



**MINUTES OF THE INTERNATIONAL COMPARISON PROGRAM
INTER-AGENCY COORDINATION GROUP MEETING**

June 8-9, 2022

Virtual meeting

Welcome and meeting objectives

A meeting of the International Comparison Program (ICP) Inter-Agency Coordination Group (IACG) was held on June 8 and 9, 2022, virtually, via a videoconference hosted by the World Bank.

The main objectives of the meeting were to discuss regional and global updates. The meeting participants are listed in Annex 2. The meeting presentations are available [here](#).

Marko Rissanen, World Bank, opened the meeting by welcoming the attendees and acknowledging the progress made so far in implementing the ICP 2021 under unique circumstances. A new member of the ICP Global Office, Giovanni Tonutti, was introduced. Nada Hamadeh, ICP Global Lead, World Bank, highlighted the importance of developing mitigation measures to address and minimize the risks.

Session 01: Regional Updates

The ICP Regional Implementing Agencies (RIAs)—Gregoire Mboya de Loubassou, African Development Bank (AfDB); Kaushal Joshi, Asian Development Bank (ADB); Andrey Kosarev, the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT); Claudia de Camino Ferrario and Lady Infante, 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 Union (Eurostat); and Daniel Sanchez Serra, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) —briefed the meeting on their respective ICP 2021 cycle activities.

Latin America and the Caribbean

Claudia de Camino Ferrario and Lady Infante presented the status of the ICP 2021 cycle in the Latin America and the Caribbean region. For the ICP 2021 cycle there are 33 participating economies, and efforts are being made to include additional Caribbean Islands economies. Price collection for the household consumption survey started in 2019 but was interrupted due to the COVID-19-related postponement of the ICP cycle. Price collection activities restarted in 2021 and UN-ECLAC is considering

the use of extrapolated 2019 and 2020 price data, in combination with 2021 price data. The price analysis process was presented and included data cleaning, extrapolation of data from previous periods, and intra- and inter-country validation in close collaboration with national specialists. Regarding operational activities, UN-ECLAC has organized several technical meetings and workshops throughout 2021 and 2022, including four price validation meetings for each quarter of 2021. The next price validation technical meeting is scheduled for July/August 2022, referring to Q4 2021 price data.

With respect to risk assessment, UN-ECLAC identified financial and human resources constraints, the response to COVID-19 in the form of lockdowns and mobility restrictions, the census round in the Caribbean Region, which demanded additional resources from the NSOs, and natural disasters such as the August 2021 earthquake which hit the Caribbean Region. These factors resulted in a delay in the data submissions of some countries.

Western Asia

Majed Skaini presented the status of the ICP 2021 cycle in the Western Asia region. Regarding country participation, Lebanon, Syria, and Tunisia are participating in the ICP 2021 cycle, in addition to the 12 participating economies from the previous cycle. Additionally, there are ongoing efforts to include Libya, Mauritania, and Yemen in the ICP 2021 cycle, but their participation is not confirmed. As for the survey implementation, all price data were collected in 2021 and preliminary expenditure data are expected to be received by Q3 2022. National data validation is ongoing with regional checks and a regional validation workshop is scheduled for Q3 2022. In February 2021, UN-ESCWA published the report: *“Release of new purchasing power parities for the Arab region: Real sizes of Arab economies”* which includes regional 2020 PPPs as well as preliminary 2021 PPPs. This publication received wide media coverage and further established the ICP as a permanent program in the region. Regarding operational activities, UN-ESCWA has already conducted two workshops in 2022, including a bilateral meeting in the United Arab Emirates, and has scheduled a regional training workshop for June 2022.

Regarding the challenges faced in the implementation of the ICP 2021 cycle, UN-ESCWA noted the delays in budget approvals, shortages of staff in UN-ESCWA, and new staff in national implementing agencies (NIAs) as some of the main difficulties. The timeline of price collection for dual participating countries is also a concern, as the implementation of the ICP 2021 cycle is delayed in Africa.

