



**INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON PROGRAM (ICP)
FOURTH MEETING OF THE GOVERNING BOARD**

MARCH 3, 2019

**MILLENNIUM HILTON NEW YORK ONE UN PLAZA
NEW YORK, USA**

MEETING MINUTES

Introduction

The fourth meeting of the International Comparison Program (ICP) Governing Board took place on March 3, 2019, at the Millennium Hilton New York One UN Plaza in New York, USA. The main objectives of the meeting were to review the progress of ICP 2017 cycle activities and assess outstanding risks, and discuss the draft communication and dissemination strategy for the release of the results 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.

Welcome address, opening remarks and adoption of the agenda

Board Co-Chair Mr. Pravin Srivastava, Chief Statistician of India and Secretary of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation, opened the meeting and welcomed the Board Co-Chair, members and observers. He invited Ms. Haishan Fu, World Bank Development Data Group Director, to deliver opening remarks.

Ms. Fu noted that 2019 is a crucial year for the ICP and that, in this final phase of the 2017 cycle, the focus has shifted to the calculation and validation of results. She indicated that the roadmap proposed at this meeting set out the remaining steps towards the release of the ICP 2017 results. She also noted that serious risks persisted, especially on the completeness, quality and timeliness of the data and results, and she urged all participating countries and regional partners to multiply their efforts to ensure the ICP 2017 results are robust and stand up to scrutiny, are released on time, and are impactful. Ms. Fu reported that the World Bank has strengthened and expanded the ICP Global Office to meet the challenges and demands of this crucial phase of the program.

Mr. Srivastava invited the Board to adopt the meeting agenda.

The Governing Board adopted the proposed meeting agenda.

Progress with implementing the ICP 2017 cycle, and risks

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

Since the third Board meeting held in October 2018, UN-ECLAC had confirmed the participation of Sint Maarten in the 2017 cycle, bringing country participation to a total of 176 countries. Of these, all but one country (Madagascar) had submitted household consumption data, an increase of ten countries since October 2018. However, several countries in Latin America and the Caribbean and Africa had yet to submit data for non-household consumption surveys.

Global validation of household consumption data began in September 2018, and validation of non-household consumption data commenced in February 2019. Data quality indicators had been examined, and data from some regions/countries were of concern, warranting serious validation efforts over the next few months. Ms. Hamadeh then presented the proposed roadmap to the release of the ICP 2017 results, envisioned in the second quarter of 2020.

Regional progress reports

The Regional Implementing Agencies briefed the Board on the progress made in implementing ICP 2017 cycle.

Africa

Mr. Charles Lufumpa, Statistics Department Director, African Development Bank (AfDB), reported that the AfDB was doubling down on efforts to assist countries in their validation efforts and ensure the quality of the data. This encompassed expanding the regional ICP team, convening workshops in the near future to discuss national accounts and prices, and numerous missions to countries. Household consumption data was expected from Madagascar, the one remaining country, shortly, and the AfDB is working closely with those countries yet to submit non-household consumption data and national accounts data. A lack of capacity in some countries has led AfDB to form an emergency plan, whereby some data validation is done centrally rather than nationally.

Asia

Mr. Kaushal Joshi, Principal Statistician, Asian Development Bank (ADB), reported that all ICP 2017 cycle surveys have been completed and that the validation activities are ongoing. Overall, data quality is satisfactory; however, data from some countries will be further scrutinized. Additional efforts are directed at producing reliable housing estimates, while results from the interim 2016 exercise are utilized as another reference point for the 2017 cycle validation. The timetable to finalize the regional results by end 2019 is tight but feasible.

Eurostat and OECD

Ms. Mariana Kotzeva, Director-General, Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat), reported that the Eurostat countries are participating in the ICP through their regular European Comparison Program (ECP). Georgia and Ukraine will be included in the comparison through a special exercise underway.

Ms. Martine Durand, Director of Statistics and Chief Statistician, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD), reported that OECD data had already been submitted to the Global Office, but some data were missing for Colombia and Costa Rica. However, these data were expected within the coming months, allowing for simulations on the impact of these countries' moving from the Latin America and Caribbean to the OECD comparison. She also reported that the 2011 Eurostat-OECD results have been recalculated.

Commonwealth of Independent States

Mr. Andrey Kosarev, Deputy Chairman, Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT), reported that the CIS region's focus is now on data validation and the calculation of the 2017 results, as well as revising the results from the 2011 and 2014 comparisons. The region is on track to finalize the results per the proposed timetable. Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan have been invited to attend the regional workshops on regular basis, and Turkmenistan may join the ICP 2017 cycle on an experimental basis.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Mr. Giovanni Savio, Chief of the Economic and Environment Statistics Unit, United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-ECLAC), noted that some data coverage and quality issues persist in LAC. However, he was overall confident that the region would meet the proposed timetable for publication of the 2017 results. It was also noted that allocating financial support to countries requires substantial resources from UN-ECLAC, hence sustainable domestic funding should be secured.

Western Asia

Mr. Juraj Riecan, Statistics Department Director, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA), reported that the Western Asia region was on track to produce 2017 results per the proposed timetable. An upcoming workshop in April would finalize both household consumption and non-household consumption data and would review and update the product list for the 2020 cycle. The region is also pursuing further harmonizing the ICP and consumer price index (CPI) activities and producing sub-national purchasing power parities (PPPs).

