, Israel, Norway, Portugal, Switzerland, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States of America, Upper Volta, and Venezuela.

Representatives of EUROSTAT, the UN Statistical Office and employers' organisations also attended.

The Working Group elected Mr. Herberger of the Federal Republic of Germany as Chairman and appointed Mr. Davis of the United Kingdom as Rapporteur.

The Working Group addressed itself to three issues:

- (i) the need for a revision to the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO);
- (ii) the factors which should be taken into account in any such revision;
- (iii) what further action, if any, should be taken.

A. The need for a revision of ISCO

Members of the Working Group were unanimous in calling for an urgent revision of ISCO. The present classification, drawn up in 1968 and published in 1969, is now out of date. Because of the creation of new skills and methods of working arising out of new technological developments, it no longer provides an adequate basis for describing the occupational characteristics of the labour force satisfactorily in either the developed or the developing countries. It is outmoded in its structure because it does not pay sufficient regard to the wide range of uses which a classification of occupations now has to meet. Furthermore, it does not allow for the proper description of occupations in countries at different stages in their industrial and technological development.

The present ISCO therefore fails to meet the three objectives expected of it:

- (i) the means by which meaningful comparisons of the occupational and socio-economic structures of the labour force in different countries can be made;
- (ii) a framework for the improvement of existing national classifications;
- (iii) guidelines to countries developing occupational classifications for the first time.

B. The factors to be taken into account in revising ISCO

The Working Group was strongly of the opinion that a revision of ISCO should be completed in time to be used in connection with the 1990 round of population censuses. The revision would need to be completed, therefore, by 1987. It was also felt that the design of any new classification should allow for more frequent updating than has been possible hitherto while, at the same time, providing for some continuity with the present ISCO where this is thought desirable.

It was recognised that occupational classifications today had to service a wide variety of purposes in addition to statistical uses, e.g. to assist in the development of manpower and training programmes, the operation of employment services and the scientific determination of wages within countries, as well as for making international comparisons.

To meet these objectives, national occupational classifications would have to take into account elements such as the training needed, the materials used, the experience required, the level or degree of responsibility, the industrial structure, areas of international collaboration and development, the socio-economic characteristics of the society and other factors.

The Working Group recognised that it would not be possible to devise an international classification of occupations which would embrace all these elements.

It therefore recommends that an international classification system should be developed which, while providing for the inclusion of a wide variety of factors, would only attempt to specify the occupational detail at a level appropriate for making international comparisons. But that, in addition, guidelines should be prepared for the development of the more detailed elements of national classifications so that, as far as possible, such classifications would be convertible to the agreed international framework.

C. Action to be taken

Without passing a resolution, the Working Group unanimously and firmly recommends that, in order to achieve the objectives outlined above, as a first step, the Bureau of Statistics of the ILO appoints, and gives support to, a group of experts, not only drawn from countries with recent experience but also representing the needs of countries at different stages in their development who, having regard for the work already done by the ILO consultant, would:

- (i) devise the international classification of occupations system and specify the elements of the system;
- (ii) outline those elements of the system which are relevant for the purpose of making international comparisons of occupations;
- (iii) specify the form and content of the guidelines to be prepared for the national elements of the system;
- (iv) estimate the time and resources required to complete the work specified in (ii) and (iii) above.

Necessary preparatory work should be immediately initiated by the Bureau of Statistics of the ILO.

Labour force, employment,
unemployment and underemployment

57. The Conference considered this topic on the basis of Report II: "Labour force, employment, unemployment and underemployment", prepared by the Bureau of Statistics and dealing with: the history and substance of present international recommendations relating to statistics of the labour force, employment and unemployment (the 1954 Resolution), as well as the measurement and analysis of underemployment and underutilisation of manpower (the 1966 Resolution); the new conditions, concerns and practices which have developed during the long currency of these recommendations and which render them unsuitable in certain respects as a basis for national practices in developing countries, in industrialised market economies, and in centrally planned economies, as well as for international comparisons; and proposals for the reorientation, amplification, and extension of the recommendations.

58. The elements of these proposals had been consolidated into a draft resolution for consideration by the Conference, and to assist the Conference in this consideration, Chart ICLS/13/D.3 was provided as a replacement of the charts contained in Report II.

59. Prior to discussion by the Conference, the Secretariat summarised the more important elements of the proposals and highlighted the major points of departure from the 1954 and 1966 Resolutions, under four main headings as follows: two approaches for measuring the economically active population - one based on the current activity status and the other on the usual activity status; the distinction between the paid labour force and its self-employed counterpart; the suggestion to provide for an alternative, extended definition of unemployment; and the proposals concerning the measurement of underemployment and the relationships between employment and income.

60. The 1954 Resolution had defined the active population by reference to current activity, i.e. labour force activity "during a specified brief period, either one week or one day", which eventually created problems for countries just beginning to measure labour force activity and where major elements of the population were engaged in agricultural and other seasonal or intermittent activities. The proposal provided for a second, alternative definition of the active population, based on "usual activity", through the identification of employment or unemployment status during the major part of a longer specified time such as the preceding 12 months or the preceding calendar year.

61. Again, with respect to the different status categories, the 1954 Resolution placed major emphasis on wage and salary earners and related categories. For a very great number of member countries today, however, much of the working population consisted of own-account and unpaid family workers, for whom different criteria and terminology were appropriate. The proposal therefore sought to reflect this reality by a distinction between the paid labour force and its self-employed counterpart, and the corresponding distinction between paid employment and self-employment, and also the distinction between those seeking or currently available for paid or self-employment.

62. With respect to the definition of unemployment, the 1954 position was mainly based on the criterion of seeking work, with two exceptions - layoffs and so-called future starts. This criterion essentially meant seeking job information and was applicable only when at least two conditions were satisfied: that the individual had incomplete knowledge of the job market; and that there existed job information channels through which the individual could seek a job.

63. Increasingly, it had been demonstrated that these conditions were not satisfied in many countries. The first condition most typically broke down in rural and less densely populated areas and the second in urban areas. Thus, Report II proposed two definitions, the first being a restricted or standard definition based on the seeking work criterion, and the second an extended definition based on an availability criterion. Each country could then choose between one or the other according to its national circumstances, and would not be - as the Secretariat emphasised - obliged to adopt both definitions.

64. Finally, with respect to the measurement of underemployment, the 1966 Resolution distinguished two principal kinds: visible and invisible. The former was a relatively straight-forward statistical concept measuring employment of less than normal duration, while the latter was a more complex analytical concept which

might be characterised by low income, underutilisation of skills, or low productivity, and which could draw on different sorts of data. The proposals sought to separate the two measures and to clarify them operationally, with invisible underemployment, for instance, being replaced by a study of the relationships between employment and income.

65. In order to ensure full and careful consideration of the proposals, the Conference agreed to devote two plenary sessions to a general review of the draft resolution contained in Report II and to then refer it to a Committee under the Chairmanship of Mr. Grais (France) for more detailed study. The draft resolution, as modified by the Committee, would then be brought back to the plenary session in the second week for final review and eventual adoption.

66. Forty countries, Employers' and Workers' representatives nominated by the ILO Governing Body, and six international organisations took part in the general discussion of the draft resolution and there were virtually unanimous expressions of appreciation and admiration for the careful work and imaginative thinking that had gone into the development of the resolution by the ILO Bureau of Statistics.

67. The following summary of the preliminary general discussion of Report II in plenary session is roughly organised according to the four headings under which the Secretariat introduced the main elements of the proposals contained in the draft resolution. It is, however, preceded by a number of general points as follows:

68. First, the broadly based expression of approval of the proposals was qualified in a number of ways. In general, countries with centrally planned economies, for instance, indicated that, while they would endeavour to conform for reasons of international comparability, the thrust of the recommendations was at variance with their national needs and practices. In one or two instances, there was scepticism as to whether the ILO was not setting itself an impossible task in attempting to develop a single standard that would be applicable to the varying circumstances of so many countries, as opposed to concern as to why the ILO was considering the extension of definitions which, it was claimed by some, had worked well so far. There were some indications, too, of the inadequacy of the proposals as a basis for labour market planning. As one example, it was said that they did not bring to light mismatches between employment and the education-training process. There were questions about possible inconsistencies of the proposals with the United Nations principles and recommendations for population censuses, but the representative of the United Nations Statistical Office indicated that none of these were major and could probably be cleared up by the Committee.

69. It was noted that countries using administrative records as their sources of data would have problems in applying the proposed recommendations and, more generally in this connection, the lack of any statement about interconnections between different data sources - household surveys, establishment surveys, and administrative records - was also pointed out. Unique expressions of views included the failure of the draft resolution to deal with the requirements of the National Accounts and the need for statistics relating to the safety aspects of hazardous work.

70. A set of criteria against which the proposals could be assessed was put forward. These covered: relevance; measurability; understanding; simplicity; universality; consistency and utility. By way of example, it was suggested that the recommendation for an extended definition of unemployment might not meet the simplicity criterion because of the confusion it was potentially capable of causing. The attention of the Conference was drawn to two kinds of perspective for international comparisons on the basis of the proposals - the technical and the contextual. The considerable degree of variability in the latter was illustrated by the example cited by one country, whereby terminology could carry implicit value judgements and therefore obscure policy aims. In this example, the term "underemployment" might not be helpful for a government which was endeavouring to encourage part-time work.

71. More specifically, it was noted that paragraph 38 of Report II had mentioned flows into, within, and out of the labour force, but that the point had not been followed up in the draft resolution. Again, there were some indications that the recommended periodicity for certain "current" data, as set out in paragraph 42(1) of Report II, was too frequent, and that this might more appropriately be lengthened to between one and five years.

72. Finally, in this group of general comments, the international organisations re-emphasised their generally strong support for the proposals and commended the ILO Bureau of Statistics on its responsible, sensitive and imaginative approach to the task of formulating international guidelines.

73. The first group of comments on the proposals themselves related to the definition of the active population and may be summarised as follows:

74. There was a considerable degree of satisfaction with the concept of the "usually active" population which, by virtue of the longer reference period involved, was more suited to the realities of labour market activity in many countries than the "currently active" concept. Some countries especially emphasised their inability to work with the "current activity" concept, indicating, for instance, that they could only satisfy the detailed requirements of paragraph 42 of the draft resolution on the basis of the "usual activity" concept. Even so, there was concern that the terminology and related operational definitions presently envisaged for the alternative concept should fully capture all the subtleties of seasonal and intermittent labour force activity, and the term "periodically active" was proposed at one point in the discussion.

75. Some countries, in reporting that they did not at present include the armed forces in their measures of the currently or usually active population, indicated that this would not be possible in the future either, but at least one country hoped to be able to include the armed forces quite soon.