Eurostat–OECD PPP Program

Håkan Linden and Daniel Sanchez Serra presented the status of the Eurostat-OECD PPP Program. The economies participating in the ICP 2021 cycle remain the same as in the previous ICP cycle, including Georgia and Ukraine, who are included as guest participants. With respect to price surveys, the price collection period for consumer goods and services ran for three years, from 2020 to 2022, following the Eurostat-OECD PPP Programme’s rolling survey schedule. For the machinery and equipment survey, prices were collected in 2021 for European countries and in 2020 for non-European countries and data are validated. For the construction survey, some countries collected prices in 2020 but the majority collected prices in 2021 and data were already submitted. The preliminary 2021 PPP estimates are scheduled to be released in June 2022. Regarding operational activities, Eurostat has organized two regional meetings

since the last IACG meeting and one workshop on transaction data for PPPs was held in May 2022. Lastly, the updated “Eurostat OECD Methodological Manual on PPPs” is scheduled to be released by the end of 2022.

Concerning the main challenges, the participation of Russia and Belarus in OECD bodies is suspended, as well as the participation of Russia in Eurostat PPP meetings. As a result, OECD has not received any data from Russia since March 2022. However, release of extrapolated GDP and consumption PPPs will be continued. The participation of Russia in the ICP 2021 cycle as a dual participation country is no longer possible. Regarding Ukraine, selected ICP 2021 survey activities have been altered due to the ongoing war; however, estimation of PPPs for the cycle is still feasible.

Commonwealth of Independent States

Andrey Kosarev presented the status of the ICP 2021 cycle in the CIS region. Regarding country participation in the ICP 2021 cycle, CIS-STAT confirmed the full participation of nine countries and there are ongoing efforts to include Turkmenistan in future ICP cycles. The prices for the household consumption and investment goods surveys were collected in 2021 and are currently being validated at the national and regional levels. Regarding operational activities organized since the last IACG meeting, CIS-STAT has conducted a bilateral meeting with Uzbekistan and four regional meetings. A bilateral meeting with Tajikistan is scheduled for July 2022 and a regional meeting will be held in December 2022.

On its risk assessment for the implementation of the ICP 2021 cycle, CIS-STAT noted that some NIAs which had staff changes required additional support and funding issues remains one of the most pressing concerns. Regarding the participation of Russia in ICP 2021 cycle, CIS-STAT does not consider it at risk as it did not affect the data submissions or planned activities; however, the global linking approach needs to be addressed.

Asia and Pacific

Kaushal Joshi presented the status of the ICP 2021 cycle in the Asia and Pacific region. With respect to the participation status in the ICP 2021 cycle, the total number of participating economies is 21.¹ While 18 of these economies initiated their price survey activities in 2021, Lao PDR, India, and Pakistan, who could not begin their survey activities in 2021 due to COVID-19 and other reasons, were expected to initiate the survey activities at different points in Q1-Q2 2022, much later than originally scheduled. Other economies have also experienced delays in their price collection work, mainly due to COVID-19, and these delays in surveys creates additional challenges. As a mitigating solution, and to allow maximum participation, the price collection period in the region has been extended until the Q4 2022. Since the last IACG meeting,

¹ In ICP 2017, 22 economies participated in Asia and the Pacific. In the written statement submitted by Myanmar on the Report of the World Bank on the International Comparison Programme for the 53rd Session of the UN Statistical Commission, Myanmar informed its non-participation in the 2021 ICP round in the Asia and the Pacific region.

ADB has already conducted ten regional workshops and one additional workshop is planned until the end of the Q2 2022.

ADB assessed the risks for the ICP 2021 cycle, noting the delays in commencing the price surveys in many economies due to COVID-19 and the need to obtain reliable indicators from detailed levels of consumer price indices for extrapolating and backcasting price data. Other challenges include lockdown restrictions and the constraint on resources due to budget cuts, turnover of trained ICP staff, and competing national statistical priorities such as population and housing census or other major survey undertakings. In order to address these issues, ADB is conducting additional bilateral meetings to ensure full participation, emphasizing rigorous data validation, collection of additional metadata, and allowing price surveys to be extended to 2022, as needed.