The Board:

- ***Took note of the overall progress in implementing the ICP 2017 cycle and thanked the Regional Implementing Agencies and the ICP Global Office for presenting a clear status report and alerting the Board of potential timeliness and quality risks.***
- ***Approved the proposed roadmap to the release of the ICP 2017 results, envisioned in the second quarter of 2020.***
- ***Noted that the ICP 2017 cycle is crucial as it is the launching pad for the permanent ICP program; thus, it is essential that the results are timely and of good quality.***
- ***Stressed the need for regional and global implementing agencies to multiply their quality assurance efforts over the next few months to ensure that no further delays occur and that the results are of good quality.***
- ***Noted that priority should be given to improving the quality of data from countries with the highest economic weight and to their sectors of the economy with the highest weight in national GDP.***
- ***Stressed the importance of better integration between the ICP and national CPIs, and of sub-national PPPs for national policymaking, and welcomed the initiative to produce***

guides on achieving synergies between the ICP and CPI exercises, and on producing sub-national PPPs, with illustrative case studies.

Communication and Dissemination Strategy

At the behest of the Board, the ICP Global Office prepared a [draft strategy](#) outlining the outputs of the 2017 cycle, their timing, the audience they target, the vehicles through which they will be relayed, and the accompanying messages. The release will encompass a full suite of new ICP data for the benchmark year 2017, revised data for the benchmark year 2011, and an interim time series bridging the 2011 and 2017 results.

The Board welcomed the proposed communication and dissemination strategy and its components, and noted the following:

- *Releasing the ICP results during the World Bank/IMF Spring Meetings in 2020 may result in them being overshadowed by other Spring Meeting events and activities; hence, a release a few days or weeks prior to the meetings may be preferable.*
- *Pre-release messages should highlight that the ICP is now a permanent statistical exercise, producing PPP timeseries, and provide guidance on the correct use and limitations of the data, so users and journalists know at the time of release how to correctly interpret the data.*
- *Release messages should explain to users the drivers behind revising the ICP 2011 results and the impact of the revisions.*
- *Release messages should highlight the various uses and applications of PPPs, other than for global poverty measurement.*
- *Each region should develop its own regional communication and dissemination strategy that reflects the importance of ICP data for regional priorities, e.g. trade integration in Africa.*
- *The use and value of PPPs for national policymaking should be highlighted, especially the importance of sub-national PPPs.*
- *The ICP should target key events that national policymakers attend and identify regional/national policymaker champions that can help promote the ICP.*

The Board agreed to provide a virtual review and endorsement (via email exchange) of both the final communication and dissemination strategy and an outline of the final ICP 2017 report in June-July 2019.

Closing remarks and any other business

Board Co-Chairs, Mr. Srivastava and Mr. Pesendorfer, closed the meeting by thanking the Board members and observers for their participation and contributions. It was agreed that the fifth meeting of the ICP Governing Board will take place in November 2019.

Annex 1: Meeting Agenda



**Fourth Governing Board Meeting
March 3, 2019
Millennium Hilton New York One UN Plaza
New York, USA**

Agenda

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| 06:30– 06:40 pm | Opening remarks and adoption of the agenda, <i>Meeting Chair</i> |
| 06:40– 07:40 pm | Progress with implementing the ICP 2017 cycle and risks <ul style="list-style-type: none">– Overall progress and risks, <i>ICP Global Office, World Bank</i>– Regional interventions, <i>ICP Regional Implementing Agencies</i> |
| 07:40– 08:20 pm | ICP dissemination and communication strategy, <i>ICP Global Office, World Bank</i> |
| 08:20 – 08:30 pm | Closing remarks, <i>Governing Board Co-Chairs</i> |

Annex 2: List of Participants

Country / Organization	Participant
Austria (Co-Chair)	Konrad Pesendorfer, Director General, Statistics Austria
Austria	Ingolf Böttcher, Statistics Austria
Brazil	Roberto Luis Olinto Ramos, President, Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics
China	Jun Zhang, Director-General, International Statistical Information Center, National Bureau of Statistics of China
China	Zhe Chen, International Statistical Information Center, National Bureau of Statistics of China
India (Co-Chair)	Pravin Srivastava, Chief Statistician and Secretary of the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
India	K.S. Rejimon, DDG, Coordination and Public Division, Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation
Saudi Arabia	Fahad S. Altekhaifi, President, General Authority for Statistics
Saudi Arabia	Mohammed Alfarraj, General Authority for Statistics
Senegal	Babacar Ndir, General Director, National Agency for Statistics and Demography
South Africa	Risenga Maluleke, Statistician-General, Statistics South Africa
Suriname	Iwan Sno, Director General, Bureau of Statistics
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	Ben Paul Mungyereza, Manager, Statistics Department
Asian Development Bank	Joseph Ernest Zveglic, Deputy Chief Economist
Asian Development Bank	Kaushal Joshi, Principal Statistician
International Monetary Fund	Louis Marc Ducharme, Chief Statistician and Data Officer
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
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

Country / Organization	Participant
United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean	Giovanni Savio, Chief of the Economic and Environment Statistics Unit, Statistics Division
United Nations Statistics Division	Ivo Havinga, Assistant Director
World Bank	Haishan Fu, Director, Development Data Group
World Bank	Nada Hamadeh, ICP Global Lead, Development Data Group
World Bank	Marko Rissanen, Statistician, Development Data Group
World Bank	Edie Purdie, Consultant, Development Data Group