76. The question of age-limits for eligibility of inclusion in the active population was touched upon, with some countries mentioning that persons of official retirement age were excluded ipso facto from the labour force regardless of whether they were actually participating. Two contrary points were made in this connection touching directly upon the draft resolution. The first related to the removal of the lower age limit, so as to acknowledge the frequently important contribution of children working part time. More typically, the second stressed the desirability of stipulating in the resolution minimum and maximum ages - the latter presumably being as high as possible - so as to permit international comparisons.

77. Both the currently active and usually active populations were measures of the economically active population, which in turn related to an internationally-accepted concept, the production of economic goods and services. In this connection, mention was made of the distinction between the domestic and national active populations, which would obviously be important for any country whose nationals worked elsewhere to any significant extent or which employed the nationals of other countries. The issue of activities in the so-called "informal sector" was also mentioned, where not only purely statistical problems but also questions as to the legality of the activities made it difficult even to identify, let alone measure, the activities and the persons involved in them. In addition, several countries were of the view that the concept of productive activity should be extended to include home-making and voluntary work, with the contributing persons accordingly being deemed to be part of the active population.

78. One of the more recurrent themes of the discussion related to perceived ambiguities within and at the margin of the active population and the need to establish clearer boundaries between what many countries considered should be mutually exclusive components. These points can most appropriately be reported on in terms of the discussion about the paid and not paid components of the labour force and division of the former into those persons in paid employment and those seeking (or available for) paid employment, and of the latter into those persons in self-employment and those seeking (or available for) self-employment.

79. A frequently made point, particularly by countries with industrialised market economies, concerned this distinction between persons in paid employment and those in self-employment. The difficulty here primarily arose from the problems of allocating own account workers between paid and self-employment, as proposed in the draft resolution, on the basis of the criterion of whether or not such workers were paid directly for services performed, and the related difficulty of distinguishing them from employers. Modern legal, institutional and other considerations relating to the provision of services to individuals and to businesses, where much of the work of such persons was typically done, were thought to preclude any basis for the distinction proposed that would be both rational and consistent through time. Accordingly, it was urged that the definition of paid employment be restricted to cover only wage and salary earners.

80. But, apart from the foregoing boundary problems vis-à-vis paid employment, other difficulties with the concept of self-employment were revealed, for instance, it could be difficult to identify statistically persons with work but not at work, owing to circumstances which might not always be understood or well-defined. More frequently, however, the concerns related to the inclusion of unpaid family workers who satisfied the minimum (one hour) requirement, as persons in self-employment. In many countries, it was stated, this would enlist virtually the whole of the rural population into the labour force. Some countries, however, expressed their active support for this proposal.

81. A similar expansion of the labour force would take place if the part-time jobs of students, or their efforts to find such jobs, were taken cognizance of.

82. Other problems relating to students were also raised. Different institutional arrangements with essentially the same objective might affect their status, for example, a government might place a trainee in an educational institution or pay for him to be trained within a business establishment. Again, there appeared to be problems with the transitional status of students as they went from the educational sector and into the labour force (or vice versa). This might be regarded as one example of a more general need for unambiguous flow statistics.

83. A further proposal about which a considerable degree of concern, and even scepticism, emerged, was that relating to the treatment of layoffs. The notion that these might, under certain circumstances, be treated as employed created a credibility problem for many countries, where the reality of closed factories and laid-off persons was obviously synonymous with unemployment and its adverse economic and social consequences. But, even allowing that the concept might be rationalised, the operational problems of defining various degrees of job attachment so that the employed/unemployed status distinction could be clearly made, was thought to be virtually impossible.

84. Multiple job-holding was a subject of some concern, particularly since, under the draft proposals, it could take place on either side of the paid employment/self-employment dichotomy. Attention to the income implications of multiple job-holding was also urged. In addition, the existence of a more complex set of categories with boundaries that were not altogether clear was said to encourage misreporting and, even when this was not so, to provide information on status changes or "category jumping" that might not be easy to interpret or analyse.

85. Finally, under the heading of the paid and not paid labour forces, and their respective components, a number of observations not directly related to the proposed definitions may be noted. First, it was urged that the employment/unemployment characteristics of households, as well as the related income status, be given explicit recognition in the resolution. The linkage between employment and hours worked was also mentioned. And, finally, it was argued that the proposals did not sufficiently bring out the unique contribution to, and involvement of, women in labour market activities, although there was realistic recognition of the difficulties in this regard in certain countries. The proposal for an extended, alternative definition of unemployment was generally welcomed, certainly by the majority of developing countries, the nature of whose labour market operations did not lend themselves to application of the search criteria set out in the 1954 Resolution. Others, in stressing that they could not use, or would not be willing to use, the extended definition, for reasons varying from the purely operational to those stemming from the difficulty of getting the public to understand or accept it, nevertheless indicated their willingness to acquiesce in its adoption because it was being put forward as an alternative. Some countries foresaw the possibility of working with both definitions, noting the logical connection of the restricted definition with administrative concepts like those relating to eligibility for unemployment insurance benefits, and the relevance of the extended definition to household inquiries. But there was a view that there should be a single definition of unemployment, regardless of whether this be the restricted or extended definition.

86. Some countries had in fact not used the restricted definition for many years, because of the difficulty regarding search criteria. But, as another point, even where search mechanisms existed and were known about, some classes of people were not able to exploit them, e.g. the handicapped and mothers with young children. It was quite clear, however, that the specification of appropriate criteria to define the status of "available for work" would not be at all simple. Considered in abstract, the notion had a highly subjective connotation since many kinds of work, if offered, might not in fact be acceptable. In this connection, the

continuous nature of labour force status was stressed, ranging from regular full-time employment and various kinds of irregular and part-time employment, to being without work and actively seeking, to being without work and not seeking but available in various senses, including that of being a "discouraged worker", to being voluntarily out of the labour force but potentially recallable if a suitable opportunity arose.

87. Reflecting this latter notion, mention was made of the possibility of publishing ranges of unemployment measures, analogous to those used in connection with the money supply - M_1 , M_2 , M_3 etc., which would provide users with a choice of concepts to apply in different analytical contexts.

88. In contrast with the sometimes controversial nature of the proposals put forward as replacements for the recommendations covered by the Resolution of 1954, those addressed to the measurement of underemployment and the relationships between employment and income, and intended to replace the recommendations contained in the Resolution of 1966, appeared to command much broader support. There were, nevertheless, indications of the need for the proposals to be elaborated in certain ways, and, just as in the case of the earlier proposals discussed, some of the recommendations were perceived as requiring further clarification. In the former connection, the link between employment and income received most mention in spite of there having been no small amount of illustrative analytic comment in Report II.

89. There had been virtually no such comment, however, with respect to visible underemployment, and it was suggested that measures of the latter could very usefully be integrated with measures of unemployment to provide indications of unutilised capacity that would be valuable for policy purposes.

90. On points of clarification, it was thought difficult to distinguish between voluntary and involuntary situations with respect to part-time employment, and the underemployment of persons in self-employment seemed not to be a very clear concept. It was stressed that statistical measurements in support of these proposals would not be an easy matter for most developing countries. Two specific suggestions to help in this respect were that legal minimum wages could be made use of in characterising income as less than satisfactory, and that the estimation of visible underemployment by counting days or half days without work might be replaced by other measures of labour intensity.

91. Following preliminary discussion during two plenary sessions of the proposals of Report II, as here summarised, the draft resolution contained in the report was, as previously agreed by the Conference, referred to the Committee under Mr. Grais as Chairman for further intensive study, after which it was to be reintroduced to the Conference in plenary session.

92. The report of the Committee, which served as the basis for further discussion of the draft resolution in plenary session of the Conference, is hereto attached in the Annex. The list of participants in the Committee is presented in Appendix II.

93. In his introduction of the amended draft resolution, the Chairman of the Committee reported that there had been wide-ranging discussion focusing on the concepts and definitions of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment. As a result, the amended draft resolution presented to the plenary session represented a rearrangement and condensation of the draft resolution contained in Report II, and involved significant revisions, amplifications and additions. In its work, the Committee had recognised the importance of the international definitions adopted in the final resolution reflecting the different national practices, and being applicable to situations in countries at varying levels of development and with diverse legal and institutional organisation.

94. The reworded definition of the economically active population was intended to allow more latitude for its application according to different national circumstances. It had been decided to include the category of own-account workers receiving direct payment for their services in the group "self-employed", and not, as had been proposed in the draft resolution, in "paid employment". This would avoid confusion and difficulties in application. For operational purposes, the Committee had decided that the notion "some work" could be interpreted as "work for at least one hour" for determining employment; unpaid family workers should be classified in this respect as employed in the same way as other groups of workers. The criteria used for classifying self-employed with work but temporarily absent from work had been redefined, and the category renamed.

95. The definition of unemployment had been debated at length by the Committee. It had concluded that, instead of retaining a standard or restricted definition as well as an extended definition, as proposed in the draft resolution in Report II, a single definition should be adopted, based on the three criteria: "without work", "currently available for work", and "seeking work". However, under certain circumstances where labour market conditions rendered the seeking work criterion inappropriate, countries could apply the first two criteria only. In this case, it was recommended that persons without work and currently available for work but not seeking work be identified separately as a sub-category, in order to facilitate international comparisons.

96. With regard to underemployment, the general definition adopted by the Eleventh ICLS (1966) had basically been retained, but the proposed definitions of the number of persons underemployed and the measure or quantum of underemployment had been amended.

97. The Committee had decided that it was more appropriate to leave out the sections regarding the methodology of statistics of the economically active population, which had been included in the draft resolution proposed in Report II, and to include instead a recommendation that the ILO prepare a manual on statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment, which would elaborate such aspects as the methodology of data collection, tabulations and analysis.

98. There was a general discussion following the Chairman's introduction, in which a number of countries which had not been able to be represented on the Committee participated. Several points were raised concerning terminology, translations and the need for clarification in certain sections.

99. In the detailed review of the amended draft resolution, section by section, concern was expressed by one of the Workers' representatives about the treatment of persons with a job but temporarily absent from work and not receiving a wage or salary, in the proposed definition of "paid employment". The Workers' representative objected to their inclusion in this category, stating that the criterion of strength of job attachment was too subjective to permit the production of meaningful statistics. In response, the Chairman of the Committee pointed out that this category of persons might not necessarily be classifiable as employed, since the receipt of a wage or salary was actually embodied in the job attachment criterion. Furthermore, the criterion of strength of job attachment was not considered subjective, since it was formulated on the basis of three objective criteria, namely: receipt of a wage or salary, return to work, and elapsed duration of absence.