Africa

Gregoire Mboya de Loubassou presented the status of the ICP 2021 cycle in the Africa region. Regarding country participation, all 50 countries from the ICP 2017 cycle are participating in the ICP 2021 cycle, while technical assistance is being provided to Eritrea, Libya, Somalia, and South Sudan in preparation for future participation. The implementation of the ICP 2021 cycle has been challenging due to financial difficulties, particularly in the 37 African Development Fund (ADF) countries, but these issues have now been resolved. COMESA will carry out the ICP operational activities in the 37 ADF countries, while the 13 middle-income countries (MIC) will report directly to AfDB. The ICP-specific price collections for the household consumer survey will take place between Q2 and Q4 2022. For the machinery and equipment survey, as well as the construction survey, data collection will be centralized. For education, government, and housing surveys price data collection will also take place in 2022. A data validation workshop is scheduled for November 2022.

In its assessment of operational risks, AfDB signaled the significant amount of non ICP statistical activities coinciding with the implementation of the ICP 2021 cycle, the high turnover of ICP staff in NSOs and the lack of funding for middle-income countries as the greatest challenges in the region.

Agreements and conclusions

- Data collections are finalized in most regions and the focus has now shifted to data validation. However, in some regions and for some participating economies the price surveys will continue throughout 2022. Regional workshops and meetings, as well as virtual bilateral technical assistance missions, are being conducted in all regions.
- Among the main difficulties faced by NSOs are financial and human resource constraints. Additionally, price and expenditure data collection and compilation are more challenging due to pandemic-related restrictions, differing collection schedules, and changing patterns of expenditure.
- Several regions have collected price data in 2020 and are also planning to collect in 2022. These prices will be extrapolated or backcasted to the reference year 2021. This approach will be necessary to obtain sufficient coverage to calculate annual average prices.

- Since Russia is no longer participating in the Eurostat-OECD program it will not be treated as a dual participation country. As a result, the linking of the CIS region to the rest of world will have to follow a different method to ICP 2017 when it was linked to Eurostat-OECD via Russia. The methodology to link CIS in the ICP 2021 cycle is a subject for future discussion.

Session 02: Global Updates

The ICP Global Office presented global updates. Commencing with governance activities, it was noted that the annual ICP report was submitted for discussion at the 53rd United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC): the Commission acknowledged the risks to the program and reiterated its support for ICP 2021 cycle. The ICP Governing Board highlighted the good progress made with the 2021 cycle despite pandemic disruptions, the delay in price collection in some countries and regions until 2022, and the new participation risks arising from the crisis in Europe and Central Asia. The Technical Advisory Group discussed the impact of COVID-19 on ICP methods and the quality of the results. The next TAG meeting will discuss the linking of the CIS region, the COVID-19 impact on expenditure weight structures and the inclusion of additional economies in the revised ICP 2017 results, among others.

Regarding operational activities, the attendees were presented with a summary of ICP 2021 cycle materials and a reminder of the headings to be published, that is, hierarchical and non-hierarchical headings and combined reporting of NPISH PPPs and expenditures. Subsequently, the ICP 2021 Survey Framework Questionnaire was reviewed, highlighting the new questions related to COVID-19 metadata, which are especially important for this ICP cycle. The attendees were also reminded that in response to COVID-19 and its impact, the ICP published two guidance notes in 2021 on price and expenditure data requirements. More recently, in May 2022, the Global Office circulated an additional guidance note on the Private Education Survey.

On the ICP 2021 cycle timetable, the upcoming TAG and IACG meetings in Q4 2022 were highlighted, as well as the extension of the price collection period to Q4 2022 in response to the delays observed in some participating economies. Moreover, a detailed production timetable for the ICP 2021 cycle was presented to the regions, scheduling the sequence of data submissions, validation, meetings, and calculation of results, from Q1 2021 to Q4 2023. The objectives, content, and timing of the data submissions were presented and reviewed, as summarized in Annex 3.

On the current status of ICP 2021 data submissions, attendees were presented with a summary table of the data received so far by the ICP Global Office. The main purpose of initial data submissions is to verify the completeness of the data and to detect potential mistakes at an early stage, such as unit scales, zero values, data coverage, and consistency between datasets and with the previous ICP cycle in the case of ICP 2017 data revisions.

