



**INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON PROGRAM (ICP)
THIRD GOVERNING BOARD MEETING**

OCTOBER 25, 2018

**FEDERAL COMPETITIVENESS AND STATISTICS AUTHORITY
DUBAI, UNITED ARAB EMIRATES**

MEETING MINUTES

Welcome address, opening remarks and adoption of the agenda

The third meeting of the International Comparison Program (ICP) Governing Board took place on October 25, 2018, at the Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority in Dubai, United Arab Emirates. The main objectives of the meeting were to review the progress in implementing the interim and ICP 2017 cycle activities, assess outstanding risks, and discuss plans for the forthcoming ICP 2020 cycle, per the meeting agenda provided in Annex 1. In attendance were the Governing Board Co-Chairs, members and observers, and Board secretariat staff, as listed in Annex 2.

Dr. Abdulla Nasser Lootah, Director-General, Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority, welcomed the meeting delegates and noted the ICP's significant impact and importance in the Arab region. He invited the delegates to a cake-cutting ceremony to celebrate the program's 50th anniversary. The related press release is available [here](#).

Mr. Konrad Pesendorfer, ICP Governing Board Co-Chair, Statistics Austria, opened the meeting and introduced Mr. Pravin Srivastava, India's Chief Statistician and Secretary of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, as the new Board Co-Chair. He welcomed Mr. Yasuyuki Sawada, Chief Economist, Asian Development Bank, Ms. Mariana Kotzeva, Director-General, Statistical Office of the European Communities, Mr. Jun Zhang, Director-General, International Statistics Information Center, National Bureau of Statistics of China, and Mr. Neil Jackson, Chief Statistician, United Kingdom's Department for International Development, all attending the Board meeting for the first time.

After the welcome address and opening remarks, Mr. Pesendorfer invited the Board to adopt the meeting agenda.

The Governing Board adopted the proposed meeting agenda.

Overall progress in the implementation of ICP 2017 cycle and interim activities

Ms. Nada Hamadeh, ICP Global Lead, World Bank, briefed the Board on the overall progress in implementing the interim and ICP 2017 cycle activities. The related presentation is available [here](#).

It was noted that much progress has been made in implementing the ICP 2017 cycle since the second Board meeting held in September 2017. On country participation, 175 countries were participating in the cycle, including Argentina, Iran, Georgia, Ukraine, and 22 Caribbean Islands. Out of the 175 participating countries, 165 submitted household consumption survey data and around 130 submitted gross capital formation data to date. Non-household consumption surveys and national accounts activities were still underway in many countries. National, regional and global data validation activities were underway, and the quality of the input data received to date was promising. However, the timetable to produce 2017 results and the purchasing power parity (PPP) timeseries, bridging the 2011 and 2017 ICP results, by the end of 2019 remained extremely tight.

It was also noted that several regions have recalculated, or were planning to recalculate, their 2011 regional results, primarily due to large revisions in national accounts estimates in many countries. Revisions of 2011 regional results would necessitate recalculating the 2011 global results. It was stressed that no methodological changes would be introduced in the calculation of the 2017 results nor the revision of 2011 results, in order to ensure most consistent PPP timeseries. However, new or updated data sources, if available, would be used. To this end, the Global ICP Unit and the Regional Implementing agencies were developing a detailed timetable for recalculating the regional and global 2011 results.

The progress made with various governance, capacity building, research, knowledge and outreach activities was also highlighted, together with an overview of the latest PPP and ICP data uses. The proposed criteria for publishing more detailed ICP results, as agreed by the Inter-Agency Coordination Group (IACG), were also presented.

The Board took note of the overall progress in implementing the ICP 2017 cycle and interim activities and commended the vast efforts undertaken at national, regional and global levels to accelerate the implementation of program activities.

The Board stressed the importance of releasing both the 2017 cycle results and PPP timeseries jointly. Furthermore, the recalculation of the ICP 2011 results should be carried out as early as possible, in order to assess the scale of the revisions.

The Board noted that the criteria for determining the level of detail in the results to be published should include relevance to users, in addition to the quality of the results for a particular heading.

Furthermore, the need to develop a comprehensive communication and dissemination strategy was stressed. The strategy should be made available prior to the release of the ICP 2017 cycle results and PPP timeseries.