100. In a statement by the representative of the United Nations Statistical Office, the attention of the Conference was drawn to the importance of its resolutions and conclusions for work on population censuses, and in other fields which required the co-ordination of statistics among the various agencies of the United Nations system. The ILO Bureau of Statistics endorsed the suggestion that it should work with the United Nations Statistical Office to ensure that the United Nations Statistical Commission fully consider ways and means of most effectively implementing the results of the Conference in the different statistical programmes with which the Statistical Commission was concerned.

101. A number of suggestions were made by the Conference with regard to the section "data on particular topics". It was proposed that a paragraph be added relating to special statistical methods making use of the balance sheet of labour resources, which would be particularly appropriate for those countries with centrally planned economies. It was also suggested that reference be made to statistics of disabled and other handicapped persons, whether in employment or not in employment. There was an increasing need for data on these groups of persons, but it was recognised that their collection would present great difficulties.

102. The attention of the Conference was drawn to the problem of proxy respondents, which could introduce bias in the measurement of the economically active population, for both men and women. It was stated that this should be borne in mind when carrying out research into the extent and nature of the bias and the development of methods to reduce it.

103. Concern was also expressed with regard to the need for information on the population not economically active, and it was suggested that provision be made in the resolution to draw attention to the importance of this group.

104. A proposal was made to include in the preamble to the resolution a statement emphasising the utility of labour statistics in the elaboration of policies aimed at eliminating unemployment, which deprived millions of persons of the right to work. While there was consensus in the meeting with regard to the right to work, it was considered by a number of delegates to be outside their field of competence to adopt such a statement.

105. A clean version of the amended draft resolution, taking account of the suggestions and amendments made in the plenary session, was presented the next day, in order that delegates would have a definitive text in front of them before finally taking a formal vote on the resolution. Following a discussion of procedure, the Chairman decided to take a vote on the resolution, section by section. In the vote on the section concerning the definition of employment, one of the Workers' representatives abstained.

106. The text of the resolution on the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment, as adopted by the Conference, is presented in Appendix I, as Resolution I.

ANNEX

Report of the Committee on labour force, employment
unemployment and underemployment

After a general discussion of the Office Report II (ICLS/13/II) during two plenary sessions, the Conference referred the detailed examination of the draft resolution contained in the Report to a Committee under the chairmanship of Mr. Grais (France). The Committee first met on the afternoon session of Wednesday, 20 October 1982 and held seven consecutive sessions, completing its work on Monday, 25 October 1982. Representatives of the following countries participated: Algeria, Angola, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Benin, Canada, Czechoslovakia, Denmark, Egypt, Ethiopia, Finland, France, Federal Republic of Germany, India, Ireland, Israel, Italy, Jamaica, Japan, Luxembourg, Mexico, Morocco, Netherlands, Norway, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, Thailand, Turkey, United Kingdom, United States and USSR. Also participating were Workers' representatives nominated by the ILO Governing Body. Representatives of the following international organisations also participated: INSTRAW, IBRD, OECD, EUROSTAT and UNSO.

The Committee organised its work on the basis of the major sections of the draft resolution and examined in detail each paragraph and subparagraph. The major discussions ranged over the purposes of international standards, the programme and sources of data collections, terminologies and the structure of the draft resolution, the basic concepts and definitions, namely, the definitions of the usually active population, the currently active population (the labour force), employment, unemployment and underemployment. Particular attention was devoted to the definition of unemployment and the need, in certain situations, to relax the seeking work criterion embodied in the definition of unemployment. The discussion dealt also with the statistical treatment of particular categories of persons, namely, layoffs and persons temporary absent from their jobs, students and others mainly engaged in non-economic activities, unpaid family workers and persons engaged in primary productions for own and household consumption, etc. The measurement of visible underemployment and, in that context, the measurement of the quantum of underemployment, in particular, was discussed in some detail, and special attention was given to the concept of labour-time disposition suggested for obtaining a composite measure of unemployment and underemployment in terms of labour time. Other topics of major discussion included the classification of the populations not economically active, the cross-classification of the population by usual activity status and current activity status, and the measurement of the relationships between employment and income.

The draft resolution as amended by the Committee is submitted for the consideration of the Conference.

Occupational Injuries

107. This topic was considered by the Conference on the basis of Report III: "Occupational Injuries", prepared by the Bureau of Statistics. The report dealt with: the purpose of international recommendations on statistics of occupational injuries, terminologies involved, sources of data and methods of collection, units of enumeration, classification of occupational injuries and various comparative measures. It also included as annexes the resolution concerning statistics of employment injuries adopted by the Tenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 1962, and a proposed draft resolution which consolidated recommended improvements of the statistics of occupational injuries in the light of conditions, concerns and practices that had evolved during the intervening 20 years. In addition, a chart was provided indicating the proposed classification of statistics of occupational injuries.

108. In its introduction, the Secretariat briefly described the historical background of employment injury statistics and pointed out that the topic had been dealt with by International Conferences of Labour Statisticians three times in the past - by the First ICLS in 1923, the Sixth in 1947 and the Tenth in 1962. The Tenth ICLS had recognised the importance of adequate statistical information on employment injuries for the purposes of developing accident prevention programmes and had passed a resolution concerning standard terminology, definitions and concepts as well as guiding rules for the measurement of employment injuries, aimed at achieving a higher degree of comparability on both the national and international levels.

109. Because of certain deficiencies in the resolution as adopted 20 years earlier, an increasing number of member States had been requesting the ILO to improve and update the concepts and methodology of occupational injury statistics in order to enable them to produce frequency or incidence rates or other measures which would be more meaningful and useful for comparisons within and between countries. For this reason, in 1977, the ILO asked countries to provide it with detailed information on their national practices and the characteristics of their occupational injury statistics. The responses from 47 countries were studied and a Meeting of Experts was convened in Geneva, in January 1980, by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office to consider the topic. On the basis of the country practices reported in this field, a paper was prepared for discussion by the Meeting. It identified several common problems, including heterogeneity due to differences in national concepts, definitions, collection methods and sources, types of injury reported or interest, and extent of coverage; variations in methods for calculating the different rates (frequency, severity, fatality, incidence); and the tendency for many countries to estimate incidence rates (using as denominator the number of persons exposed to injury risk) rather than frequency rates, due to the difficulty of obtaining data on the number of hours worked (or paid for by these persons or even the number of days worked).

110. The Secretariat concluded its brief introduction to the subject by stressing the ILO's proposal for a more flexible approach that would eliminate some of the deficiencies of the existing resolution, encouraging direct reporting of occupational injuries by establishments with the objectives of promoting sound national practices and enhancing international comparability.

111. The Conference recognised the complex nature of the topic under consideration, in view of the many variations in national practices, and noted that the aim of the proposed resolution was to identify basic goals to facilitate and improve comparability. Before discussing the draft resolution, countries were invited to describe their systems of statistics of occupational injuries and to comment on the contents of Report III.

112. The Conference welcomed the ILO's efforts towards revising and updating the system of statistics on occupational injuries and endorsed the general approach the Office had taken on the subject. Many delegates considered the term "occupational injuries" as appropriate to distinguish injuries sustained through work accidents from those resulting from commuting accidents. Several countries endorsed the recommendations contained in the draft resolution and indicated that they would be able to compile the statistics accordingly. Others, while supporting the proposals, anticipated varying degrees of difficulty in applying the specified standards without making some changes in their respective national practices. Some considered that the draft resolution did not cover sufficiently the situation in the developing countries, where traditional and informal activities in which large numbers of own-account and unpaid family workers were engaged were much more important than in industrially advanced nations.

113. In the presentations of national practices concerning injury statistics, many aspects of the collection, production and uses of the data were described. These included concepts and definitions, sources and coverage, methods of collection and computation of the various measures, their objectives, classification systems, and the problems encountered in producing final estimates, as well as their shortcomings for national and international needs.

114. Most frequently, the statistics of occupational injuries were a by-product of an administrative system, such as records of insurance schemes, social security agencies, labour inspectorates or accident prevention units or institutions. The administrative system was in turn a product of legislation, acts or regulations concerning social security, health and safety, or compensation for accidents. In some cases, these regulations provided detailed definitions of the persons and types of injuries and illnesses to be covered. Typically, the administrative systems relating to occupational injuries, and hence the resulting statistics, were limited in coverage. This was because the various laws were applicable to certain types of persons, injuries, industries or establishments.

115. In some countries, establishment and household sample surveys were conducted to provide further statistical information, of a more rigorous kind, relating to injuries. The unit of enumeration was the person, accident or injury, and the final data could contain details on the classification of the injuries and diseases, the characteristics of the victims as well as the establishments or workplaces involved. Various measures, such as the frequency or incidence of injuries and their severity rates, could be calculated for the purposes of comparisons.

116. In general, the primary objective of the statistics was to support programmes for the prevention of injuries and diseases, but many countries used the data for other purposes as well, such as processing compensation claims, identifying establishments with poor safety records, monitoring environmental health hazards, guiding policy makers, and so on.

117. Almost all countries, however, mentioned limitations which rendered their occupational injury statistics less than fully useful for national needs and international comparisons. As one obvious example, consistency and historical comparability were diminished when legislative changes occur.

118. There was serious difficulty in all countries in identifying and measuring occupational diseases that surfaced many years after exposure to the hazard. Normally, employers were required to record and report disease at the time of its detection through diagnosis or when the sick person started to lose time from work. In addition, the surveys frequently covered only those illnesses which were visible or easily diagnosed at the time of the survey.

119. Where a combination of administrative data with the sample survey data was used, there was often a problem of linkage of one set of data with the other. Also where occupational injuries were collected by one agency and disease information by another, aggregation of the statistics became problematic due to lack of co-ordination. On the other hand, in countries where there were several jurisdictions (states, provinces, territories) which were responsible for their own separate systems, the injury data could be fragmentary or inconsistent.

120. While many countries could provide fatality rates and incidence rates which used as denominator the number of persons exposed to injury risk, the ability to supply frequency rates was rarer. This was due to the difficulty of obtaining information on the number of hours actually worked or paid for.

121. Only a few countries were able to classify the injury statistics according to occupation. Some used the WHO standards to classify occupational diseases. Others could produce detailed cross-classifications of accidents by various characteristics such as those of the victim, the accident and the injury.

122. Many specific points were raised concerning the draft resolution, including the treatment or classification of accidents involving more than one employee, or several industries; accidents at the workplace not directly related to or influenced by the work itself; diseases or injuries resulting from multiple causes, and the treatment of commuting accidents where these are not distinguished from work accidents. Some countries considered that there would be difficulty in providing information on work accidents using the event as the unit instead of the victim. It was also suggested that microdata could frequently reveal more information than aggregated data in analysing the causes of injuries and in devising preventative measures.

123. There was a question as to which measure should be used regarding time lost from work as a result of an accident: actual working days lost or calendar days. Some countries would have problems in compiling the total number of days lost on any basis.

