

**Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia (ESCWA)**

Statistical Committee  
Sixteenth session  
Manama, 22–23 October 2024



Item 3 of the provisional agenda

**Provisional agenda and annotations**

1. Opening of the session.
2. Election of officers.
3. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters.

**Follow-up issues**

4. Activities implemented in the field of statistics:
  - (a) Implementation of activities under the ESCWA programme plan and of recommendations made by the Statistical Committee at its fifteenth session to the ESCWA secretariat;
  - (b) Technical cooperation activities;
  - (c) Implementation of recommendations made by the Statistical Committee at its fifteenth session to member States;
  - (d) Activities of the Technical Advisory Group on Demographic and Social Statistics;

**Statistical work in the Arab region: a glimpse into the future**

5. Future of population and housing censuses and lessons learned from past and current experiences.
6. Technological developments in areas that influence the modernization of official statistics.
7. Round-table discussion: Investing in the power of data and digital transformation to accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals and support evidence-based policymaking in Arab countries.
8. Empowering national statistical systems to bridge gaps in SDG indicator data.
9. Statistical business continuity in Arab countries affected by conflict and post-conflict situations.

### **Programmatic issues**

10. Outcomes of the fifty-fifth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission.
11. Results of evaluations of previous sessions of the Statistical Committee.
12. Date and venue of the seventeenth session of the Statistical Committee.
13. Other matters.
14. Adoption of the recommendations made by the Statistical Committee at its sixteenth session.

### **Annotations**

1. Opening of the session

The sixteenth session of the Statistical Committee will open in the afternoon of Tuesday, 22 October 2024. The Chair of the fifteenth session of the Committee will give the opening address, the representative of Bahrain will make the opening remarks, and the ESCWA secretariat will deliver a welcome statement.

2. Election of officers

Rule 18 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia states: “Member States shall chair the sessions of the subsidiary bodies of the Commission on a rotating basis, in the Arabic alphabetical order employed by the United Nations. Unless the Commission decides otherwise, those bodies shall elect all their other officers”.<sup>1</sup>

The Committee shall elect two vice-chairs and a rapporteur from representatives of member States.

3. Adoption of the agenda and other organizational matters

Rule 8 of the rules of procedure of the Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia, which apply to subsidiary bodies, states: “At the beginning of each session, once the Chair has assumed his/her duties in accordance with rule 12, the Committee shall adopt the agenda for that session on the basis of the provisional agenda”. Pursuant to that rule, the Committee will have before it the provisional agenda in document E/ESCWA/C.1/2024/L.1, and the proposed organization of work in document E/ESCWA/C.1/2024/L.2. Both documents may be adopted by the Committee as submitted or in amended forms.

### **Follow-up issues**

4. Activities implemented in the field of statistics (E/ESCWA/C.1/2024/3)

The Committee will discuss four topics with reference to the following documents under this item:

- (a) Implementation of activities under the ESCWA programme plan and of recommendations made by the Statistical Committee at its fifteenth session to the ESCWA secretariat (E/ESCWA/C.1/2024/3(Part I))

The Committee will consider activities and key achievements of the ESCWA secretariat in the field of statistics since its fifteenth session, which was held in Beirut on 16 and 17 November 2022. These activities include issuing publications, reports and technical material, platforms and

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<sup>1</sup> ESCWA member States in the Arabic alphabetical order are as follows: Jordan, the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Tunisia, Algeria, the Syrian Arab Republic, Djibouti, the Sudan, Somalia, Iraq, Oman, the State of Palestine, Qatar, Kuwait, Lebanon, Libya, Egypt, Morocco, Saudi Arabia, Mauritania, and Yemen.

databases on economic statistics and national accounts, demographic and social statistics, gender and disability statistics, and SDG indicators; and holding capacity-building workshops. The Committee will also consider progress in implementing recommendations made to the ESCWA secretariat at its fifteenth session.

The Committee is invited to take note of progress made in the statistical field and comment thereon.

(b) Technical cooperation activities (E/ESCWA/C.1/2024/3(Part II))

The Committee will consider technical cooperation activities undertaken by the ESCWA secretariat since its fifteenth session in the field of statistics, including advisory services, workshops, capacity-building activities and projects.

The Committee is invited to take note of these activities, make comments thereon and provide guidance on the way forward.

(c) Implementation of recommendations made by the Statistical Committee at its fifteenth session to member States (briefings by State representatives)

Representatives of member States will brief the Committee on national actions taken pursuant to the recommendations addressed to them at its fifteenth session, highlighting challenges faced in implementation. Representatives wishing to give a briefing are invited to submit a request in advance to the ESCWA secretariat.