Regarding the risk assessment at the global level and the respective mitigations measures, the ICP Global Office identifies the following risks:

- *Methodology*: linking the CIS region via OECD-Russia will not be possible for 2021. As an alternative, it is suggested to link CIS via the “standard” global core list (GCL) approach. Additional consultations with the IACG, TAG, and GB are required.
- *Participation*: although the total number of participating economies is expected to be similar to ICP 2017, it is important to continue the advocacy efforts and to ensure that any change in participation does not impact results.
- *Data quality*: due to delays and COVID-19-related restrictions, there are differences in survey implementation schedules within and between regions. This required a greater reliance on data backcasting and extrapolation which is dependent on the quality of the extrapolation indices. The data quality of expenditure weights is also an important factor to consider. This situation requires continued validation efforts at the national, regional, and global levels, as well as technical guidance from the TAG.
- *Timetable*: the publication of ICP 2021 results remains as scheduled for Q4 2023 despite the delays observed in the implementation of this cycle. Meeting this deadline will require active monitoring of the production schedule and close cooperation between the regional and global implementing agencies.
- *Resources*: the ICP 2021 cycle faces limited human and financial resources at the national, regional, and global levels, and there have been delays in transferring funds to subregional and national agencies. To mitigate this issue, it will be necessary to utilize or extend the use of new working arrangements and initiate additional fundraising.

Lastly, with regards to outreach activities and announcements, it was highlighted that the global poverty estimates will be updated using ICP 2017 PPPs and the international poverty line will be adjusted from \$1.90 to \$2.15 a day. Another important development is the upcoming publication “[The State of Food Security and Nutrition in the World](#)” (SOFI), scheduled for release in July 2022, which uses ICP data to estimate the affordability of healthy diets across countries. The attendees were also informed that an article written in consultation with IACG was submitted to the Statistical Journal of the International Association for Official Statistics and is currently under review. Other advocacy activities include: a new ICP Blog published in March 2022; the new ICP-COVID 19 Guidance Note on Private Education released in May 2022; a new ICP article on World Development Indicators scheduled for release in July 2022; an article by the NSO of Singapore on the national ICP work in a recent newsletter. A new design of the ICP website is also scheduled for release in summer 2022.

Agreements and conclusions

- The implementation of the ICP 2021 cycle is well underway in all regions and the total number of participating economies is expected to be similar to the previous cycle.
- The first data submission for the ICP 2021 cycle was made in June 2022, before the IACG meeting, according to the originally planned schedule.
- To ensure the coordination and timeliness of ICP 2021 cycle activities, a detailed production schedule was shared and agreed upon between the RIAs and the ICP Global Office (refer to Annex 3).

Annex 1: Meeting Agenda

DAY 1: WEDNESDAY, JUNE 8, 2022

- 08:00 – 08:10 am** **Welcome**
- 08:10 – 09:30 am** **Regional updates on the ICP 2021 cycle implementation**
- Updates on country participation
 - Survey implementation, expenditure compilation, data validation and PPP estimation status (2021 and revised 2017)
 - Recent workshops and meetings
 - Outreach activities and announcements
 - Risk assessment
- 09:30 – 09:45 am** **Break**
- 09:45 – 11:00 am** **Regional updates on the ICP 2021 cycle implementation (Cont'd)**

DAY 2: THURSDAY, JUNE 9, 2022

- 08:00 – 08:10 am** **Opening remarks**
- 08:10 – 09:30 am** **Global updates on the ICP 2021 cycle implementation**
- Governance activities
 - Operational material and guidance
 - Overall ICP 2021 cycle timetable and production roadmap
 - Data submission status and initial data reviews
 - Outreach activities and announcements
 - Risk assessment
- 09:30 – 09:45 am** **Break**
- 09:45 – 10:45 am** **Global updates on the ICP 2021 cycle implementation (Cont'd)**
- 10:45 – 11:00 am** **Any other business**

Annex 2: List of participants

African Development Bank (AfDB)

- Ben Paul Mungyereza
- Gregoire Mboya de Loubassou
- Michel Mouyelo-Katoula
- Charles Sessede
- Symphorien Ndang Tabo

Asian Development Bank (ADB)