124. With regard to the classification of total days lost, a number of countries stated that the A/B breakdown as proposed in the draft resolution would not be feasible for them, due to the nature of their administrative records. There was a preference on the part of some for an additional C/D classification, with "C" referring to lost time between four days and one year, and "D" to lost time exceeding one year. This would facilitate the inclusion of injuries in countries where sickness benefit information was used for recording the accident or disease and where the processing of the benefit could take more than a year.

125. Since national practices were very much dependent on unique conditions and needs, many countries felt that it would not be possible to achieve full international comparability. However, there was general support for endeavours to meet ILO requirements to the extent that national circumstances would permit.

126. The Conference then considered in detail the draft resolution on occupational injury statistics submitted by the Office. In the light of proposals made by delegates, it decided on a number of amendments.

127. The amended resolution concerning statistics of occupational injuries was adopted by the Conference. The text of the amended resolution is presented as Resolution II in Appendix I to this report.

Revision of the ILO October Inquiry on
Occupational Wages

128. This item was considered by the Conference on the basis of Report IV: "Revision of the ILO October Inquiry on Occupational Wages", and the accompanying document D.4: "Descriptions of selected occupations for the revised ILO October Inquiry on Occupational Wages", which were prepared by the Secretariat. The report described the origin and development of the Inquiry, and the reasons and methods used for its revision. A revised list of occupations, described in document D.4, was included, as well as a draft questionnaire for the collection of data from national statistical offices.

129. The subject was introduced by the Secretariat with a brief description of the genesis of the Inquiry and its original objectives. The Inquiry was initiated by the ILO in 1924 following a resolution of the First International Conference of Labour Statisticians (1923), which was approved by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office. The first Inquiry began in July 1924, covering 14 countries, mostly developed, and collected wage rates and normal hours of workers and retail prices of selected consumer goods relating to ordinary consumption patterns of working class families. These data were compiled in order to calculate the food purchasing power of wages of workers in selected representative occupations. Prior to 1924, a similar survey had been conducted by the British Ministry of Labour. The Inquiry was initially conducted on a monthly basis, then quarterly, then twice a year, until 1931, when it became an annual survey, with October as its reference period. The results of the Inquiry were published each year in the ILO Bulletin of Labour Statistics, second quarter edition.

130. The Inquiry had been placed on the agenda of the Second International Conference of Labour Statisticians in 1925 and the Fourth in 1931, and was also considered by others. As a result of their recommendations, the number of occupations and items, as well as the types of data, were modified over the years, until it arrived at its existing structure in 1953, when the computation of food purchasing power ceased.

131. For nearly 30 years the Inquiry had been conducted by the ILO without any alteration or examination by an International Conference of Labour Statisticians. However, demand from both within and outside the ILO for more occupational wage data had been growing during this period. Within the ILO, information was required for the purposes of the Sectoral Activities and other Departments, since the earnings and hours of work statistics already compiled and published in the Year Book and Bulletin of Labour Statistics were not sufficient. Data were required for work in connection with the World Employment Programme, which in a number of country reports had recommended a matrix of occupational wages according to industry. There was also pressure for data relating to conditions of employment for women. These, and the many requests for occupational wage data from outside the ILO, from, for instance business firms, researchers, employers' and workers' organisations, had led to the Office's decision to revise Parts 1 and 2 of the October Inquiry. The revision of the Inquiry was limited at this stage to Parts 1 and 2, on occupational wages or salaries and hours of work. While it was recognised that there was also a need to re-examine the items contained in Part 3, on retail prices, there had been greater pressure for more wage data.

132. Some 159 occupations in 41 industry groups had been selected for the revised Inquiry. These were chosen as representative in terms of: the numbers employed, the employment of women, and their importance for the ILO Sectoral Activities and other Departments. In addition, those occupations already covered in the Inquiry were retained as far as possible for the purposes of continuity. The sources of data used for the selection mainly comprised the results of population censuses, industrial and commercial censuses and surveys, and wage surveys. The ISCO was used as the basis for the occupations, since it was the only existing international framework available.

133. The revised and expanded list of occupations was divided into two parts: Part 1 comprising those occupations generally considered as relating to wage earners, and Part 2 for those considered as relating to salaried employees. This division was made according to the major groups of ISCO, with Part 1 covering occupations in major groups 6 and 7/8/9, and Part 2 those in major groups 0/1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. This had led to a few anomalies, in that certain wage earner types of occupations were grouped in Part 2.

134. It had also been decided to expand the types of data collected through the Inquiry to cover earnings and hours actually worked or paid for, in order to provide more useful information.

135. The occupational descriptions presented in document D.4 had been developed on the basis of those presented in ISCO, as well as the available national descriptions. The descriptions were aimed at guiding countries in their identification of the Inquiry occupations. Clearly, the occupations in different countries could not all correspond exactly to the descriptions provided. Furthermore, it was recognised that these descriptions were of a provisional nature. Therefore, countries were urged to communicate their suggestions for improvements to the ILO, in order that operationally useful descriptions could be worked out.

136. The meeting was informed that the Office intended to introduce the revised October Inquiry in 1983, with reference to October 1981. It sought the co-operation and support of countries for the implementation of the revision, as well as their guidance in respect of the selected occupations and procedures for compiling the data.

137. In the discussion which followed the introduction of the topic, many countries expressed their support, in principle, of the revision of the October Inquiry. They recognised the desirability of extending the occupational and industrial coverage and the types of data to be collected, as well as the need for obtaining wages and hours data separately for men and women. However, concern was expressed about the difficulties which would be encountered by national statistical offices in providing information for the expanded list of occupations in the revised Inquiry. Certain occupations and industries did not exist in some countries. For others, it would be impossible to provide any data for the Inquiry, since the occupation was not a characteristic used for the compilation of wage data, but instead the level of skill or qualification was employed. For others, no national framework existed for the systematic collection of occupational wage data. If the Office were to be supplied with the information requested, it would have to provide assistance for developing appropriate survey methodology and capability and estimation procedures.

138. With regard to the occupations selected for the revised Inquiry, and their descriptions, a number of observations were made. These included the concern over the absence of occupations representing certain types of workers, such as the liberal professions and employers. In this connection, the Secretariat stated that the Inquiry was intended to cover only employees, that is wage or salary earners, and therefore the groups mentioned fell outside its scope. Some suggestions were made concerning the need to specify the level or grade within certain broad occupations, and to use neutral terminology for the titles, so as to avoid sex-specific nomenclature.

139. The appropriateness of using the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) as a basis for the occupations and their descriptions was questioned, particularly in view of the proposed revision of ISCO. The Secretariat stated that ISCO had been used as it was the only existing framework of occupations and descriptions internationally approved. The Inquiry would not seriously be affected by any revision of ISCO, since it would be concerned with the classification of occupations into groupings, and not with the individual occupations. A revision of ISCO could, on the other hand, result in a refinement of the occupations and their descriptions.

140. The Conference recognised the utility of extending the types of data to be collected to cover earnings and hours actually worked or paid for. Wage rates could not be considered to be a suitable measure of how much employees received for their work. However, the wage measure used for the Inquiry should be determined by the purpose for which the information was compiled. Wage rates represented the price of labour, while earnings provided a measure of the income received for work done. If however, the cost of labour was needed, compensation of employees or labour cost should be collected. It was not clear in Report IV as to exactly what the wage statistics were to be used for. More explanation should be provided. The Secretariat noted that, while it was desirable to have statistics on the compensation of employees, since the non-wage component of compensation was growing in importance in most countries, it would be impracticable to compile them through the October Inquiry, especially since some of their components were not generally occupation-specific. Earnings data should provide an indication of the income of workers, although it was recognised that they were not a true measure of disposable income. However, in the absence of earnings data, wage rates should be reported.

141. The choice of time unit used in the Inquiry was considered to be important, although problematic. Normal hours of work did not reveal the amount of time actually worked by employees. The meeting agreed that hours actually worked or paid for were

better measures of the amount of labour input of workers. However, while hours actually worked could be collected for certain types of occupations, this would be difficult for salaried employees in many cases, since their hours worked were often not recorded by employers. In general, the hours data for salaried employees related to normal hours of work.

142. The proposed reporting of data separately for males and females was endorsed by most countries. However, many countries had adopted equal pay legislation, which in a number of cases had led to the exclusion of male-female distinctions in their wage statistics. In addition, it was considered too great a burden on respondents to require them to collate wage data along with the personal characteristics of workers in current wage surveys.

143. It was also pointed out that, although equal pay laws existed in many countries, women often tended to be concentrated in the lower paid occupations, so that the collection of wage data according to sex would not reveal wage differentials. The Secretariat pointed out that it was for this reason that some 42 occupations, which were identified as predominantly female occupations, had been selected for the Inquiry. However, it was also useful to have a knowledge of women's pay for all the occupations selected, wherever it was possible to obtain these data.

144. A number of countries also stressed that, for the occupational wage data, classified separately according to sex, to be meaningful, the corresponding employment figures were also required. These data were generally available only through population censuses or surveys, which took place every five or ten years, while the October Inquiry was an annual survey. The question was raised as to whether there was a need for the Inquiry data every year, or whether its periodicity could be extended.

145. The timing of the Inquiry was also discussed. Several countries currently experienced difficulties in supplying their responses to the Office in time for their publication in the second quarter edition of the Bulletin. These were particularly due to data processing problems at the national level. The use of October as reference month was also questioned, owing to the cyclical or seasonal nature of earnings in many countries.

146. With regard to the types of data which countries would be able to furnish through the revised Inquiry, a wide range was registered by the Conference. For some countries, information on occupational wage rates and normal hours of work could be provided, using as their source records of collective agreements. These generally referred to minimum rates payable, rather than rates actually in practice. For others occupational wage or salary rates, earnings and hours worked could be provided from the results of existing surveys, undertaken systematically. However, many countries, in particular developing countries, informed the meeting that while they wished to participate in the Inquiry, they would face many problems in collecting the required data. Resources were often limited, in terms of financing and personnel, and technical assistance would be required from the ILO if such wage surveys were to be introduced. In this connection, the Secretary-General stated that it was not the intention of the Office to increase the burden on national statistical offices by asking them to conduct wage surveys specifically to answer the requests of the ILO. The Office recommended that countries examine their existing survey instruments to determine whether the data required could be collected through these. However, it stressed that whatever occupational wage data were available would be welcomed, provided they were consistent from year to year; the deficiencies of the data could be remedied over time. The Office was aware that, as in the past, different types and amounts of information would be reported, according to national capabilities. The meeting suggested therefore that detailed descriptions of the statistics, their sources and concepts, be provided by countries along with their data, and be published with the results, so as to inform users and to avoid misuse and misinterpretation. At the same time, it was suggested that a warning be published about the uses to which the Inquiry data should not be put.