The Board noted that liaising with major PPP users, especially poverty economists, prior to the release of the 2017 results was crucial. To this end, it was noted that the ICP Technical

Advisory Group (TAG) has established a working relationship with the World Bank poverty economists.

The importance of producing ICP results in a sustainable manner was stressed. Increasing synergies with regular national statistical programs, building national statistical capacity, and optimizing the ICP survey approach were recommended.

The Board noted that the current draft of the ICP report to the 50th Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC), which was circulated to the Board prior to the meeting, was comprehensive but additional information on national accounts activities were to be added.

Regional progress reports

The Regional Implementing Agencies briefed the Board on the progress made in implementing ICP 2017 cycle and interim activities. The following presentations and interventions were made:

- Africa: Mr. Charles Lufumpa, African Development Bank (AfDB)
- Asia and the Pacific: Mr. Yasuyuki Sawada, Asian Development Bank (ADB) | [Presentation](#)
- Common Wealth of Independent States: Mr. Andrey Kosarev, Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT) | [Presentation](#)
- Latin America and the Caribbean: Mr. Pascual Gerstenfeld, United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-ECLAC) | [Presentation](#)
- Western Asia: Mr. Juraj Riecan, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA) | [Presentation](#)
- Eurostat-OECD PPP Program: Ms. Mariana Kotzeva, Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat) and Ms. Martine Durand, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

The draft ICP report to the 50th Session of the UNSC and the regional reports to the 6th meeting of the IACG summarized the status of each region in implementing the ICP 2017 cycle and interim activities. The regional reports to the IACG are available [here](#).

The Board took note of the overall progress in implementing ICP 2017 cycle and interim activities and thanked the Regional Implementing Agencies for their efforts in executing the program.

The Board also stressed the need to multiply quality assurance activities at national, regional and global levels, to ensure the reliability and usability of the ICP results. To this end, the Board indicated that the ICP TAG should provide an assessment of the quality of the ICP 2017 cycle results, revised ICP 2011 results, and the PPP timeseries.

Outstanding risks and mitigation measures

Ms. Hamadeh briefed the Board on the outstanding risks and related mitigation measures, covering timeliness, participation, quality, openness, funding and institutional sustainability. The related presentation is available [here](#).

The Board took note of the outstanding risks and related mitigation measures and urged countries and multilateral agencies to meet the ICP 2017 cycle deadlines, prepare for the 2020 cycle, and incorporate the ICP into their regular work programs and budgets.

The Board agreed to continue advocacy efforts with national statistical offices, regional development banks/agencies, and donors to support the ICP. To this end, the need to conduct advocacy efforts at senior official level was stressed. The Board also agreed to continue to promote the program's increased openness and transparency.

Beyond the ICP 2017 cycle: Preparations for the ICP 2020 cycle

Ms. Hamadeh briefed the Board on the preparations for the ICP 2020 cycle and discussed how the program could evolve in the future. The related presentation is available [here](#).

It was noted that all ICP regions are planning to produce regional results for the reference year 2020. Moreover, the Eurostat-OECD PPP program and Western Asia region are producing annual PPPs. Furthermore, as several regions conducted survey activities in 2018 for the ICP 2017 cycle, there is an opportunity to produce "benchmark" results for the reference year 2018.

With the exception of Latin America and the Caribbean region, all ICP regions are planning to conduct most survey activities during the reference year 2020, rather than applying the Rolling Price Survey approach to spread price surveys over three years.

The Board took note of both the preparations for the ICP 2020 cycle and emphasized that one of the key recommendations from the UNSC Friends of the Chair (FOC) evaluation of the ICP 2011 was that the frequency of ICP cycles should increase. To this end, ICP regions may choose the survey approach that best fits their regional circumstances, as long as they are able to produce benchmark results at least every three years, in compliance with the global schedule.

Date and venue of the next meeting and any other business

Mr. Pesendorfer invited the Board to discuss date, venue and agenda of the next Board meeting.

The Board agreed that the 4th meeting of the ICP Governing Board will take place around the 50th Session of the UNSC in New York, USA, on Sunday, March 3, 2019. The tentative agenda will include progress updates on the ICP 2017 cycle and preparations for the 2020 ICP cycle, as well as discussions of the ICP 2017 release timetable, and a communication and dissemination strategy.