- Kaushal Joshi
- Criselda H. De Dios

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

- Andrey Kosarev
- Valerica Accibas

Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD)

- Daniel Sanchez Serra
- Sophie Bournot

Statistical Office of the European Communities (Eurostat)

- Hakan Linden
- Lars Svennebye

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

- Claudia de Camino Ferrario
- Lady Infante
- Ernestina Perez

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

- Majed Skaini
- Sadim Sbeiti

International Monetary Fund (IMF)

- Brian Graf

World Bank

- Nada Hamadeh
- Marko Rissanen
- Edie Purdie
- Inyoung Song
- Giovanni Tonutti
- Maurice Nsabimana
- Mizuki Yamanaka
- Nancy Kebe
- Rui Costa

- Yan Bai
- Yuri Dikhanov

Annex 3: ICP 2021 cycle production timeline

ICP 2021 cycle production schedule		2022									2023											
		Q2			Q3			Q4			Q1			Q2			Q3			Q4		
		Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec	Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
Phase 1	Data submissions*	■	■	■																		
	Validation	■	■	■																		
	IACG			■																		
Phase 2	Data submissions*				!!																	
	Validation				■	■	■	■														
	IACG							■	■													
	Calculation								■	■												
	TAG									■												
	Validation								■	■												
Phase 3	Data submissions*										!!											
	Validation										■	■	■	■								
	IACG													■	■							
	Calculation													■	■	■						
	TAG: Draft global results														■	■						
	Validation														■	■	■					
Phase 4	Data submissions*																!!					
	Validation																■	■	■	■		
	IACG																	■	■	■		
	Calculation																			■	■	
	TAG: Preliminary global results																				■	■
	Final global results																					■

* iterative

	Key objectives	Assumptions
Phase 1	Data submissions, processing and validation have been initiated	All regions have completed their first data submission
Phase 2	Global 2021 data assessment has been conducted for the phase	All regions have provided complete or partial draft 2021 price data
	Revised global 2017 data assessment has been conducted for the phase	All regions have provided complete or partial draft revised 2017 results
	Timeseries data assessment has been conducted for the phase	All regions have provided complete or partial draft timeseries data
Phase 3	Draft global 2021 results have been estimated	All regions have provided complete draft 2021 price data for GDP level
	Draft revised global 2017 have been estimated	All regions have provided complete draft revised 2017 results
	Draft global timeseries for 2017-2021 have been estimated	All regions have provided complete draft timeseries data
	Draft global metadata has been combined	All regions have provided draft metadata
Phase 4	Preliminary and final global 2021 results have been estimated	All regions have provided final 2021 price data for GDP level
	Preliminary and final revised global 2017 results have been estimated	All regions have provided final revised 2017 results
	Preliminary and final timeseries for 2017-2021 have been estimated	All regions have provided final timeseries data
	Final global metadata has been combined	All regions have provided final metadata

Data and metadata submission requirements		
2021	Prices	Household consumption (HHC)
		Housing rentals (HOU) and volume (HOV)
		Private education (EDU)
		Government compensation (GOV)
		Construction and civil engineering (CON)
		Machinery and equipment (MEQ)
	Expenditures	155 BHs
		Hierarchical aggregates
		Non-hierarchical aggregates
	PPPs	155 BHs
		Hierarchical aggregates
		Non-hierarchical aggregates
		Special headings (gov. compensation without productivity adjustment; construction subheadings)
	Population	Mid-year population
	Market exchange rates	Annual averages

rev2017	Expenditures	155 BHs Hierarchical aggregates Non-hierarchical aggregates
	PPPs	155 BHs Hierarchical aggregated Non-hierarchical aggregates Special headings (gov. compensation without productivity adjustment; construction subheadings)
	Population	Mid-year population
	Market exchange rates	Annual averages

Timeseries	Expenditures	Most detailed available
	PPPs	As available
	CPIs	Most detailed available
	NA deflators	Most detailed available
	Population	Mid-year population
	Market exchange rates	Annual averages

Metadata	ICP Survey Framework and Covid-19 Questionnaire	
	National Accounts Country Practice Questionnaire	
	Housing Metadata Questionnaire	