147. With regard to the problems of survey methodology and computation of results raised by several delegates, the Secretariat stated that these had been excluded from the report, since much attention and study was required to provide solutions, which depended on the different circumstances in each country. While a manual on methods for wage surveys had been produced by the Office, it provided guidelines on occupational wage surveys, which would differ between countries. More work should be undertaken by the Office in this respect.

148. The discussion of the October Inquiry extended to cover Part 3 on retail prices, which had been excluded from the revision reported to the Conference. Several countries questioned the utility of collecting the price data. The ILO had not used the information for calculating food purchasing power since 1953, and the items which were priced were not representative of spending patterns in most countries. Some countries were of the view that this part should be dropped, while there was also a suggestion made to continue with this part, as it furnished useful information, which was relatively simple for countries to provide, the price data already being collected for the purposes of consumer price index construction.

149. In a written statement, one country pointed out that the ILO publication containing the prices resulting from the Inquiry constituted the only publication providing broadly comparable data on prices pertaining to a large number of countries. While the UNSO Project on International Comparisons of Purchasing Power would eventually produce such price data, this was still in the nascent stage. Moreover, the consumer prices compiled by the national statistical offices for the ILO were one of the important sources for supplying prices data required for the ICP project. It was therefore important that the publication of price data by the ILO continue, at least until such time as the UNSO would be in a position to bring out such data for different countries on a regular basis in its own publication. There was therefore an urgent need for reviewing the existing specifications of the items (on which prices were currently being collected by the ILO) in consultation with the countries concerned and the UNSO.

150. The major concerns expressed by the Conference related to the lack of clarity as to the objectives of the revised October Inquiry and the uses to which the results should be put. The aim of the survey in 1924 had initially been to calculate the food purchasing power of workers; this had ceased in 1953. It was inadvisable to use the data for making comparisons between countries of the wages received by workers in different occupations and of their levels of living owing to the different types of information reported. Report III had indicated that the information requested was required for the purposes of several departments of the ILO, but the actual uses to which these data would be put were not described clearly. It was important to know how much and what types of occupational wage data could be furnished to the ILO by countries; what their sources were and how statistically reliable they were; how they could and could not be used; and finally to identify and delimit the precise objectives of the revised October Inquiry. A Working Group was set up to examine these issues and its composition is presented in Appendix II.

151. The Chairman of the Working Group reported to the plenary session on its discussions and conclusions. It was recommended that, in order to avoid misinterpretations of the results of the Inquiry, information should be collected and published concerning important qualifications on the data and giving indications as to the adequacy of the statistics when used for specific purposes. In addition, it was suggested that, since other, perhaps more useful, wage data were available in countries, the ILO should prepare an international directory of available wage, consumer price and related statistics.

152. The Working Group urged that the ILO increase its efforts to improve the international comparability of the published data, and consider the possibility of developing measures to describe national wage changes in "real" terms. This work should be assigned a high priority for the future programme of the ILO Bureau of Statistics, and be considered as an item to be placed on the agenda of the next ICIS.

153. The Conference thanked the Working Group for its report and took note of its conclusions. It was pointed out to the meeting that, with regard to the quality of the data published by the ILO, the Office was dependent on the information supplied by countries. The Secretary-General informed the Conference that the draft questionnaire included in Report IV would be developed in order to collect more descriptive details of the types of occupational wage data furnished through the revised Inquiry. In this way, the utility of the published data could be enhanced.

154. Secretariat members subsequently made themselves available for further informal consultation to address the residual concerns of delegates about the future of the October Inquiry. When the topic was then reintroduced to the plenary session of the Conference for a final brief review, it was clear that these concerns had not been wholly resolved. Many countries continued to support the revision, but others saw little value in the Inquiry. However, almost all felt that a clearer articulation of the Inquiry's objectives would be helpful.

155. In taking note of these concluding comments, the Secretary-General undertook to continue doing as well as possible in this area with the clearly insufficient quantum of resources which were available.

International coding of labour statistics

156. This topic was introduced by the Secretary-General, who briefly explained how he had started thinking about it, and then outlined the proposal contained in Report V (ICLS/13/V), "International Coding of Labour Statistics".

157. The basic inspiration for the proposal came from the numerous computerised search systems presently used for identifying bibliographic references - as, for instance, in the ILO library. Such systems permit the user to query the index, using key words and simple inquiry routines, and to generate lists of monographs, journal articles, etc. (frequently including resumés of their contents) that satisfy the search criteria.

158. At the present time, however, any similar search for statistical tables, i.e. for the contents of a printed publication containing primarily numeric rather than textual information, could only be made manually. The question therefore arises as to whether references to statistical tables could not be retrieved in the same way as bibliographic references, i.e. by interrogating a computerised meta-data (information about information) base.

159. Many statistically advanced countries already have interactive computerised data banks which can provide the data themselves. But, with limited exceptions, such data are normally time series rather than cross-classifications of data, so that almost universally these latter must be sought for manually. While eventually the problem of retrieving cross-classifications of the data themselves will need to be addressed, considerable benefits could be derived in the meantime from the conceptually simpler procedure of coding descriptions of statistical tables, storing them in a computer, and developing systems for retrieving them.

160. The need - and the possible response - arises at both national and international levels. At the national level, an inquiry will most usually be specified in some detail, e.g. hours worked according to industry, and by age and sex. At the international level, however, the inquiry is likely to be more general, e.g. a search for any kind of information on hours worked. These two requirements could be accommodated in a common schema. At the national level, there could be precise coding and specific national terminology (say, at the 3- and 4-digit level) while superimposed upon this there could be a coarser (1 or 2 digits) coding at the international level.

161. This coarser international coding would typically yield a great deal of information in response to any inquiry, but this kind of redundancy or "overkill" can be considered an advantage rather than a drawback. It was noted that while national codings could be alphanumeric, it was important for the international coding to be primarily, or even purely, numeric so as to avoid linguistic or alphabetic problems.

162. A further question arises as to why, if the proposal has merit, it should be limited to labour statistics. The answer is that the schema is indeed capable of horizontal extension - to health statistics, education statistics, and so on. But the entire corpus of statistics cannot be tackled all at once. A start must be made somewhere and this was done with the area closest to hand - labour statistics.

163. In turning the proposal over to the Conference for discussion, the Secretary-General posed two specific questions. First, is this an interesting and important problem, i.e. does there exist a future need for data retrieval that we should be trying to do something about? Secondly, if the answer to the first question is affirmative, how can the amateur formulation of Report V be turned into a professional product?

164. In the discussion that followed, strong support was expressed for the underlying rationale of the proposal and there appeared to be widespread confidence that the technical details could be worked out. A number of countries had already discussed the very early formulations of the proposal with the Secretary-General before Report V was written; in other countries, Report V had obviously been discussed with the classifications and systems experts, since a fair amount of advice was forthcoming in the discussion on what would be necessary to achieve the Secretary-General's goal of a truly professional formulation. For instance, it was noted by one country that the structuring of subjects in the proposed coding schema was too rigid and hierarchical. Another country questioned the feasibility of using letters and words in international coding, and others noted difficulties with the examples provided in the report.

165. The Secretary-General assured the Conference of his openness on all the points mentioned; the tables he had provided were imaginary examples and simply meant to be illustrative of the possibilities of the schema. There appeared to be a general appreciation of this and some countries in fact thought it would be unproductive for the Conference to go too far into technical details.

166. Some of the United Nations representatives present and certain member countries indicated the desirability of co-ordinating the nascent ILO initiative with similar work within the UN family that is being conducted under the auspices of the Subcommittee on Statistical Activities of the Administrative Committee on Co-ordination (ACC). On this latter point, the Secretary-General noted he had already discussed the proposal with the Subcommittee. While the more general approach is attractive, the formalities involved would be likely to slow things down, whereas his ambition is to make the most rapid progress possible. At least one country with experience in this area also commented on the delays and difficulties that can occur when attempting to integrate such an idea into a broader framework. Any work in the narrower context should, however, be capable of subsequent extension and elaboration.

167. At the termination of the discussion, the Secretary-General thanked the Conference for its expressions of support and summarised how he proposed to proceed further. A first point was that he had discovered very little relevant literature in this area, and he appealed to countries to send him any kind of documentation they had generated, even if they thought it was elementary.

168. One country had suggested a meeting to consider further the development of such coding, but this would take money and a lot of time. The ILO Bureau of Statistics had little of either. However, the Secretary-General said that he at least could find some time to continue the present iterative approach of consultation by mail with interested countries. He hoped that they would find it possible to conduct internal seminars with their own experts and feed the results of their thinking back to him where it would show up in a revised draft, which would in turn be sent around for further comment. In this way, it might then be possible to put forward a well-articulated report and an appropriate recommendation to the next International Conference of Labour Statisticians.

Paid holidays

169. This subject was discussed by the Conference on the basis of Report VI: "Paid holidays", which had been prepared by the Secretariat. The report comprised a summary of ad hoc research carried out by the Bureau of Statistics into the availability of national statistics of paid holidays (including both public holidays and paid vacations), as well as the different methodologies and concepts used in their compilation. A number of countries had been consulted in this connection, and had provided information and useful comments.

170. In his introduction of the subject, the Secretary-General noted the importance of statistics of paid holidays, as a negative element in the calculation of total hours actually worked from the economic point of view, as well as their significance as a measure of social progress with respect to working conditions.

171. Following the review of different country practices with respect to statistics of paid holidays, it was concluded that the data available were somewhat deficient. However, the question as to how precise the data needed to be was raised. It was suggested that statistics of holiday entitlements could be taken as a fairly useful indicator of paid holidays, since they were relatively easier to obtain than holidays actually taken, especially if information was not required each year.

172. The study of paid holidays did not form part of the regular programme of the ILO Bureau of Statistics. However, there was a need for work to be carried out on the development of measures for total hours actually worked, and the study of paid holidays could perhaps be usefully incorporated in this work.

173. The report had been prepared for the Conference not with the aim of proposing any resolution on statistics of paid holidays, but more as a background research paper of methodological interest, and to draw attention to the subject. Any improvements or modifications suggested by the meeting would be taken into account, and a revised version of the paper could be published as an article in the ILO Bulletin of Labour Statistics. It was noted that, by introducing articles of a methodological nature, the Bulletin served as a professional journal for producers of labour statistics.

174. The meeting endorsed this initiative in the field of paid holiday statistics. A number of countries already compiled such data for various purposes: as a component for analysing total time used, particularly for the estimation of total hours actually worked for improving, inter alia, productivity measures; as a component of total compensation of employees or labour cost, in estimating the cost of time not worked; and from the social point of view, as a measure of social progress, for the benefit and well-being of workers.