Closing remarks

Ms. Haishan Fu, Director, Development Data Group, World Bank, thanked the national and regional agencies for accelerating their efforts in implementing the program's 2017 cycle. Ms. Fu also stressed the need to collectively ensure the release of the ICP 2017 results by the end of 2019, while also preparing for the ICP 2020 cycle.

Mr. Pesendorfer closed the meeting by thanking the meeting delegates for their participation and contributions, and acknowledging the Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority for their hospitality in hosting the meeting.

Annex 1: Meeting Agenda



**Third Governing Board Meeting
October 25, 2018
Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority
Dubai, United Arab Emirates**

Agenda

09:00 – 09:15	Welcome address, <i>UAE Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority</i>
09:15 – 09:30	Opening remarks and adoption of the agenda, <i>Meeting Chair</i>
09:30 – 10:30	Overall progress in the implementation of ICP 2017 cycle and interim activities, <i>ICP Global Unit, World Bank</i>
10:30 – 11:00	<i>Coffee break</i>
11:00 – 13:00	Regional progress reports, <i>Regional Implementing Agencies</i>
13:00 – 14:30	<i>Lunch</i>
14:30 – 15:30	Outstanding risks and mitigation measures, <i>ICP Global Unit, World Bank</i>
15:30 – 16:00	Beyond the ICP 2017 cycle: Preparations for the ICP 2020 cycle, <i>ICP Global Unit, World Bank</i>
16:00 – 16:30	Date and venue of the next meeting and any other business, <i>Meeting Chair</i>
16:30 – 17:00	Closing remarks, <i>Governing Board Co-Chairs and the World Bank</i>

Annex 2: List of Participants

Country / Organization	Participant
Austria (Co-Chair)	Konrad Pesendorfer, Director General, Statistics Austria
India (Co-Chair)	Pravin Srivastava, Chief Statistician and Secretary of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
India	Dilip Kumar Sinha, Director, Price Statistics Division, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
China	Jun Zhang, Director-General, International Statistics Information Center, National Bureau of Statistics of China
China	Jinping Wang, Director, International Statistics Information Center, National Bureau of Statistics of China
China	Hong Chen, Principal Program Officer, International Statistics Information Center, National Bureau of Statistics of China
Saudi Arabia	Fahad S. Altekhaifi, President, General Authority for Statistics
Senegal	Babacar Ndir, General Director, National Agency for Statistics and Demography
United Arab Emirates (Host)	Abdulla Nasser Lootah, Director-General, Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority
United Arab Emirates	Ali Buharoon, Director, Economic Statistics Department, Federal Competitiveness and Statistics Authority
United Arab Emirates	Rashid Bin Lahej Al Mansouri, Board Chair, Abu Dhabi Statistics Center
United Arab Emirates	Aref Al Muhairi, Executive Director, Dubai Statistics Center
United Arab Emirates	Tariq Al Janahi, Vice- Executive Director, Dubai Statistics Center
United States of America	Susan Fleck, Assistant Commissioner for International Prices, Bureau of Labor Statistics
African Development Bank	Charles Lufumpa, Director, Statistics Department
African Development Bank	Michel Mouyelo-Katoula, Consultant, Statistics Department
Asian Development Bank	Yasuyuki Sawada, Chief Economist and Director General
Asian Development Bank	Kaushal Joshi, Principal Statistician
International Monetary Fund	Florina Tanase, Advisor, Statistics Department
Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States	Andrey Kosarev, Deputy Chairman
Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development	Martine Durand, Director of Statistics and Chief Statistician
Statistical Office of the European Communities	Mariana Kotzeva, Director-General
Statistical Office of the European Communities	Maria Joao Santos, Team Leader of International Relations
United Kingdom's Department for International Development	Neil Jackson, Chief Statistician

Country / Organization	Participant
United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia	Juraj Riecan, Director, Statistics Division
United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia	Majed Skaini, Statistician, Statistics Division
United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	Pascual Gerstenfeld, Director, Statistics Division
United Nations Statistics Division	Ivo Havinga, Assistant Director of Economic Statistics
World Bank	Haishan Fu, Director, Development Data Group
World Bank	Grant Cameron, Manager, Development Data Group
World Bank	Nada Hamadeh, ICP Global Lead, Development Data Group
World Bank	Marko Rissanen, Statistician, Development Data Group