



**MINUTES OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON PROGRAM
INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION GROUP MEETING
OCTOBER 20, 22, 2020
Virtual Meeting**

Welcome and meeting objectives

A meeting of the International Comparison Program (ICP) Inter-Agency Coordination Group (IACG) was held on October 20 and October 22, 2020, virtually, via a videoconference hosted by the World Bank.

The main objectives of the meeting were to discuss i) ICP 2017 cycle results release and post-release activities; and ii) ICP 2021 cycle preparations, as per the meeting agenda provided in Annex 1. The meeting participants are listed in Annex 2. The meeting presentations are available [here](#).

Nada Hamadeh, ICP Global Lead, World Bank, opened the meeting by welcoming all participants and acknowledging the progress made by the Regional Implementing Agencies and the Global Office on the release of ICP 2017 results, the rollout of post-release activities, and preparations for the ICP 2021 ICP cycle.

Session 01: ICP 2017 cycle results release and post-release activities

Regional release and post-release activities

The ICP Regional Coordinators—Gregoire Mboya Deloubassou, African Development Bank (AfDB); Kaushal Joshi, Asian Development Bank (ADB); Valerica Accibas, Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT); Martha Tovar and Claudia de Camino, United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-ECLAC); Majed Skaini, United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA); Hakan Linden, Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat); and Sophie Bournot, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)—briefed the meeting on their respective ICP 2017 cycle regional release and post-release activities.

Overall, regarding the regional ICP 2017 cycle reports, [ADB](#), [CIS-STAT](#), [Eurostat](#) and [OECD](#) have concluded their release activities, while UN-ECLAC and UN-ESCWA are expected to release their respective regional reports by the end of 2020. AfDB has released a [summary report](#) and is to release a supplemental thematic report by the end of 2020.

Agreements and conclusions

- The ICP Regional Implementing Agencies agreed to keep the ICP Global Office informed of further regional ICP 2017 cycle release activities, which will be subsequently featured on, and linked through, the global [ICP website](#).
- The ICP Technical Advisory Group (TAG) should be invited to address the methodology used to produce annual estimates for the years following the latest ICP benchmark year. To date, the TAG has endorsed the methodology for estimating annual purchasing power parities (PPPs) between benchmark years, however, PPP estimates for the years following the latest benchmark year are produced as a simple extrapolation based on national accounts deflators [for gross domestic product (GDP)] or consumer price indices (CPIs) [for household consumption] and disseminated through the World Bank's World Development Indicators (WDI).
- The ICP Global Office will review metadata entries for PPP-based indicators in the WDI to ensure that participation-based PPPs are distinguished from non-participation-based PPPs and from WDI extrapolations.

Global release and post-release activities

The ICP Global Office briefed the meeting on global release and post-release activities, including progress made with drafting the ICP Visual Compendium of Uses and country operational guidelines on consumer price index (CPI)-ICP synergies and subnational PPPs. Furthermore, the ICP report to the 52nd Session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) and ICP session proposal for the 63rd International Statistical Institute (ISI) World Statistics Congress (WSC) were discussed. As regards to outreach, it was noted that the ICP- and/or PPP-related [blogs](#) are being released frequently, while the global [ICP website](#) continues to maintain an up-to-date archive of PPP and ICP data uses in reports, papers, articles and blogs.

Lastly, the meeting was briefed on the Food Prices for Nutrition project, which is being conducted as a partnership with ICP data users, namely the International Food Policy Research Institute (IFPRI) and Tufts University. On a related note, the feasibility of widening collaboration on food prices under the ICP framework was discussed, reflecting a growing demand for appropriate data sources and an opportunity to position the ICP as a leading partner in these initiatives.

Agreements and conclusions

- ICP Regional Implementing Agencies will have the opportunity to review the draft Visual Compendium of Uses before publication.
- ICP Regional Implementing Agencies will have the opportunity to review the draft guidelines on CPI-ICP synergies and subnational PPPs. In addition, the Inter-Secretariat Working Group on Price Statistics (IWGPS) will have the opportunity to review the draft guidelines CPI-ICP synergies.
- The ICP Regional Implementing Agencies will provide regional inputs for the 52nd ICP UNSC report by end-October 2020. The deadline for submitting the report is early December 2020. The report will be for information at the UNSC session.
- The ICP Regional Implementing Agencies are invited to provide suggestions for ICP proposed session at the 63rd ISI WSC as early as possible. The deadline for submitting the proposal to the ISI is November 30, 2020.

- The ICP Regional Implementing Agencies are invited to draft joint blogs with the ICP Global Office on the release of their respective regional ICP 2017 results.
- The feasibility of widening collaboration on food prices will be discussed bilaterally between the ICP Global Office and the Regional Implementing Agencies.

Session 02: ICP 2021 cycle preparations

Regional preparations

The ICP Regional Implementing Agencies briefed the meeting on their regional ICP 2021 preparations.