175. The sources of holiday data generally comprised records of collective agreements, establishment surveys or household surveys. Several countries described their methods of compilation, and the problems encountered in this regard.

176. Where records of collective agreements were exploited, the data collected usually related to minimum holiday entitlements, which could differ from the holidays actually offered to employees, and from those actually taken. Furthermore, they were generally fixed for certain types of workers engaged in specific industries (and often in certain regions); therefore, such statistics were limited to those workers. The number of workers covered by the different collective agreements could also vary considerably.

177. Establishment surveys, while a useful vehicle for collecting both entitlements and holidays taken, placed a considerable reporting burden on respondents, often requiring modifications to the accounting methods of establishments. In addition, they were costly. However, where these types of surveys were conducted, it was possible to compile the data according to employee and employer characteristics. The disadvantage was that they generally referred only to paid employees of the establishments covered, thereby excluding the self-employed and often employees in small establishments.

178. Household surveys, on the other hand, could be used to collect information on paid holidays taken by all types of workers according to their individual characteristics. The reliability of such data was limited by problems inherent in household surveys: problems of respondent recall over a long reference period; problems of selection of reference period, especially since paid holidays were not spread evenly throughout the year; and problems of distinguishing the holidays taken from other types of leave or absence from work.

179. A number of countries emphasised the importance of collecting paid holiday statistics along with other types of paid leave. Paid holidays were only one part of the total time paid for by employers, but not worked by employees. In addition, the number of paid holidays to which employees were entitled was increasing, leading to changes in the pattern of holidays taken throughout the year. It was important to have a knowledge of these patterns for estimating time worked during different periods of the year.

180. The discussion by the Conference also revealed many conceptual problems, stemming from the different national practices regarding public holidays and paid annual vacations. The treatment of different types of rest days, leave accorded for studies, work carried out during vacations from principal jobs, additional days given in lieu of public holidays or feast days, days taken off on the basis of hours accumulated through flexible working hours, and many others, were cited in this connection. In addition, paid holidays as such did not exist in some developing countries; employees took other forms of paid or unpaid leave instead. In order to collect meaningful statistics, solutions to these problems would have to be worked out at the national level. At this stage, it would not be useful or feasible to attempt any development of international standards in this respect.

181. A number of countries stressed that the objectives of such statistics would determine the level of accuracy required in the measure used. For many purposes, holiday entitlements could serve as a proxy for holidays taken. In several countries, this was in fact the case, particularly where paid holiday statistics were used in the study of working conditions as a whole. However, for calculating more precise measures of time actually worked, or for monitoring the well-being of employees, more reliable measures of holidays actually taken were necessary.

182. The Secretary-General remarked that the study of available national statistics in this area had underlined the difficulties involved in their collection, as well as in the concepts used. There was a lack of homogeneity in the existing data, which precluded any action on the part of the Bureau of Statistics to compile and publish series on paid holidays. Other departments within the ILO were concerned with paid holidays, in so far as they comprised one aspect of working conditions. At this stage, however, the Bureau of Statistics' work in this field would be more usefully directed towards the collection of information on existing national concepts and methodologies, to set up a meta-data base, rather than the collection of the statistics themselves.

183. With regard to the discussion on the total hours actually worked, required for productivity and macro-economic analysis, the Secretary-General made a few practical observations. The existing estimates of total hours worked tended to be very rough, often more "guesstimates" than scientific estimates. The approaches used by different countries varied, but the concept was more or less the same. Countries making these estimates were obliged to use the available sources, and therefore compromises were necessary: for instance some used the figures from records of collective agreements, and multiplied these by the corresponding number of employees to calculate a figure to represent the total number of holidays taken in a year. The different attempts made in this respect were interesting, but they had little in common. It would not be possible for the ILO to propose any recommendations on the methodology of statistics of total hours actually worked in the near future. In this connection, he also queried the utility for economic analysis of total hours worked at the macro-level. A counter-proposition was made that a more relevant measure would be the total wage bill at constant wages, rather than hours worked. He pointed out that the physical volume of output was not used in calculating GDP, but rather the value of output at constant prices. Without opening a debate on this question, some countries indicated that they would not agree with the proposition.

184. In conclusion, the Secretary-General stated that he was encouraged by the reactions of the Conference to his study of paid holiday statistics. The comments made were very helpful, and the immediate task would be to revise the information provided in Report VI, taking into account the corrections and additions proposed. The aim was therefore to publish the resulting paper as an article in the Bulletin of Labour Statistics, to provide methodological information for those interested in, or concerned with, statistics of paid holidays.

RESOLUTION I

Resolution concerning statistics of
the economically active population,
employment, unemployment and underemployment

The Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians,

Having been convened at Geneva by the Governing Body of the ILO and having met from 18 to 29 October 1982,

Recalling the existing international standards concerning statistics of the labour force, employment and unemployment contained in Resolution I adopted by the Eighth Conference (1954) and concerning measurement and analysis of underemployment and under-utilisation of manpower contained in Resolution III adopted by the Eleventh Conference (1966),

Recognising the need to revise and broaden the existing standards in order to enhance their usefulness in the provision of technical guidelines to all countries and particularly those with less developed statistics, and recognising the usefulness of such standards in enhancing the international comparability of the statistics,

Adopts, this 29th day of October 1982 the following resolution in substitution for Resolution I of the Eighth Conference and paragraphs 4 to 9 and 13 of Resolution III of the Eleventh Conference:

OBJECTIVES AND SCOPE

1. Each country should aim at developing a comprehensive system of statistics on the economic activity of the population, in order to provide an adequate statistical base for the various users of the statistics, taking account of the specific national needs and circumstances. In particular, the system should provide for needs in connection with the measurement of the extent of available and unused labour time and human resources, for purposes of macro-economic monitoring and human resources development planning, and the measurement of the relationships between employment, income and other social and economic characteristics, for purposes of formulating and monitoring employment policies and programmes, income generating and maintenance schemes, vocational training and other similar programmes.

2. In order to fulfil the above objectives, the programme of statistics of the economically active population should, in principle, cover all branches of economic activity, all sectors of the economy, and all status groups (employees, own-account workers, etc.) and should be developed, to the fullest extent possible, in harmony with other economic and social statistics. The programme should specifically provide for both short-term and longer-term needs, i.e. statistics for current purposes compiled frequently on a recurrent basis, and statistics compiled at longer intervals for structural in-depth analysis and as benchmark data:

- (a) the current statistics programme should encompass statistics of the currently active population and its components in such a way that trends and seasonal variations can be adequately monitored. As a minimum programme, countries should collect and compile statistics on the currently active population twice a year, if possible coinciding with the agricultural peak and slack seasons, wherever considered appropriate;

- (b) the non-current statistics programme which may include censuses and surveys should provide: (i) comprehensive data on the economically active population; (ii) in-depth statistics on the activity pattern of the economically active population over the year and the relationships between employment, income and other social and economic characteristics; and (iii) data on other particular topics (e.g. children and youth, women, households) as determined by the long-term and continuing needs.

3. Population censuses and sample surveys of households or individuals generally constitute a comprehensive means of collection of data on the economically active population which can be linked with data on other related topics. Establishment surveys and administrative records may also serve as sources for obtaining in some cases more precise, more frequent and more detailed statistics on particular components of the economically active population. The different sources of information should be regarded as complementary and may be used in combination for deriving, where necessary, integrated sets of statistics. In designing population censuses, surveys of households or individuals or other means of data collection on the economically active population, efforts should be made, in so far as possible, to incorporate the international standards.

4. In order to promote comparability of the statistics among countries, where national concepts and definitions do not conform closely to the international standards, explanations should be given and the main aggregates should, if possible, be computed on the basis of both the national and the international standards. Alternatively, the necessary components should be identified and provided separately in order to permit conversion from the national to the international standards.

CONCEPTS AND DEFINITIONS

The economically active population

5. The "economically active population" comprises all persons of either sex who furnish the supply of labour for the production of economic goods and services as defined by the United Nations systems of national accounts and balances, during a specified time-reference period. According to these systems, the production of economic goods and services includes all production and processing of primary products, whether for the market, for barter or for own consumption, the production of all other goods and services for the market and, in the case of households which produce such goods and services for the market, the corresponding production for own consumption.

6. Two useful measures of the economically active population are the "usually active population" measured in relation to a long reference period such as a year, and the "currently active population", or, equivalently, the "labour force", measured in relation to a short reference period such as one week or one day.

The usually active population

7. (1) The "usually active population" comprises all persons above a specified age whose main activity status, as determined in terms of number of weeks or days during a long specified period (such as the preceding 12 months or the preceding calendar year) was "employed" or "unemployed" as defined in paragraphs 9 and 10.

(2) Where this concept is considered useful and feasible, the usually active population may be subdivided as employed and unemployed in accordance with the main activity.

The labour force (the currently active population)

8. The "labour force" or "currently active population" comprises all persons who fulfil the requirements for inclusion among the employed or the unemployed as defined in paragraphs 9 and 10 below.

Employment

9. (1) The "employed" comprise all persons above a specified age who during a specified brief period, either one week or one day, were in the following categories:

(a) "paid employment":

(a1.) "at work": persons who during the reference period performed some work for wage or salary, in cash or in kind;

(a2.) "with a job but not at work": persons who, having already worked in their present job, were temporarily not at work during the reference period and had a formal attachment to their job.

This formal job attachment should be determined in the light of national circumstances, according to one or more of the following criteria: (i) the continued receipt of wage or salary; (ii) an assurance of return to work following the end of the contingency, or an agreement as to the date of return; (iii) the elapsed duration of absence from the job which, wherever relevant, may be that duration for which workers can receive compensation benefits without obligations to accept other jobs.

(b) "self-employment":

(b1.) "at work": persons who during the reference period performed some work for profit or family gain, in cash or in kind;

(b2.) "with an enterprise but not at work": persons with an enterprise, which may be a business enterprise, a farm or a service undertaking, who were temporarily not at work during the reference period for any specific reason.

(2) For operational purposes, the notion of "some work" may be interpreted as work for at least one hour.

(3) Persons temporarily not at work because of illness or injury, holiday or vacation, strike or lock-out, educational or training leave, maternity or parental leave, reduction in economic activity, temporary disorganisation or suspension of work due to such reasons as bad weather, mechanical or electrical breakdown, or shortage of raw materials or fuels, or other temporary absence with or without leave should be considered as in paid employment provided they had a formal job attachment.

(4) Employers, own-account workers and members of producers' co-operatives should be considered as in self-employment and classified as "at work" or "not at work", as the case may be.

(5) Unpaid family workers at work should be considered as in self-employment irrespective of the number of hours worked during the reference period. Countries which prefer for special reasons to set a minimum time criterion for the inclusion of unpaid family workers among the employed should identify and separately classify those who worked less than the prescribed time.