(d) Activities of the Technical Advisory Group on Demographic and Social Statistics (E/ESCWA/C.1/2024/3(Part III))

The Committee will consider the work outcomes of the Technical Advisory Group on Demographic and Social Statistics, notably the results of its fifth meeting held in Beirut on 7 and 8 March 2023, and its sixth meeting held online on 3 and 4 July 2024. Both meetings considered progress in bridging gaps in demographic and social data series, and the strategic framework for civil registration and vital statistics 2022–2025.

The Statistical Committee is invited to take note of the work outcomes of the Technical Advisory Group on Demographic and Social Statistics and discuss its recommendations.

**Statistical work in the Arab region: a glimpse into the future**

5. Future of population and housing censuses and lessons learned from past and current experiences (E/ESCWA/C.1/2024/4)

The Committee will discuss the vital role of population and housing censuses in achieving the SDGs in Arab countries, and the challenges posed by the 2020 census round, such as security, technical and financial issues, and COVID-19-related challenges. The Committee will explore possible solutions, such as using modern technology and hybrid methodologies, and enhancing regional cooperation and capacity-building, in preparation for the 2030 round.

The Committee is invited to comment on the challenges and solutions presented, and to make recommendations on the way forward.

6. Technological developments in areas that influence the modernization of official statistics (E/ESCWA/C.1/2024/5)

The Committee will review technological developments that influence the modernization of statistical production, including cloud computing for official statistics, data science applications in price data

collection, case studies on the use of the Automatic Identification System (AIS) in shipping and trade, Statistical Data and Metadata eXchange (SDMX) standards, open data, and geospatial applications.

The Committee is invited to discuss the opportunities and challenges that these technological developments present to official statistical work.

7. Round-table discussion: Investing in the power of data and digital transformation to accelerate progress on the Sustainable Development Goals and support evidence-based policymaking in Arab countries (E/ESCWA/C.1/2024/6)

The round-table discussion will provide a platform to explore the transformative potential of data, and the need to promote coordinated, coherent and strategic investments in data to monitor the SDGs in the Arab region.

Representatives of member States are invited to actively participate in the discussion, and consider joining the High Impact Initiative on the Power of Data to build advanced partnerships and harness the transformative power of data in their countries.

8. Empowering national statistical systems to bridge gaps in SDG indicator data (E/ESCWA/C.1/2024/7)

The Committee will consider achievements in the statistical monitoring of progress towards realizing the SDGs and implementing the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. It will examine various issues, such as bridging the data gap and coordinating national statistical systems, including the legislative environment. It will also address the data gap in terms of understanding and analysing data and their availability from the perspective of national priorities and local needs. Moreover, the Committee will discuss factors and opportunities to empower national statistical systems in support of statistical capacity development and lessons learned.

The Committee is invited to take note of the challenges and achievements in the field of statistical monitoring of the SDGs, and to provide guidance and recommendations to increase the flow of data and expand its use in appropriate national planning and decision-making.

9. Statistical business continuity in Arab countries affected by conflict and post-conflict situations (E/ESCWA/C.1/2024/8)

The Committee will consider ways to ensure the continuity and rehabilitation of national statistical systems in Arab countries affected by conflicts and humanitarian crises, so as to enhance the availability, quality and accessibility of data to support evidence-based decision-making and achieve recovery and sustainable development. The Committee will also discuss innovative solutions to address challenges, and seize opportunities in statistical data management.

The Committee is invited to discuss ways to ensure the continuity of statistical work in countries affected by conflict and make recommendations in this regard.

### **Programmatic issues**

10. Outcomes of the fifty-fifth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission (briefing by the ESCWA secretariat)

The Committee will review the outcomes of the fifty-fifth session of the United Nations Statistical Commission, held in New York from 27 February to 1 March 2024, and review key recommendations from its agenda items.

11. Results of evaluations of previous sessions of the Statistical Committee  
(presentation by the ESCWA secretariat)

The Committee will review the results of evaluations of previous Committee sessions, based on a presentation by the ESCWA secretariat that provides an analytical reading of key findings.

The Committee is invited to take note of the evaluation results of previous sessions and to evaluate the current session, based on a questionnaire distributed by the ESCWA secretariat for that purpose.

12. Date and venue of the seventeenth session of the Statistical Committee

The Committee will discuss the date and venue of its seventeenth session.

13. Other matters

This item will cover any other matters that members of the Committee may wish to discuss.

14. Adoption of the recommendations made by the Statistical Committee at its sixteenth session

The Committee will review the draft recommendations of its sixteenth session for discussion and adoption.

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