Overall, all regions have launched the ICP 2021 cycle and are conducting virtual workshops and consultations with participating countries. Participation is expected to be similar to ICP 2017, however, Uzbekistan is expected to join the CIS comparison, Lebanon the Western Asia comparison, and Guatemala the Latin America and Caribbean (LAC) comparison, while the Cayman Islands and Sint Maarten are not expected to participate in the LAC comparison. In addition, Georgia and Ukraine will continue to participate as “guest” participants in the Eurostat PPP programme. Furthermore, additional ICP data collections for *government compensation* and *construction and civil engineering* will continue as per the ICP 2017 cycle in the Eurostat-OECD comparison. Lastly, the number of dual-participation countries in the Africa and Western Asia comparisons are expected to increase. Feedback from regions suggests that countries are adopting alternative modes of data collection to supplement face-to-face collection of prices for regular consumer price collection activities due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Similar alternative modes are most likely adopted for ICP price collection in 2021, as the Covid-19 related risks are expected to persist in 2021.

Agreements and conclusions

- The ICP Regional Implementing Agencies will keep the ICP Global Office informed on the ICP 2021 cycle preparations, including forthcoming workshops and any changes in expected country participation.
- The impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the ICP 2021 surveys is being assessed and related guidance for conducting surveys will be issued as needed. To this end, the ICP Global Office and ICP Regional Implementing Agencies are invited to share any existing guidelines and other information with the IACG.
- The ICP Global Office, AfDB and UN-ESCWA will schedule a separate meeting to discuss the dual-participating country arrangements.

Global preparations

The ICP Global Office briefed the meeting on global ICP preparations, including the status of the operational materials and the overall ICP 2021 cycle timeline for governance events and production of the 2021 cycle results. In addition, the composition of the ICP Governing Board was discussed.

Agreements and conclusions

- The ICP Global Office will circulate a revised *household consumption* item list, reflecting minor updates for mobile phone related items. In addition, the definitions for *private education* items

will be reviewed amidst the current special circumstances. Item lists for *housing, government compensation* and *construction and civil engineering* were considered to be final, while the item list for *machinery and equipment* will be updated based on the Eurostat 2021 list, which is expected to be available by mid-February 2021 as a semi-final list. The ICP machinery and equipment list will be subsequently made available to the regions by end-February 2021, the source list availability allowing.

- Regarding the timetable, it was agreed that the IACG virtual meetings should take place on a quarterly basis, rather than bi-annually. Publication of the ICP 2021 results by end-2023 is paramount to ensure that the ICP results remain relevant.
- The ICP Regional Implementing Agencies are invited to provide suggestions on the ICP Governing Board composition, for consideration by UNSD.

Annex 1: Meeting Agenda

Day 1, Tuesday, October 20, 2020, 8-10 a.m. (Washington, DC time)

Session 00 **Opening remarks**

Session 01 **ICP 2017 cycle results release and post-release activities:**

- Release of regional results and post-release activities (Regional Agencies)

- Global post-release activities (Global Office)
 - Compendium of PPP uses
 - Country guidelines on ICP-CPI synergies and sub-national PPPs
 - ICP report to the 52nd Session of the UNSC
 - ICP session proposal at the 63rd ISI World Statistics Congress 2021
 - Information on the food prices project

Day 2, Thursday, October 22, 2020, 8-10 a.m. (Washington, DC time)

Session 02 **ICP 2021 cycle preparations:**

- Launch activities, anticipated country participation, regional survey schedules, anticipated impact of the pandemic on 2021 price surveys and national accounts compilation, and use of pre-2021 price data, if applicable (Regional Agencies)

- Finalization of global operational materials, and overall timetable (Global Office)

Session 03 **Any other business (Global Office and Regional Agencies)**

Annex 2: List of participants

African Development Bank (AfDB)

- Ben Paul Mungyereza
- Gregoire Mboya Deloubassou
- Michel Mouyelo-Katoula

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

- Kaushal Joshi
- Criselda H. De Dios
- Mel Lorenzo Accad
- Eleanore Ramos
- Mario Ilagan
- Paolo Kris Adriano

Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT)

- Andrey Kosarev
- Valerica Accibas

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

- Sophie Bournot

Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat)

- Hakan Linden
- Marjanca Gasic

United Nations Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean (UN-ECLAC)

- Claudia de Camino
- Martha Tovar

United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (UN-ESCWA)

- Majed Skaini

World Bank

- Nada Hamadeh
- Yuri Dikhanov
- Marko Rissanen
- Inyoung Song
- Mizuki Yamanaka
- William Vigil-Oliver
- Maurice Nsabimana
- Edie Purdie
- Rui Costa
- Shriya Chauhan
- Nancy Kebe

Observer(s)

- David Roberts (Independent Expert)