(6) Persons engaged in the production of economic goods and services for own and household consumption should be considered as in self-employment if such production comprises an important contribution to the total consumption of the household.

(7) Apprentices who received pay in cash or in kind should be considered in paid employment and classified as "at work" or "not at work" on the same basis as other persons in paid employment.

(8) Students, homemakers and others mainly engaged in non-economic activities during the reference period, who at the same time were in paid employment or self-employment as defined in subparagraph (1) above should be considered as employed on the same basis as other categories of employed persons and be identified separately, where possible.

(9) Members of the armed forces should be included among persons in paid employment. The armed forces should include both the regular and the temporary members as specified in the most recent revision of the International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO).

Unemployment

10. (1) The "unemployed" comprise all persons above a specified age who during the reference period were:

- (a) "without work", i.e. were not in paid employment or self-employment, as defined in paragraph 9;
- (b) "currently available for work", i.e. were available for paid employment or self-employment during the reference period; and
- (c) "seeking work", i.e. had taken specific steps in a specified recent period to seek paid employment or self-employment. The specific steps may include registration at a public or private employment exchange; application to employers; checking at worksites, farms, factory gates, market or other assembly places; placing or answering newspaper advertisements; seeking assistance of friends or relatives; looking for land, building, machinery or equipment to establish own enterprise; arranging for financial resources; applying for permits and licences, etc.

(2) In situations where the conventional means of seeking work are of limited relevance, where the labour market is largely unorganised or of limited scope, where labour absorption is, at the time, inadequate, or where the labour force is largely self-employed, the standard definition of unemployment given in subparagraph (1) above may be applied by relaxing the criterion of seeking work.

(3) In the application of the criterion of current availability for work, especially in situations covered by subparagraph (2) above, appropriate tests should be developed to suit national circumstances. Such tests may be based on notions such as present desire for work and previous work experience, willingness to take up work for wage or salary on locally prevailing terms, or readiness to undertake self-employment activity given the necessary resources and facilities.

(4) Notwithstanding the criterion of seeking work embodied in the standard definition of unemployment, persons without work and currently available for work who had made arrangements to take up paid employment or undertake self-employment activity at a date subsequent to the reference period should be considered as unemployed.

(5) Persons temporarily absent from their jobs with no formal job attachment who were currently available for work and seeking work should be regarded as unemployed in accordance with the standard definition of unemployment. Countries may, however, depending on national circumstances and policies, prefer to relax the seeking work criterion in the case of persons temporarily laid off. In such cases, persons temporarily laid off who were not seeking work but classified as unemployed should be identified as a separate subcategory.

(6) Students, homemakers and others mainly engaged in non-economic activities during the reference period who satisfy the criteria laid down in subparagraphs (1) and (2) above should be regarded as unemployed on the same basis as other categories of unemployed persons and be identified separately, where possible.

Population not economically active

11. The "population not economically active" comprises all persons, irrespective of age, including those below the age specified for measuring the economically active population who were not "economically active", as defined in paragraph 5.

The population not currently active

12. (1) The "population not currently active", or, equivalently, persons not in the labour force, comprises all persons who were not employed or unemployed during the brief reference period and hence not currently active because of (a) attendance at educational institutions; (b) engagement in household duties; (c) retirement or old age; or (d) other reasons such as infirmity or disablement, which may be specified.

(2) Countries adopting the standard definition of unemployment may identify persons not classified as unemployed who were available for work but not seeking work during the reference period and classify them separately under the population not currently active.

The population not usually active

13. (1) The "population not usually active" comprises all persons whose main activity status during the longer specified period was neither employed nor unemployed. It comprises the following functional categories: (a) students; (b) homemakers; (c) income recipients (pensioners, rentiers, etc.); and (d) others (recipients of public aid or private support, children not attending school, etc.) as defined by the United Nations Principles and Recommendations for Population and Housing Censuses (1980).

(2) Where necessary, separate functional subcategories may be introduced to identify (i) persons engaged in unpaid community and volunteer services and (ii) other persons engaged in marginal activities which fall outside the boundary of economic activities.

Underemployment

14. Underemployment exists when a person's employment is inadequate, in relation to specified norms or alternative employment, account being taken of his or her occupational skill (training and working experience). Two principal forms of underemployment may be distinguished: visible and invisible.

15. (1) Visible underemployment is primarily a statistical concept directly measurable by labour force and other surveys, reflecting an insufficiency in the volume of employment.

(2) Invisible underemployment is primarily an analytical concept reflecting a misallocation of labour resources or a fundamental imbalance as between labour and other factors of production. Characteristic symptoms might be low income, under-utilisation of skill, low productivity. Analytical studies of invisible underemployment should be directed to the examination and analysis of a wide variety of data, including income and skill levels (disguised underemployment) and productivity measures (potential underemployment).

16. For operational reasons, the statistical measurement of underemployment may be limited to visible underemployment.

Visible underemployment

17. Two elements of the measurement of visible underemployment should be distinguished:

- (a) the number of persons visibly underemployed;
- (b) the quantum of visible underemployment.

Persons visibly underemployed

18. (1) Persons visibly underemployed comprise all persons in paid or self-employment, whether at work or not at work, involuntarily working less than the normal duration of work determined for the activity, who were seeking or available for additional work during the reference period.

(2) For the purpose of classifying persons as visibly underemployed, normal duration of work for an activity should be determined in the light of national circumstances as reflected in national legislation to the extent it is applicable, and usual practices in other cases, or in terms of a uniform conventional norm.

Quantum of visible underemployment

19. (1) The quantum of visible underemployment may be measured by aggregating the time available for additional employment during the reference period in respect of each person visibly underemployed. The time available for additional employment may be computed in units of working days, half-days or hours as may be convenient in national circumstances, depending on the nature of data collected. It may be useful to measure separately the part of the quantum of visible underemployment that corresponds to "time lost" defined as the difference between hours usually employed and hours actually employed.

(2) Countries who wish to apply the criterion of seeking work for the measurement of the quantum of visible underemployment may do so by taking into account the duration of work sought.

20. A composite estimate of the quantum of current unemployment and visible underemployment may be compiled on the basis of the labour-time disposition of all persons in the labour force, by accounting for the total labour time potentially available for each person in the labour force in terms of time employed, time available for employment and time not available for employment during the reference period. It can be measured for simplicity either in units of working days or half-days, or, more fully, in hours, where feasible.

Analytical concepts

21. Based on the concepts and definitions given in paragraphs 5 to 20 above, a variety of analytical concepts and measures can be derived. For instance:

(1) The economically active population may be divided into two broad segments: the armed forces and the economically active civilian population.

(2) The economically active population may be related to the total population for the derivation of a crude participation rate, or, more appropriately, to the population above the age prescribed for the measurement of the economically active population.

(3) The employed population may be related to the population above the specified age for the derivation of an employment-population ratio.

(4) The unemployed population may be related to the economically active population for the derivation of a general unemployment rate. Unemployment rates, relevant to paid employment on the one hand and self-employment on the other, may be derived, wherever considered useful and feasible.

(5) The number of persons visibly underemployed may be related to persons employed and the proportion may be studied separately for each branch of economic activity and each occupational group.

(6) A composite rate of unemployment and visible underemployment compiled as the ratio of unemployed labour-time available for employment to the total labour-time employed or available for employment.

The rates, ratios and proportions suggested above may be compiled separately by sex in respect of specified age groups.

22. The technique of labour-time disposition suggested in paragraph 20, if carried out through a series of current surveys covering a representative sample of reference periods spread over a year, can be used for the estimation of labour-time employed or unemployed over the year. The estimates may be expressed in terms of person-days or person-hours, or if so desired, converted into standard full-time person-years.

Employment and income relationships

23. In order to realise the objectives of analysis of the relationships between employment and income mentioned in paragraph 1, countries should develop programmes of data collection on employment and income that reveal related economic and social aspects. In particular, data should be compiled on employment, income from employment and household income for the purpose of (a) analysing the income-generating capacity of different economic activities and (b) identifying the number and characteristics of persons who are unable to maintain their economic well-being on the basis of the employment opportunities available to them.

24. (1) In order to obtain comprehensive measures of the relationships between employment and income, the measurements of employment, income from employment and household income should refer to the work experience of the population over a long reference period, preferably a year, taking into account not only the principal occupation but also any secondary occupations and other sources of income.

(2) Income from employment includes wages, salaries and other earnings in cash and kind of persons in paid employment and net entrepreneurial income of persons in self-employment.

(3) The concepts and definitions of income and its components are given in the resolutions concerning an integrated system of wages statistics and concerning household income and expenditure surveys adopted by the Twelfth Conference (1973) and in the United Nations Provisional Guidelines on Statistics of the Distribution of Income, Consumption and Accumulation of Households (1977).

(4) The statistics on employment and income should be analysed, to the extent possible, in conjunction with duration of work, household size, number of earners, assets and other demographic, social and economic characteristics of the individual and the household.

(5) The statistics on employment and income should be consistent with and, in so far as possible, be integrated into the framework of the statistics of the economically active population set forth in paragraphs 5 to 22 above.

DATA COLLECTION, ANALYSIS AND CLASSIFICATIONS

25. The International Labour Office should prepare a manual on statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment and underemployment detailing such aspects as methodology of data collection, tabulations and analysis.

26. (1) The analysis of the economically active population and the population not economically active should include classifications by significant demographic, social and economic characteristics as well as appropriate cross-classifications by two or more related characteristics.

(2) In particular, the population above the age specified for the measurement of the economically active population should be cross-classified by usual activity status (employed, unemployed, students, homemakers, etc.) and current activity status (employed, unemployed and not currently active).

27. For the purpose of international comparisons, the classifications of the statistics of the economically active population should adhere to or be convertible into the standard international classifications most recently adopted such as:

- (a) International Standard Classification of Occupations (ISCO) - ILO;
- (b) International Standard Industrial Classification of All Economic Activities (ISIC) - United Nations;
- (c) International classification according to status (as employer, employee, etc.) - Definitions of status by the United Nations - except that for the classification of unpaid family workers the minimum time criterion (at least one-third of the normal working hours) no longer need be applied;

(d) Provisional Guidelines on Standard International Age Classifications - United Nations.

28. For classifications according to other characteristics such as duration of work, duration of unemployment, the International Labour Office should develop appropriate international standard classifications taking into account the current national practices and needs.

DATA ON PARTICULAR TOPICS

29. In order to adequately study the transition phases from learning to earning activities, and to develop appropriate policy measures where necessary, specific statistics should be obtained periodically on children and youth in relation to school attendance and their participation in economic activity. For this purpose, it may be necessary to collect additional data on children and youth below the specified minimum age limit adopted for measuring the economically active population.

30. (1) For the purpose of developing and monitoring programmes concerned with the participation of women in development and the promotion of equality between the sexes, an adequate statistical base on women's participation in economic activities is essential. In this respect, therefore, the statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment, underemployment and related topics should be compiled separately for males and for females.

(2) Further, in order to obtain more accurate statistics on women's participation in economic activities, measurement methods should be carefully reviewed to ensure unbiased coverage of men and women. Sex biases in the form of underestimation of women's participation in economic activity may result, for example, from incomplete coverage of unpaid economic activities, failure of respondents and enumerators to take account of women's multiple activities and use of proxy respondents. Where necessary, research should be carried out in order to identify the extent, nature and sources of the possible biases, if any, and to develop appropriate methods of reducing them.

31. Since the participation in economic activity of individuals often depends on the circumstances of other members of the family or household and in many countries, particularly in rural areas of developing countries, economic activity is largely organised on a family or household basis, statistics on economically active population, employment, unemployment, underemployment and related topics should be supplemented periodically by statistics on families and households; for example, identifying the unemployed in terms of their relationship to other members of the household or family, presence of other working members of the household or family, number of children in the household or family, as well as identifying households and families in terms of number of members unemployed, sex and other characteristics of the primary earner in the household or family, etc.

32. In order to provide improved and more detailed information on employment, unemployment and underemployment and for other purposes such as identifying multiple activities and marginal activities, attempts should be made to collect periodically statistics on time-use.

33. In order to account for the informal sector activities, both in developed and developing countries, and the rural non-agricultural activities, generally carried out by households in conjunction with agricultural activities in developing countries, and given the scarcity of statistics on these topics, it is desirable that countries develop appropriate methodologies and data collection programmes on the urban informal sector and the rural non-agricultural activities. In particular, suitable definitions and classifications should be developed in order to identify and classify the economically active population in the urban informal sector and those engaged in the rural non-agricultural activities.

34. In order to provide adequate employment opportunities and means of livelihood for the disabled and other handicapped persons, statistics should be collected and compiled, using appropriate methodologies, on the size of this population and its distribution according to relevant social and economic characteristics, distinguishing, in particular, those employed, those unemployed and those inactive.

35. (1) It is recommended that in countries with a planned economy, extensive use should be made of the balance sheet of labour resources so as to identify the size and structure of the labour force, and its geographical distribution by type of employment and sector of the national economy.

(2) The population of working age, with the exception of the disabled who do not work, and also the population not of working age, are included as labour resources. The balance sheet of labour resources may be broken down separately according to sex, identifying persons employed in subsidiary farming and in house-work, disabled persons of working age but who do not work and persons not of working age.

(3) The data in the balance sheets make it possible to identify the proportion of labour resources which may be utilised in the future to work in national production.

36. It is suggested that countries consider collecting information on the population not economically active, taking account of national needs and circumstances, to assist governments in designing their human resources and development policies. Countries should develop classifications designed to permit cross-tabulations reflecting the relative strength of attachment to the labour market of the groups identified in paragraphs 12 (1) and 13 (1) above.

EVALUATION AND DISSEMINATION

37. Like any other set of data, statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment, underemployment and related topics are subject to errors. While the data collection programme should be carefully designed to minimise possible errors, some are bound to occur. A careful interpretation of the results, therefore, requires some knowledge about the quality of the data. An evaluation of data quality is also necessary to improve upon data collection, processing and estimation procedures in subsequent rounds of the programme. The evaluation procedure should, as far as possible, form part of the data collection programme itself.

38. Statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment, underemployment and related topics should be issued promptly and made widely available. The statistics may be issued in stages by means of preliminary reports as soon as the main aggregates are available, followed by one or more final reports giving the revised and detailed statistics, in tabular form and, to the extent possible and permissible, in machine readable form.

39. Every release of statistics of the economically active population, employment, unemployment, underemployment and related topics, whether recurring or single-time, should clearly indicate the nature of the data and make reference to any detailed technical descriptions. In particular, descriptions should be given of the scope and coverage, the concepts and definitions, the method of data collection, the sample size and design where sampling is used, the methods of estimation and adjustments, including seasonal adjustments where applied, measures of data quality, including sampling and non-sampling errors where possible, as well as descriptions of changes in historical series, deviations from international standards and relationships with other sources of similar data and related bodies of statistics.

RESOLUTION II

Resolution concerning statistics of occupational injuries

The Thirteenth International Conference of Labour Statisticians,

Having been convened by the Governing Body of the International Labour Office, and having met in Geneva from 18 to 29 October 1982,

Recognising the importance of establishing an adequate statistical basis for the analysis and measurement of risks inherent in employment for the purpose of facilitating the establishment of prevention programmes and evaluating the efficiency of measures taken,

Noting that statistics of occupational injuries are collected on different bases for different purposes by different agencies,

Considering that recommended standard methodology, definitions and concepts relating to statistics of occupational injuries and guiding rules for the classification and presentation of statistics would facilitate the development of statistics of occupational injuries with a higher degree of comparability, both on the national and on the international level,

Adopts this twenty-sixth day of October 1982 the following resolution to replace the resolutions adopted in this field by the First, Sixth and Tenth International Conferences of Labour Statisticians:

Terminology

1. (1) Employment injuries as defined in Convention No. 121 cover all injuries resulting from accidents arising out of or in the course of employment (industrial accidents and commuting accidents) and all occupational diseases.

(2) Work accidents are accidents occurring at or in the course of work which may result in death, personal injury or disease.

(3) Commuting accidents are accidents occurring on the way to and from work which may result in death or personal injury.

(4) Occupational injuries include deaths, personal injuries and diseases resulting from work accidents.

General

2. (1) Every country should systematically collect statistics of occupational injuries; these statistics should be published regularly.

(2) Where resources permit, countries should consider the establishment of a direct reporting system for occupational injuries, designed among other things to furnish reliable, uniform and comprehensive statistics. The reporting unit should be the establishment. In the collection and compilation of such statistics, consideration may be given to the advantages of sampling.

3. Where the statistics cover not only occupational injuries but also occupational diseases or commuting accidents or both, these should be shown separately.

4. Where possible, occupational injuries to self-employed persons and family workers (paid or unpaid) should be included in the statistics, but they should be distinguished so that comparisons can be made with countries where they are excluded.

5. In the presentation of statistics on occupational injuries, information should be furnished on the following points:

- (a) the nature of the sources of the statistics, e.g. direct reporting system, records compiled by labour inspectorates, by insurance or by social security agencies, claims for compensation, etc.;
- (b) the coverage of the statistics, particularly in respect of the categories of persons, divisions of economic activity (industries), occupations, the minimum size of establishment, etc.;
- (c) the definitions used;
- (d) the methods used for reporting injuries and compiling the statistics;
- (e) the quality of the statistics.

6. (1) Where one person is the victim of two or more distinct recorded work accidents during the period covered by the statistics, each accident should be counted separately, i.e. the same person would be counted twice or more.

(2) The statistics should normally cover injuries that were sustained during a calendar year; in any case the period covered should be clearly defined.

(3) The unit of enumeration should be the person killed or injured as a result of a work accident. Countries should also consider the use of the event as another way of presenting the data.

Classifications

7. (1) In the statistics relating to a given period, occupational injuries should preferably be classified as follows:

I. TOTAL OCCUPATIONAL INJURIES

1. FATAL (within one year)

A. Within 30 days.

B. Within 31-365 days.

2. NON-FATAL (within one year)

(i) No lost time (national definition)

(ii) Lost time (excluding the day of the accident)

A. Up to 3 days

B. More than 3 days.

II. TOTAL DAYS LOST (for non-fatal injuries)

A. Lost time up to 3 days

B. Lost time exceeding 3 days.

(2) Wherever possible both the total for each item and its breakdown into A and B should be given. When the total is not available, then, under (I.1), A alone, and under (I.2) and (II), B alone should be provided if at all possible.

(3) It should be made clear whether lost time is measured in calendar days or weekdays or in worker-shifts or working days; calendar days are preferable as a measure of severity while working days are preferable as a measure of economic impact. Where working days or weekdays are used, an estimate in terms of calendar days should be provided wherever possible.

(4) A further and separate division of lost-time injuries between cases and types of permanent disablement and of temporary disablement may be considered useful.

(5) It is recognised that not all countries will be able to provide data on injuries resulting in no time lost and that countries which can provide such data will use national definitions of the minimum reportable event.

8. (1) Occupational injury statistics should be classified according to the economic activity in which the person injured was employed. The classification used should be the one used in other national labour statistics and should preferably conform with or be convertible into the International Standard Industrial Classification of Economic Activities.

(2) Occupational injury statistics should preferably also be classified according to the occupation and where possible the sex of the person injured. The classification used should be the one used in other national labour statistics and should preferably conform with or be convertible into the International Standard Classification of Occupations. Whenever possible, aggregative data should be provided for the group of occupations classified as operatives or as manual workers in other national labour statistics.

(3) Occupational injury statistics sometimes may be usefully classified by at least broad age groups, by size of establishment where the injured person works.

9. National definitions should be used for making detailed breakdowns of work accidents or occupational injuries according to their characteristics and relevant circumstances. In this context the usefulness of the International Statistical Classification of Diseases, Injuries and Causes of Death is recognised.

10. Where the statistics of occupational injuries sustained during a year exclude all or some of the resulting lost days and deaths in subsequent years and do not include lost days and deaths during the year which resulted from injuries sustained in previous years, then estimates of the under-count should be provided.

Comparative measures

11. Sound comparisons between periods, industries and countries can only be made if the statistics are considered in conjunction with employment, hours of work, etc. For such purposes, it is desirable to resort to relative measures.

12. Rates should be computed by major divisions of economic activity (industry), and where possible by occupation, distinguishing at least operative or manual workers, and should be presented separately for as many as possible of the items and their A/B subdivisions given in paragraph 7(1), with due regard to paragraphs 3 and 4 above.

13. Incidence rates should use as denominator the average number of people exposed to risk (i.e. those persons covered by the injury statistics). Wherever possible, the number of hours worked by them, the number of hours paid for or failing that, the number of days worked by them, should also be used as a second denominator to calculate frequency rates for non-fatal injuries. For convenience, incidence and non-fatal frequency rates can be expressed per thousand persons and per million hours worked or paid for. In the case of incidence rates, allowance should be made, where appropriate, for the proportion of part-time workers in the population at risk.

14. Data on days (or shifts) lost should be used to calculate (a) the average number of days lost per lost-time injury and (b) days lost per day worked by persons exposed to risk or, failing that, per person exposed to risk.

APPENDIX II

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LIST OF PARTICIPANTS

LISTE DES PARTICIPANTS

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<u>Employers</u>	--	<u>Employeurs</u>	--	<u>Empleadores</u>
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